

APPROVED

**City of Fort Lauderdale Visioning Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 14, 2010
Mizell Center, 1st Floor
1409 Northwest 6th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311**

MEMBERS

		FEB 2010/JAN 2011	
		Present	Absent
Tim Smith, Chair	P	8	0
Stanley Eichelbaum, Vice Chair	P	8	0
Peg Buchan	P	8	0
Alan L. Gabriel (left at 6:00)	P	8	0
Desorae Giles-Smith (4:11 – 6:15)	P	6	2
Gloria Katz (by telephone)	P	7	1
Charles B. Ladd	P	7	1
Dan Lindblade	P	7	1
Gary T. Sieger	P	7	1
Wiley D. Thompson, III	P	6	2
Randall Vitale	P	7	1

Staff

Shannon Vezina, Staff Liaison

Gerry Burrini, Public Information Office

Barbara Hartmann, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

COMMUNICATION TO THE CITY COMMISSION

Motion made by Mr. Sieger and seconded by Ms. Buchan that the full membership of the Visioning Committee serve on the visioning consultant RFP evaluation committee. The motion was passed unanimously.

Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by Chair Smith. As of this date there were eleven appointed members to the Visioning Committee, which means six would constitute a quorum. Following a roll call it was determined that a quorum was present.

Motion by Chair Smith, seconded by Mr. Lindblade, to approve Gloria Katz' participation by conference call. Ms. Vezina explained that Ms. Katz can participate in the meeting, but cannot vote by phone. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Vezina initiated a conference call to Ms. Katz at 4:15 and she then joined the meeting.

- **Approval of Minutes from May 11 and July 13 Meetings**

Motion by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Eichelbaum, to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2010, meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2010, meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Liaison Update (not on agenda)

Ms. Vezina reported that there were four public comments submitted to the Committee's email address, and she distributed them.

She also reported that the RFP is out on the street. She said there have been several questions already from potential respondents, which are posted and answered on BidSync (through the City website).

Chairman's Report (not on agenda)

Chair Smith said he has been thinking about the pace of progress being made by the Committee and how public the Committee should go with its effort. He wondered if they should wait until they have the consultant on board and then have a kick-off like the Centennial event, or do something more technologically oriented.

Chair Smith also commented on the trolley tour that was called off, noting that the City Commission has tours frequently, but the attorneys said they do it as a social event. He announced that at the end of this meeting, several police officers will be available to escort them around the neighborhood in a "social walk" if they would like to see any part of District 3. At the end of the meeting, he will ask if any members are interested in taking the walk.

Chair Smith reported that he called business folks from District 3 and encouraged them to attend this meeting and give their input.

Old Business

- **RFP Evaluation Committee**

Chair Smith announced that the RFP was approved by the City Commission and he thanked Mr. Sieger for attending the City Commission Conference meeting with him. Chair Smith said that he asked Ms. Vezina to bring the tape of the meeting so that Committee members could hear the questions that were asked.

[Video of August 17, 2010, City Commission Conference Meeting played from 4:21 to 4:40 p.m.]

Vice Chair Eichelbaum expressed that while he is a proponent of transparency, he finds it frustrating that the Committee members cannot talk amongst themselves under Sunshine Laws, and it makes it difficult to communicate. He conveyed his consistent support of the RFP. He mentioned that he was appointed by Mayor Seiler and he heard the thoughts that he talked about on the video several months ago. He went to Mayor Seiler for an update (with Leonard Samuels), who has talked to the business community about the potential for funding the visioning project. Vice Chair Eichelbaum commented that he talked to the City Attorney earlier on the day and was given restraints about what he can say at this point. Mayor Seiler urged him to talk to the other City Commissioners, and he talked to Commissioners Rogers, DuBose and Roberts before the RFP went out. Vice Chair Eichelbaum emphasized that he is not endorsing any specific group for the visioning study, and pointed out that he is in support of education and the environment, not just business. He noted that the City is under strain due to budget issues.

