

SUMMARY MINUTES

REGULAR COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 4, 2007

A regular meeting of the Chairman and Members of the Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee (CRAAC) was held in the North Miami CRA Offices beginning at 6:07 p.m.

(Phonetic spelling of each speaker's name may be used throughout the minutes unless correct spelling is known.)

ROLL CALL

	<u>Absent/ Present</u>	<u>Cumulative From 2/9/2006</u>	
	(P)	(A) *	
Blanca Cobo	P	9	2
Inez Couch	P	8	2
Judy Feldman	P	9	2
Dr. Smith Joseph	P	8	1
Michael McDearmaid	P	11	0
Jean Monestime (left 8:20 pm)	P	6	0
Clark Reynolds	P	10	1
Bill Valentine	A	7	3
Duke Sorey	P	8	1

* Absences from special or rescheduled meetings are not counted

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes to the December meeting were not in final form and will be distributed prior to the next meeting.

INTRODUCTION

After Chair Clark Reynolds brought the meeting to order, the Executive Director asked members of the audience to introduce themselves: Michael Fisher, Action Transmission; Cynthia Ordaz,

Vessel Design; Mabel Romanik; Antonio Padim; Dan Lima, City of North Miami; Roberta Segal and Jack Youches, property owners; Beverly Hilton, The Challenger; Amelia Javier, Atlantic Accounting. (Note: there were other people whose names were not understood)

ITEMS FOR REVIEW AND/OR DISCUSSION

ITEM III - Update regarding recommendations for the award of CRA Commercial Rehabilitation and Beautification Grants

The Executive Director provided a brief review of the CRA's Commercial Grants program. The CRA is funding Commercial Rehabilitation Grants of up to \$80,000, with the building owner providing matching funds, and a Commercial Beautification Grants of up to \$15,000 to business owner or property owner, without the matching requirement. The CRA received 22 applications during the application period from October 16 to November 10, 2006, and made recommendations based on two meetings of the Grant Review Committee. The CRA then sent a letter out to all applicants with the recommendations and invited them to attend this meeting. Final recommendations will be made to the CRA Board at their next meeting.

The Executive Director said that in the packet there is a table of applicants and their status, including three applicants that need to provide additional information. Atlantic Accounting had brought some final estimates and the Executive Director handed those out to the CRAAC members.

As of December 21, 2006, the Grant Review Committee had recommended four of five Commercial Rehabilitation grants for a total of \$320,000, and 15 of 17 Beautification Grants for just over \$160,000. The Executive Director stated that at this time he would like to recommend up to \$15,000 for Atlantic Accounting and Mabel Romanik (who had also provided her estimates at the meeting), in addition to those in the current table.

DISCUSSION

Chair Reynolds had questions on the totals, and the Executive Director introduced Dan Lima, the Economic Development Specialist from the City of North Miami who has been working on this program for the CRA. Mr. Lima gave a detailed overview that referred to the table provided in the agenda packet. He added that prior to agreements being drawn up a detailed scope of work will be created that would clarify some of the complex estimates being presented.

Clark Reynolds asked about how much money would be left in the program if all these applications are approved. If the additional grants are accepted, that would mean \$190,000 of a total of \$315,000 available for the fiscal year for the Beautification Grants leaving a balance of \$125,000. For the Rehabilitation Grants, we are proposing \$320,000 out of a total budget of \$480,000, with a balance of \$160,000. The Executive Director said that therefore he expects to have another round of grants later this year.

Mr. Monestime then asked about the three grants that were not recommended. The Executive Director said that there were three applicants that were selected by the Review Committee, but that did not provide estimates. As was discussed earlier, two of those applicants have come forward with estimates and we are still awaiting the estimate from Arefa Mansuri. If we do not receive the estimates prior to the CRA Board meeting, this recommendation will be taken off the list.

The Valavanis application was rejected as it was for a Church property which is not eligible according to program guidelines. The other application that did not get the Review Committee's recommendation is The Challenger. The Executive Director explained that the grants are being made specifically to improve the primary commercial corridors, and for that reason the Review Committee felt that the Challenger application did not meet the intent of the program. Dr. Joseph asked about the appeals process, and the Executive Director said that he invited the applicant to the meeting and she is present. The CRAAC can make a recommendation to the Board that differs from the Review Committee.

