

**IMMOKALEE MASTER PLAN & VISIONING COMMITTEE
& CRA ADVISORY BOARD/EZDA JOINT MEETING**

September 6, 2006
Career and Service Center of Collier County-Immokalee
750 South 5th Street
Immokalee, FL 34142
8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

**Work Session and Joint Meeting
of the**

- **Immokalee Enterprise Zone Development Agency**
- **Immokalee Local Redevelopment Advisory Board**
- **Immokalee Master Plan and Visioning Committee**

A. **Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 8:40am by Chairman Fred N. Thomas, Jr.

B. **Roll Call**

CRA Advisory Board/Enterprise Zone Development Agency

Present

Fred Thomas, Chair
Bob Soter, Vice Chair
Bernardo Barnhart
Eva Deyo
Denise Blanton
Robert Halman
Julio Estremera

Absent

Rick Heers
Ana Salazar
Chritina Perez
Ira Malamut
Captain Tom Davis (excused)

Immokalee Master Planning and Visioning Committee

Present

Raymond T. Holland
Edward (Ski) Olesky
William O'Neill
Fred N. Thomas, Jr.
Floyd Crews
Richard Rice

Absent

Esmeralda Serrata
Clarence S. Tears, Jr.
Leo F. Rodgers
Rick Heers

There was an announcement of a quorum.

Staff Present

Thomas Greenwood, Principal Planner, Ekna Guevara, Planning Technician, Mike Bosi,
Community Redevelopment & Planning Manager

Others Present

Tari Harris, Jeremy Jenkins, Susanne Specht, Anne Goodnight, Tammie Nemecek of the Economic Development Council of Collier County, and Ron Zimmerly, the Hendry County Enterprise Zone Coordinator.

C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Floyd Crews and second by Bob Soter, to add to the agenda under new business the following, upon request for amendment by Denise Blanton:

- Discussion of CRA Advisory Board attendance at the October 6-11 Miami conference of the Florida Redevelopment Association and
- Discussion of sending a letter to Florida Secretary of Agriculture a letter and pictures of the Immokalee Farmer's Market's deplorable condition, which is the first business incubator in Immokalee.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes of the August 16, 2006, Joint Meeting

Motion to approve minutes made by Eva Deyo, second by Richard Rice with the minutes approved unanimously.

E. Communications None

F. Old Business

1. Enterprise Zone Development Agency.

a. Review of the EZDA Member Handbook.

The EZDA reviewed and discussed and came to the conclusion on the following courses of action with respect to the handbook:

- Various updates of member contact information were noted
- Need to update the goals and objectives
- Need to invite other representatives of economic development agencies to a meeting of the EZDA set tentatively for October 18 at 8:30 a.m. to involve the EDC of Collier County, the Workforce Development Council, Florida Rural Heartland Economic Development, Collier County School District, etc. Tammie Nemecek and others were going to provide the contact information to Tom Greenwood for invitations to individuals and information to be sent out with agenda packets for the October 18 meeting.

b. Review of County and State Incentives for Business Expansion and Location in Immokalee (Economic Development Council of Collier County and Ron Zimmerly of Hendry County). Ron Zimmerly, the Hendry County Enterprise Zone Coordinator, stated the following:

- There is a **materials sales tax refund** available on businesses and homes and Hendry County hands out an information sheet on the program building permits are issued and also passed out the August, 2006, Hendry County summary of sales tax refunds applied for which require a copy of the building permit and the certificate of occupancy. Home sales refunds can be for up to \$5,000 and businesses can be for up to \$10,000.
- **Business equipment sales tax refunds** possible on a minimum \$5,000 purchase.
- **Jobs tax credits (either sales taxes) or Jobs tax credit (corporate tax)** available for new job creation for a maximum of 24 months (36 hours per week minimum hours) and can be applied for not sooner than 3 months after the job is created and not later than 6 months after the job is created. Other incentives are listed in the EZDA handbook in the back and there is an excellent web site at Florida Enterprise at **www.floridaenterprisezone.com.**

There was a general discussion of the need for someone in Collier County to be responsible for promoting and implementing the various incentives available through the Enterprise Zone.

Motion by: Denise Blanton

Seconded by: Richard Rice

Moved that: The CRA Advisory Board write a letter to the Board of County

Upon Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners asking for general county funds to be earmarked for a full time person to promote and administer the Enterprise Zone programs and incentives in Immokalee.