Vice Chair Eichelbaum continued that he recently flew to Washington and met with a Senior Associate, two Senior Economists and one Junior Economist at Rand Corporation, discussing the plan for visioning for Fort Lauderdale. They had interest in looking at it, but also suggested talking to McKenzie and other groups. After this meeting and the subsequent discussions with the City Commissioners, the general feedback was positive.

Rand also offered help writing grants, and Vice Chair Eichelbaum felt there is potential to get this to a high level. He reported that while he is still interested in approaching other firms, he did receive a quote, the lowest to date, from Rand. The quote included double staffing and a strong commitment to public input. They have interest in co-venturing the study with NOVA or other universities.

Vice Chair Eichelbaum continued that there are other premier groups to consider, and Rand is not usually an RFP responder, but they have done it in the past. Before the RFP went out, they looked at it and said they might be a responder.

Vice Chair Eichelbaum thought the main interest of the Commissioners was that the Committee needs to know how to fund the project and how to implement it.

Mr. Sieger commented that he had a different take on the Commission meeting altogether. Mr. Sieger remarked that the Committee should speak as one voice before the City Commission and, while he thought that the conversations Vice Chair Eichelbaum has had are very helpful, he thought it should be brought to the Committee so the Committee knows what is going on and can decide if they want to support or not support something.

Ms. Katz remarked that even though Mr. Sieger has a valid point, perhaps the Committee should overlook that discussion and get to what is being afforded to the Committee through the talks that Vice Chair Eichelbaum has had. She was curious

what groups like the Rand Corporation want from the Committee, and what the Committee would have to do to make it worthwhile for them to take on the visioning task.

Vice Chair Eichelbaum responded that Rand noted they were nonprofit and quoted fees in the \$250,000 to \$450,000 range. They are looking for a test case to create a template for their projects and they felt Fort Lauderdale has potential for that.

Ms. Katz wondered if what they want is what the Committee wants, but if both could be married together, it would be a bonus for both. If Rand worked with FAU to give the Committee what it wants, then it's not out of the realm of possibility for everybody to get what they want out of this. She advocated taking a hard look at it and not shooting it down because of the way it was presented.

Ms. Buchan reported that no quotes have been received yet. Some people gave the Committee "concepts" and relayed prices they may have charged other entities, but there have been no formal quotes so far. She emphasized that all input so far has been off the cuff.

Chair Smith divulged that he felt undermined at the meeting in front of the City Commissioners. He was there to forward the collective agreement of this Committee, and felt undercut by Vice Chair Eichelbaum's remarks there. Chair Smith went on to state that he received a phone call from former Mayor Dressler, who reported that Vice Chair Eichelbaum's efforts to sunset this Committee and start a new Committee that is not Sunshine-restricted is picking up steam. Chair Smith felt that Vice Chair Eichelbaum should not stay on this Committee while privately advocating a different direction, as it will lessen their success.

Vice Chair Eichelbaum replied that he is not advocating the demise of this Committee although he has been in discussions when the topic came up.

Mr. Ladd remarked that the concept of having a study done (as proposed by Vice Chair Eichelbaum) is very different than a visioning exercise. The Visioning Committee has been assigned to reach out to the public, not conduct a study.

Ms. Buchan remarked that the Committee should be aware that there might not be feelings on City staff that correspond with their own feelings about the project. She suggested more interaction between staff and the Committee might be helpful. This arose from a memo that was introduced by City staff inferring that the Committee was proposing a \$6M project.

Ms. Vezina explained that the Memo she referred to was a CAR (Commission Agenda Report) which Staff has to submit to get an item on a City Commission Agenda. The CAR for the RFP included background information to provide context to the Commission, and is available online. She said the CAR reported a range from

\$200,000 on the low end to multi-million dollars on the high end, and she those amounts were referring to what other communities had spent on similar kinds of exercises. It was suggested that in the future, the CAR be shared with the Committee Chair before being sent out.

Ms. Vezina reminded the Committee that no one should be talking to any potential respondents at this point until all responses to the RFP are in. Chair Smith added that it is permissible to encourage people to apply, but there cannot be any conversation regarding the “meat” of the RFP. Ms. Vezina added that no one can provide any direction as to what they should put in their response, because their response could be jeopardized. She said the RFP pre-bid meeting is the next Thursday.