The Chair then called on Beverly Hilton to talk about her application for The Challenger. Ms. Hilton said her nonprofit is in a commercial building on a street that gets a lot of traffic, even though it is not considered one of the main corridors. The Executive Director suggested to Ms. Hilton that she apply for the CDBG grant which may be more appropriate for this kind of effort. She replied that CDBG is not for beautification, but for programming. Dan Lima stated that although the CDBG grant is for programming, this would free up money so that it could be spent on something else, such as the requested beautification. Judy Feldman, who was on the Review Committee, reiterated that the guidelines specifically stated which corridors were being targeted, and this building is not in those corridors.

Jean Monestime said that as the property is in the CRA area, and she cannot apply for any residential grants, why was it rejected? The Executive Director said that there are other projects that met the desired goals, especially visibility, better than that one. Vice-Chair Michael McDermid, another member of the Review Committee, felt that this applicant is actually quite visible as various groups from outside the City work with Ms. Hilton, such as Barry University and Miami-Dade County.

Duke Sorey asked for details on the property and Dan Lima said that it's an after-school program located across the street from the Greek Church. It is a one story building with a large parking lot. Mr. Sorey asked for more details, and Ms. Hilton said she is requesting funds to resurface the parking lot and add new lampposts for better security. Her hours of operation are from 4 pm to 8 pm. Mr. Sorey stated that he disagreed with the policy of restricting grantees to the main corridors – if they want to improve their properties and they are within the CRA boundaries, then the CRA should support it. Judy Feldman replied that to get the most bang for the buck, we should go for the highest visibility areas, and the applicants that made it are located right on the various entrances to the City, creating a great impact. Inez Couch added that the CRA will be setting precedent by funding something like this, when it clearly falls outside the adopted guidelines of the project – it makes recommendations too subjective. Duke Sorey asked when would money be made available for these kinds of projects. The Executive Director said that in future budgets we can address these and other types of programs, such as neighborhood rehabilitation. Blanca Cobo

suggested that there are other programs she could apply for but Ms. Hilton disagreed. Duke Sorey asked if people can continue to apply for this program throughout the year, and the Executive Director responded that there would be specific windows of opportunity, and he expected another round later this year.

MOTION

Made by Jean Monestime, seconded by Duke Sorey

A motion was made to add The Challenger to the list of recommended grant applicants for up to \$14,830.

Approved 7 to 1 (Judy Feldman opposed).

At this point, the Executive Director asked about the estimate from another project, and noted that Arefa Mansuri was present and has provided some new estimates for her application. It was for new signage, pressure cleaning, painting, replacement of a lamp post and improvements to the stucco, for a total of \$19,000; the Executive Director explained that the CRA can provide up to \$15,000. The store is located across the street from Publix, next to Federal Discount.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Inez Couch

A motion was made to add Arefa Mansuri to the list of recommended grant applicants for up to \$15,000.

Approved 8 to 0

The CRA Attorney, Steven Zelkowitz, reminded the Chair that there has not been a motion made to approve the list of recommendations from the Review Committee, and that this motion be separate from the motions to recommend additional applicants.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Duke Sorey

Motion made to move to the CRA Board the Executive Director's recommended grant awards based on the Grant Review Committee's findings.

Approved 7 to 0 (Chair Clark recusing himself)

Chair Clark noted that he attended the grant applicant meeting and was very impressed by what he saw. He feels that, collectively, these improvements are going to make a significant impact on the City. Inez Couch asked whether Mr. Lima would have sole discretion in approving paint colors, etc. Dan Lima explained that all applicants would still have to follow City procedures and permit requirements.

Jean Monestime wanted to make sure that there are safeguards to keep people from taking the money, improving the property, then selling it. Dan Lima explained that both programs will create a lien on the property and you would not be able to sell it for three without repaying the grant. The CRA Attorney added that each grantee will be entering into a formal, legal agreement with the CRA, outlining the terms and conditions for giving the grant, and providing safeguards such as repayment obligations if they sell their property. Also, there will be prohibitions from re-applying for additional grants.

Chair Reynolds asked Dan Lima to explain the general process. Mr. Lima said that the CRA's documentation requirements will not be as onerous as the City's program as it does not need to follow various federal requirements. The first step is that each grantee must present a clear scope of work which will then be incorporated into the agreement that they must enter into. As the work is being completed, CRA staff will do inspections and then make the appropriate payments.