Tammie Nemecek, Executive Director of the EDC of Collier County, summarized county and state incentives including:

- Collier County Fast Track Regulatory Process Program
- Business services including enterprise zone, incentives, equipment sales tax exemption for new equipment, economic development transportation fund, tax refunds for qualified targeted industry, work opportunity tax credit, workforce training, business financing and local incentives (fee payment assistance program for impact fees, property tax stimulus program, and broadband infrastructure investment program).

There was some discussion about the high impact fee rates charged in Collier County to pay for new growth.

Tammie Nemecek explained that currently the Enterprise Zone Area is the same area as the Federal Empowerment Zone. In 2005 the EDC and Board of County Commissioners were successful in expanding the State Rural Area of Critical to include Sections 12,13, 14, 15 and 16 and the south half of Section 1, which are located within the Redevelopment Area. Ms. Nemecek asked the EZDA to consider recommending to the Board of County Commissioners that the Enterprise Zone boundary be expanded to include Sections 12,13, 14, 15 and 16 and the south half of Section 1 so that the EZ south boundary is the same as the south boundary of the Federal Empowerment Zone and the State Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern. The approval will have to come from the State Legislature and the timing may require 2 legislative sessions. Silver Strand and other developments would then be located within the Enterprise Zone Area.

After further discussion, the following action was taken:

Motion by: Richard Rice

Seconded by: Ski Olesky

Moved that : Moved that the EZDA support efforts of the EDC of Collier County to expand the Enterprise Zone boundary so that it coincides with the State Area of Critical Economic Concern.

Upon Vote: the motion was carried unanimously.

2. Immokalee Local Redevelopment Advisory Board.

- a. Review of Member Handbook . This handbook was reviewed briefly.
- b. Update on the Economic Feasibility Study. The Advisory Board reviewed maps which outlined the the Rural Land Stewardship Area which surrounds

Immokalee and the fact that the RLSA program, the environmentally sensitive areas to the east and west of Immokalee, and the state and federal lands to the south of the Ave Maria/Oil Well Road area form the physical boundary of the expected urban development in the Immokalee area. Dr. Gary Jackson has been in contact with Bob Soter, Clarence Tears, Tom Greenwood, and Kurt Easton of RMPK Group and it is hoped that Dr. Jackson with FGCU, who was involved with the Traded Business Clusters Study for Charlotte, Collier, and Lee Counties, will be doing the Economic Feasibility Study, which will include an assessment of all aspects of the Immokalee existing and possible future economic opportunities.

3. Immokalee Master Plan and Visioning Committee

- a. Review of Member Handbook. With limited time, the review of the handbook was postponed indefinitely.
- b. September 19 Meeting of the IMPVC. A meeting with the consultant, RMPK Group, to review the Inventory and Analysis Report, solicit comments on findings, obtain lists of priorities, etc. has been set for 5:30pm in this facility room.

G. New Business

1. **Discussion of CRA Advisory Member Attendance at the Florida Redevelopment Association.** Denise Blanton stated that 4 persons from the Bayshore CRA Advisory Board plan to attend the conference in October in Miami. Staff was asked to research the conference, email the information to the CRA Advisory Board and decision can be made during the September 20 regular meeting based upon a motion by Denise Blanton, second by Bob Soter, and unanimous approval of the motion.
2. **Discussion of the Condition of the Farmers Market in Immokalee.** Denise Blanton stated that the Farmer's Market is in deplorable condition and that a letter should be sent from the CRA to Florida Secretary of Agriculture Bronson (with photos) asking that the State commit to upgrade the facility.

H. Citizen Comments None.

I. Next Meeting Date

Next joint meeting will be held on September 20, 2006. This will be a joint CRA Advisory Board/IMPVC/EZDA meeting.

j. Adjournment at 9:55am

*The next joint IMPVC and CRA Advisory Board meeting will be held September 20, 2006 at 8:30 a.m.

** The next IMPVC meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, September 19, 2006 at 5:30 p.m.

All meetings will be publicly noticed in the W. Harmon Turner Building (Building F), posted at the Immokalee Public Library and provided to the County Public Information Department for distribution. Please call Ekna Guevara, Planning Technician, at (239) 659-5749 for additional information. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact Ekna Guevara, Planning Technician at least 48 hours before the meeting. The public should be advised that members of the Immokalee Master Plan and Visioning Committee and the CRA Advisory Board are also members of other Boards and Committees, including but not limited to: EZDA/Community Redevelopment Advisory Board, Immokalee Fire Commission, and the Collier County Housing Authority, etc. In this regard, Matters coming before the IMPVC and CRA Advisory Board may come before one or more of the referenced Boards and Committees from time to time.