Chair Smith expressed hope that the Committee will keep its disagreements in the room and when they go in public, they will speak with one voice.

- **RFP Evaluation Committee**

Chair Smith reminded the Committee that 50% of the Evaluation Committee can come from non-staff. He relayed his understanding that the maximum number of Evaluation Committee members is 11 and five could be non-staff.

Ms. Giles-Smith wondered if the Evaluation Committee would be making their recommendation to the City Commission or to the Visioning Committee, and Chair Smith said to the City Commission. Ms. Giles-Smith was curious if this was the general practice or if it written in law that 11 are on the Committee and half have to be staff. Ms. Vezina replied that she is not sure there is anything written in stone, but the Mayor and City Manager were asked if all 11 Visioning Committee members could serve on the Evaluation Committee and the answer was no, as that would mean the Committee would have to have 22 people on it.

Mr. Sieger commented that this is a major undertaking and he does not agree with half of the Visioning Committee not having any input on the Evaluation Committee.

Chair Smith said the RFP's are due October 20, 2010, and the Committee meets once again before then, so maybe it will become clear by then.

Chair Smith and Mr. Lindblade volunteered to not serve on the Evaluation Committee.

Mr. Ladd said that they have to differentiate between evaluation and what happens afterwards. Once someone (a vendor) is selected, then they are back under the control of the Visioning Committee.

Mr. Sieger added that anybody can attend the evaluation meeting, so the whole Committee could attend and listen to the RFP's.

Mr. Ladd remarked that if the proposals have different approaches, then the approach itself is set in the selection process. The City's perspective is how much money they will spend. He contended that the Visioning Committee is more concerned with the approach rather than with dollars.

Ms. Vezina reminded the Committee that they asked for three different approaches in the RFP: basic, moderate and comprehensive. Chair Smith remarked that those are the intensities of the effort rather than the types of approach. Ms. Vezina continued that it is likely that the Evaluation Committee will run into difficulty grading the proposals, and one way to simplify that would be to grade each on the three different intensities.

Ms. Buchan commented she has come to respect the divergence of opinion in this Committee and would not like to see 50% of the group not be able to have the opportunity to express their opinions. While she understands that a committee of 22 is unusual, in this instance she thinks it is the right thing to do.

Ms. Katz thought there should be a backup plan to the 22-person committee. She suggested having five or six people appointed in that case, have all Visioning Committee members show up to the evaluation meeting, listen to the presentations, huddle together, and have the appointed people represent what the Visioning Committee wants. She related the experience of the Master Plan evaluation process, where the committee looked at everything in the proposal. Whoever "wins" will have completed all of the issues with which the Committee is concerned.

Chair Smith suggested that if they want all 11 members on the Evaluation Committee, then they can make that motion and send it back to the City Commission. As an alternative action, they could work on a compromise. Chair Smith continued that the Evaluation Committee will select three to five finalists for the RFP based on their paperwork. After that, perhaps the Evaluation Committee could meet with the Visioning Committee and hear the presentations by the three finalists.

Mr. Sieger suggested that an alternate plan would be that the Visioning Committee meet after the RFP's are in, but before the Evaluation Committee meets and go over the RFP's. Then the Committee can pick its "favorites" and the select five or six representatives will go to the Evaluation Committee with that information.

Chair Smith liked that idea, and said that way the representatives to the Evaluation Committee are informed before they meet. Mr. Sieger added that he thinks the Visioning Committee should be thinking of questions that should be asked of the Evaluation Committee.

Ms. Buchan shared that the County prepares a matrix and deems which bids are responsive and responsible. Only those passing the matrix test are forwarded to the selection committee, greatly reducing the number. It is hard to predict how many will be in that category, and she is not sure if the City does the same thing.

Mr. Ladd confirmed that the Evaluation/Selection Committee meeting will be public, so that all the members of the Visioning Committee could attend. Ms. Vezina explained that her understanding is that the members of the selection committee cannot get input from other people prior to making a decision.