The CRA Attorney then asked Clark Reynolds to make clear for the record, what is the property he is recusing himself for. Chair Reynolds stated that it is 915 NE 125th Street, a 3-story office building next to a strip center. There is a big blank wall facing east and the idea is to light it with constantly changing LED lighting. The Executive Director wanted to thank the selection committee and the applicants for participating in the process. He felt the program is getting off to a flying start. Nearly all applicants made it and there will be enough money left over for another round in the Spring. Judy Feldman felt that the process was really inspiring and it will make a huge difference for the City.

Item IV - Update regarding the negotiation of a contract with Sanson, Kline Jacomino & Company for Independent Auditing Services

The Executive Director said he and others met with representatives from Sanson, Kline on December 21. He felt that negotiations were going well, and that the CRA had received the letter of engagement from them (in the agenda packet). He expected a contract to be ready for them to sign in the following week, ready to go to the CRA Board on January 23.

Inez Couch asked about the large difference between the quote by Sanson, Kline and the other respondents to the RFP. The Executive Director said that at the last meeting with the auditor they discussed this thoroughly, and the Sanson, Kline representative said they are committed to doing the work at that price they quoted and feel they will continue with this price into the next year (although that would be a different contract). They are offering the reduced cost to continue to build their client base in this field. Mr. McDermid asked for a list of the clients from the Sanson, Kline, and CRA Staff promised to forward this to Committee members. Dr. Smith Joseph asked if they were aware of each others bids when they made their initial proposals, and the Executive Director explained that the bids were sealed but once they were all opened, the documents were made public.

Item V - Update regarding the negotiation of a contract with The Housing Partnership of North Miami for Homebuyer Training, Credit Pre-Qualification and Purchase Assistance Services

The Executive Director explained that the process is similar to the Sanson, Kline selection, where the CRA took a recommendation for the Housing Partnership to the CRA Board on December 12, 2006 and they passed the resolution allowing the Executive Director to negotiate the contract with them. A meeting was held with members of the Housing Partnership, and the CRA

has asked for some more information. The CRA Attorney is working on the agreement and it should be ready to be signed by the next CRA Board meeting.

Jean Monestime asked if all the companies Florida in the Housing Partnership are Florida corporations. The Executive Director said he believes so, but that it is not required, they just need to be allowed to business in Florida. The CRA Attorney added that the entity chosen is going to be a Florida general partnership entered into by the 3 organizations and they have provided a copy of the partnership agreement to be reviewed. This is a joint venture to do business with the CRA, and this agreement needs to be signed before entering into an agreement with the CRA.

Item VI - Discussion regarding the implementation of Affordable Housing Strategies and recommendations for the distribution of the CRA's FY 2006-07 funding allocations for Affordable Housing Strategies: Homebuyer Subsidies (\$200,000), Developer/Owner Incentives (\$500,000) and Single Family Home Rehabilitation (\$602,950)

At the December CRAAC meeting, the Executive Director said he would come back to them and the CRA Board with recommendations on how to use the \$1.3 million budget to implement the affordable housing goals of the CRA. In the agenda packet, he laid out various possible strategies to meet those goals, based on his discussions with building owners, developers, City staff (including the housing administrator), and North Miami Housing (NMH). The Executive Director then asked for feedback from the CRAAC members on alternative implementation processes to pursue different affordable housing goals. He explained that each page contained one strategy with up to three alternatives they can choose from and recommend to the CRA Board.

PAGE 1 – HOMEBUYER SUBSIDIES (\$200,000)

The first strategy is for Homebuyer Subsidies *outside* the Pioneer Gardens project. There are three alternatives: A) First come, first served: once a designated application period ends, qualified recipients will receive funds in the order they applied; B) Lottery: once the application period ends, qualified recipients would be selected by a random lottery; C) Venice Park project: leverage City's funding for a condo conversion project (see details in memo).

DISCUSSION

Inez Couch said that the Venice Park project is in a pretty good location, with plenty of parking, easy access to transportation and across the street from parks. The Executive Director said that he has spent a lot of time with investors that are making conversions, but this is being brought to their attention because it allows the CRA to leverage its investment with money the City has already committed to the project. Blanca Cobo asked if the units have already been upgraded and the Executive Director said that some have and others haven't been rehabilitated, and this is why there are different prices for similar units. Buyers can purchase as is, or purchase a rehabilitated unit. The Executive Director suggested that if we decide to pursue this, the CRA would limit its funding to units that have been *fully* rehabilitated, possibly including new appliances and A/C units, and that meet US HUD Housing Quality Standards.