Chair Smith remarked then they are back to two options: pick five members and be done with it or make one more attempt to have the City do something "creative" with the effort.

Motion by Mr. Ladd, seconded by Mr. Gabriel, to pick five people to be on the Selection Committee. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 6-4 with Ms. Buchan, Mr. Vitale, Ms. Giles-Smith and Mr. Sieger dissenting.

Chair Smith then opened up the floor for nominations for the five people to serve on the Evaluation/Selection Committee.

In response to a request from Mr. Vitale, Ms. Vezina recited the timelines for the Committee: the pre-bid meeting is September 23, 2010, when vendors can come in and ask questions, and the proposals are due on October 20, 2010.

Ms. Buchan asked the Committee members to look at page 13 of the RFP to remind themselves of the core drivers, and select people who are representative of the core drivers.

****Public Comment**

Ms. Ella Phillips, Legislative Aide for State Representative Perry E. Thurston, Jr., of the Florida House of Representatives. Ms. Phillips is a resident of District 3, and is a long-time resident of the area.

Ms. Phillips expressed her desire to know more about the visioning effort.

Mr. Sieger asked Ms. Phillips how she thinks the Committee can get feedback from the citizens. She replied that they could get into the churches more, walk the neighborhoods and talk to the everyday people sitting outside. Many times those people do not read notices or read emails. She continued that walking door to door is a good way. There is a lot of input in the Lincoln Park area. Ms. Phillips remarked that you can get information from the homeowner's associations, but it will be the status quo and not the same information you will get by walking the neighborhood.

Mr. Ladd contributed that there are a lot of conflicting interests in District 3 between preserving a historic community and pro-development. Visioning will get down to where the consensus is – it will not be everything. It will not solve all the problems, but it will be about building consensus.

Chair Smith wondered how much weight they should give to any one area of the city when creating their vision.

Ms. Phillips said that gathering consensus is hard, but that the needs of that community (District 3) need to be heard. Many times this area is overlooked because they seem to have the same recurring problems and people feel it cannot be fixed. She recommended that the Committee take into consideration what these small little areas have to say.

Ms. Phillips remarked that if she had the power to change the situation in that district, she would prioritize safer streets and a busy and viable business corridor that they can walk to.

Ms. Giles-Smith reported that she had received the following comments from residents: a great vision for the New River Condo Site to be demolished and have a public/private development; something really beautiful with art across from [unable to hear person speaking], and on 4th street have tall palms with wonderful landscaping.

Ms. Giles-Smith commented that she herself would like to see police walking the streets, a buffer between industrial and residential areas, and better crime enforcement. She noted that the nine Quick Picks attract loiterers and druggies. There are vacant lots and boarded up houses. She said they should complete the annexation of Boulevard Gardens and Washington Park and annex the African American Research Library, which is now in an unincorporated area. She continued that more parks are needed. There are a lot of children without recreation centers or parks, and no activity programming within walking distance. There is a Boys and Girls Club and a YMCA, but nowhere she can walk her kids to a playground. She thinks everyone should have a park they can walk to. She said the recycling center is a haven for crime. She continued that there should be more opportunities for home ownership to contribute to stability, possibly using Section 8 vouchers. She thought that Oswald Park should have a water feature for the kids. She mentioned that a lot of pollutants are going into the north fork of the New River and it needs monitoring as to who is doing the pollution.

Ms. Giles-Smith remarked that the Sistrunk Festival is the only event around, but it needs to be brought back to the street. More public art is needed on the corridor, and the construction there has taken too long. She continued there is a lot of loitering, gambling and smoking drugs in the public park, as well as prostitution at night.

Chair Smith asked about increasing the population density in that area, and Ms. Giles-Smith replied that she would just create more home ownership opportunities.

Ms. Katz commented that most of what Ms. Giles-Smith talked about is what they call "smart growth" and the professionals that they are going to hire should be schooled in these things. They want people to be able to live in communities that are safe,

convenient, and livable, and the consultant should be searching for comments from people that will lead to changes to make that happen. She reiterated that going into the communities and getting people to listen to what the issues are and give their opinions is the best way to get people to contribute.