Michael McDearmaid said that it makes sense to piggyback on something the City is already working on, and asked if the City would be doing the rehabilitation. The Executive Director said

that NMH would be supervising the rehabilitation of those units that the CRA would be funding, and would receive the agreed upon fee. This would be true for alternatives A, B, or C.

Clark Reynolds said that he would have a reservation about funding units in a property that is entirely subsidized and would rather spread out the subsidies from the CRA. The Executive Director explained that the CRA would only be subsidizing a maximum of 5 of the 60 units, and the City would potentially subsidize an additional 10 units. Therefore, most units would not be subsidized by either. Jean Monestime wanted to understand why the Executive Director was recommending this project over all the others going on the City, and he reiterated that it was an opportunity to leverage funds and was recommended by Tom Calderon and Maxine Calloway from the City's Community Planning Department.

Responding to concerns from Inez Couch, the Executive Director reiterated that the CRA would have a higher required standard of rehabilitation for the units they subsidize. Inez Couch asked about the Oaks development, and suggested the CRA get involved in that as they seem affordable and are new. The Executive Director said he has met with those developers and may consider working with them in the future, but the units are not available now, while Venice Park is. Judy Feldman said there are some things that bother her. First she felt that the CRA should concentrate its affordable housing efforts on the central or western part of the City. Secondly, she was not comfortable funding 5 units at a higher standard if the other units were not of the same quality. The Executive Director advised that the CRA's requirements and standards would be made clear to the owners of the property before any commitment of CRA funds.

Vice-chair McDermid mentioned that he knows of some an apartment complex on NE 128th Street and 8th Avenue, where 40 units have been reduced to \$100,000 and are sitting empty. When asked why they are empty if the price is so good, he responded that he wasn't sure, but it could be a lack of amenities or assigned parking. The Executive Director asked if this complex is at the level the CRA wants to support. Not all properties are appropriate for conversion. The Executive Director offered to take CRAAC members on a tour of the various properties he has seen so that they can get a sense of what is out there.

Jean Monestime said that he would rather have the homebuyer apply and if they qualify, give them money and let them go where ever they want, rather than providing money for specific projects. It looks to him like it would become a bureaucratic problem to earmark the money.

Judy Feldman felt that should be a specific amount to the buyer, and Clark Reynolds added the properties they purchase should meet certain standards. Clark Reynolds said people should consider the lottery because maybe some people will have an inside track on this and get in early, and the lottery would solve this problem. Jean Monestime said he would like to see how other CRA's distribute their funds, so that our CRA does not have to reinvent the wheel. He also agreed that the lottery is the best alternative.

Blanca Cobo concurred that CRA subsidies should be given to a person who can then use the money to purchase where they like. When asked about how this would work, the CRA Director said that the firm the CRA hires will pre-qualify a certain number of homebuyers, and a lottery would be used to select which *qualified* buyers would get the subsidy. In response to a question

by Dr. Joseph, the Executive Director explained that the firm the CRA hires will be required to market the opportunity, hold meetings explaining the process, and advertise in order to attract a significant number of applicants.

MOTION

Made by Duke Sorey, seconded by Dr. Smith Joseph

A motion was made to recommend to the CRA Board “Alternative B” for the implementation of the Homebuyer Subsidies housing strategy.

Approved 8 to 0

PAGE 2 – DEVELOPER/OWNER INCENTIVES STRATEGY (\$500,000)

The Executive Director described the alternatives for the Developer/Owner Incentives strategy, where alternatives A and B are for homebuyers, and C is more oriented for rental opportunities.

Michael McDermid said that when the CRA was set up, the discussions were always about homeownership, so that people would have a stake in the community. Jean Monestime added that rental properties encourage blight, and the CRA’s job is in eliminating it. For discussion purposes, Inez Couch said that there are plenty of people out there that may not be in the position to buy a home but can still contribute to the City. Perhaps the CRA can provide them *better* housing that they can rent. Rentals do not have to be blighted, it’s slum landlords that create the problem. She wanted the Committee to consider creating rental housing in good areas, and keep rents low allowing the renters to save money to eventually buy.

Duke Sorey asked about those housing applicants who don’t qualify to purchase a unit – can we supply them with some rental housing opportunities? He felt that the Committee should look at different avenues to help those who need the most help. Judy Feldman added that limiting options to homeownership means they would be discriminating against renters. Not everyone can afford to buy. Mr. McDermid said he’s not disagreeing, but he did not think this was in the mission statement for the creating for the CRA. He asked if it were possible to split the money between the alternatives offered on Page 2.

The Executive Director wanted to make two points. First, he wanted to make it clear that part of the CRA’s affordable housing goal of providing up to 6,000 affordable units includes rental housing in terms of both the preservation of existing units and the construction of new units. Secondly, he said that in the effort to allocate the \$500,000, and it is possible that the CRAAC may want to recommend splitting the funding among the options.

Mr. Monestime wanted to make it clear that he is not trying to discriminate against renters, but it should not be the CRA’s goal. He feels it is not a good social-economic theory to base their decisions on, when you can find many examples of government sponsored rental housing that either went bad or was eventually converted to condos depending on changing economic conditions. He feels strongly that only homeownership should be the CRA’s goal.

Blanca Cobo then asked for a clarification of Alternative C – are you talking about improving the property or subsidizing the renters? The Executive Director answered that it is up to the property

owner to make the improvements with subsidies provided by the CRA, in return for keeping a certain number of units available for lower income tenants at reduced rents for at least five years. They must also abide by federal housing standards, which in an unregulated housing market owners don't have to worry about. For example, landlords look the other way with overcrowding and can charge exorbitant rents for substandard housing. The idea is to provide decent, safe, affordable housing to renters.

Dr. Joseph said that if the primary objective is homeownership, we would be opening a can of worms by providing subsidies for renters. He thinks the CRA should concentrate all its energies into homes for sale in order to be more efficient in providing this product. Chair Reynolds said he understands the issues and that rentals are a good idea for the future, but he felt the CRA should stick to one thing before trying to do so much. As the CRA grows it can offer more options such as rentals, but for now, he felt it should stick to promoting homeownership.

The Executive Director then clarified the difference between alternatives A and B: A gives money to *buyers* of condominium units in specific conversion projects. Alternative B provides assistance to owners/developers to do the rehabilitation, and then they would agree to price a certain number of units affordably and up to our quality standards. In this alternative, developer/owners would be competing for funds, and those that require the lowest profit margins or the lowest per unit rehabilitation cost would receive the money.

Mr. McDearmaid made a the point that he has found that some rental apartment buildings that had received CRA money in Broward and Miami-Dade County are now being converted to condominiums as the market changes, and the renters are now out.

Inez continued the discussion by reminding members that as the CRA is rehabilitating homes or helping to convert apartments, some people will be displaced. The Executive Director suggested that Alternative C that would provide temporary housing for these transitional situations. Jean Monestime restated his position that the CRA should be about providing money to fix homes or subsidize new for sale housing, not rental properties. Guylene Berry, the CRA's Community Outreach Advisor, who has a twice-weekly radio show for Creole speakers, said that many callers to her program complain that they are being forced out of their rental apartments because they cannot afford to purchase the units that are being converted.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Jean Monestime

A motion was made to recommend to the CRA Board "Alternative A" for the implementation of the Developer/Owner Incentives housing strategy.

Approved 5 to 3 (Judy Feldman, Inez Couch, and Duke Sorey oppose)

PAGE 3 – SINGLE FAMILY HOME REHABILITATION (\$602,950)

The Executive Director explained that the essential difference among the three alternatives is in the selection process, with Alternative A being first come, first served, Alternative B using a lottery system, and Alternative C is a model that would piggyback on the City's existing housing

rehab waiting list within the boundaries of the CRA, supplemented by those the CRA adds to the list by its own efforts.

MOTION

Made by Judy Feldman, seconded by Inez Couch

A motion was made to recommend to the CRA Board “Alternative C” for the Single Family Home Rehabilitation strategy.

This motion was later tabled

DISCUSSION

Chair Reynolds asked for clarification on what the City’s list was comprised of, and the Executive Director responded that the City has a list of applicants for its SHIP and HOME rehabilitation funds, but they have had more demand than available funds.

Amendment to MOTION

Made by Judy Feldman, seconded by Duke Sorey

An amendment to the motion was made to use the lottery for the selection process.