Chair Smith asked if Ms. Phillips believed that the visioning exercise has a chance of making a difference in all these things. She said there a lot of reasons for why to do it, but the real question is how.

Mr. Ladd believed a lot had been accomplished in the last ten years. The CRA was formed and has money; it helped build up Sistrunk and has bought a lot of properties and torn buildings down. He said he thinks what is missing is consensus for bolder action.

Chair Smith announced there is one more resident to speak: State Senator Chris Smith. Chair Smith asked him if he were king, what would he do for his community?

Senator Smith replied that he would add more green space, perhaps smaller passive parks. He said he has tried talking to the school boards to use their facilities after school is over for the day, as they lock up after school. There is one park, but it is across Sistrunk. Every neighborhood would benefit greatly by having their own little park for parents to walk their children to.

Senator Smith continued that many drivers are using Sistrunk for a thoroughfare and they need to be slowed down to some shopping destinations. He said there should be a place to grab a sandwich, make copies and so forth in one location. The City could promote developing some industries around there. He thought Sistrunk is a jewel and the Committee should look 10 years down the road to see what they can do as a City and community to promote businesses there.

Mr. Thompson remarked that one of the primary roles of government is to provide for life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, and a sense of security and safety. Community policing and foot patrols are important to create a perceived and real sense of security. Mr. Thompson added that he is not criticizing the Police Department, but the situation is a reflection of the staffing levels.

Mr. Thompson reiterated what Ms. Phillips had said that a resident can go to the HOA and the neighborhood churches, but the best way to reach the people is to go out on the street, door-to-door. If the police do that, they get to know the community.

Chair Smith called an end to the Public Comments and they returned to the agenda.

[Ms. Giles-Smith left the meeting.]

- **RFP Evaluation Committee (continued)**

Chair Smith nominated Ms. Buchan for membership on the Evaluation/Selection Committee. Ms. Buchan declined.

Motion by Ms. Buchan, seconded by Mr. Lindblade, to nominate Ms. Giles-Smith, Chair Smith, Mr. Ladd, Vice Chair Eichelbaum and Mr. Vitale for the Evaluation/Selection Committee.

Ms. Katz asked to put her name on the list also.

There was a discussion on how they wanted to proceed with the selection process.

Motion by Mr. Lindblade to table the motion to the next meeting.

Mr. Lindblade withdrew his second on the **motion** by Ms. Buchan. The **motion** then died for lack of second.

Chair Smith announced they would wait until the next meeting to select the representatives to the Evaluation/Selection Committee, so that everyone has time to review their schedules. Ms. Vezina commented that the Evaluation/Selection Committee will meet after October 20, 2010, but the date has not been established. The City prefers to pick the meeting date, as they can determine the meeting logistics as far as rooms available and so forth.

New Business

- **Visioning in District III (not addressed)**

Other Matters of Interest

- **Select District and confirm date of next meeting**

There was discussion on when to have the next Visioning Committee meeting. Chair Smith reported he had inquired in District 4 to see if they want the Committee to meet there for the next meeting and where that would be. If they meet on October 12, their only business would be to meet with the public. The Committee consensus was to not have a meeting just to bring in the public, but to wait until there is more business to discuss.

Mr. Sieger repeated that they cannot go through the proposals before they go to the Evaluation/Selection Committee.

Chair Smith confirmed that they decided by consensus that they want all 11 members to serve on the Evaluation/Selection Committee, but if they cannot make that happen, they will choose five.

The Committee agreed to have Chair Smith call the next meeting after October 20, 2010.

Chair Smith announced the police were on their way to accompany them on a social walk around Sistrunk, and asked if there was a need for a Communications to the Commission for the Evaluation/Selection Committee.

- **Communication to the City Commission**

Motion made by Mr. Sieger and seconded by Ms. Buchan that the full membership of the Visioning Committee serve on the visioning consultant RFP evaluation committee. The **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Vezina remarked that would come before the City Commission on September 21, 2010.

Motion by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Ms. Buchan, to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by J. Rubin, Prototype, Inc.]