This amendment was approved unanimously, but the motion was later tabled

DISCUSSION

Michael McDearmaid wanted to know how does need fit in to the criteria for selecting who on the City’s waiting list will receive the CRA funding? Duke Sorey said that for rehabilitation it should go by need, not lottery. Others suggested that by being on the list, need is already established. But Mr. Sorey suggested that there are some homes that need more help than others, and that a lottery would not take this into account. He added that with SHIP funds, they look at those that really need it, in terms of income or whether someone is on a fixed income or elderly, not just if they meet the criteria. Clark Reynolds and Inez Couch were concerned that determining need is too subjective. Jean Monestime said that they already use needs criteria for SHIP programs, and Duke Sorey suggested the motion be tabled in order to get more information on how this is done.

MOTION

Made by Judy Feldman, seconded by Duke Sorey

A motion was made to table the discussion relative to the alternative implementation processes for the Single Family Home Rehabilitation strategy to the next meeting of the CRAAC.

Approved 8 to 0

PAGE 4 – CRA PURCHASE OF EXISTING HOUSING UNITS FOR PRESERVATION AS RENTAL UNITS OR AS HOMEOWNERSHIP UNITS

The Executive Director solicited the support of the Committee for going after this strategy based on what investors and owners have told him over the past couple months. The concept is to create a formal process to solicit expressions of interest from owners/investors for the sale, lease/purchase or joint development of their properties. This process will not limit the CRA from

pursuing other opportunities that may be in the best interest of the CRA. This is a strategy the CRA is beginning to implement with the purchase of the duplex next to the Pioneer Gardens.

Clark Reynolds felt that this strategy answers in part of the question Inez Couch had brought up, as to how to house people who are temporarily displaced. Another example of the opportunities the CRA is already pursuing is the Bel House complex.

Jean Monestime stated that he strongly believes there is no need to purchase properties for rental purposes. The reason why the central part of the City has a lot more crime is because there is a concentration of rental apartments. If they own the properties they do a better job at watching out and keeping them up. Inez agrees but said this is true because that is a *corridor* of poorly maintained rental properties. She doesn't believe rentals are a blight per se, and she doesn't think the CRA is suggesting creating another corridor of rentals. If you mix it up, she doesn't see it as a problem. Mr. McDearmaid agreed that the CRA needs some apartment buildings to provide temporary housing and to provide housing options. Mr. Monestime suggested that this will force the CRA to create another bureaucracy to manage these units.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Inez Couch

A motion was made to support the Executive Director's recommendation regarding the CRA's purchase of existing housing units for preservation as rental units or as homeownership units.

Approved 7 to 1 (Jean Monestime opposed)

DISCUSSION

Mr. McDearmaid said that if the CRA goes into a project it changes the dynamics of neighborhoods, so you won't create permanent rentals but will become part of a process of change. Jean Monestime said that what he sees happening is that government is asking that a certain percentage of built units be affordable for purchase, not the whole buildings or for rentals. Then the City doesn't have to administer this. Duke Sorey stated that it's simple – we need rentals for transitional housing. He provided the example of when he was in the army, they always provided transitional housing when they were moving people in or out of an area.

The Executive Director thanked everyone for the excellent discussion and support for the CRA's affordable housing strategies.

Item VII - Discussion regarding the potential acquisition and rehabilitation of the Bel House Apartments containing 65 units located at NE 139th Street and NE 6th Avenue by the CRA to be preserved as affordable rental apartment units

The Executive Director asked CRAAC members to look to the packet for detailed information on the apartment complex. There is a unique opportunity to purchase a sizable number of units without worrying about relocating residents because there is a vacant building next door which is part of the complex. There are 45 units on the east side that are vacant due to problems with the roof-

ing. Another important consideration is that the current owners are working with the CRA to make this happen. So, the Executive Director is recommending that the CRA enter into negotiations with the owners to determine the terms and conditions that can make this happen. Once the agreement is created, the Executive Director would come back to the CRAAC and the CRA Board to seek approval for the agreement.

Inez Couch asked if we would need to wait until the Comprehensive Plan changes have been approved to rebuild the damaged building. The Executive Director explained that that discussion had been related to a different building and that they would rehabilitate the Bel House apartments under the current plan and codes.

The Executive Director noted that the CRA can't purchase until the CRA can issue debt, and that the lease/purchase option would be a financing mechanism to allow the CRA to control it now and purchase in the future.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Blanca Cobo

A motion was adopted in support of entering negotiations to purchase the Bel House Apartments to be preserved as affordable rental apartments.

Approved 7 to 1 (Jean Monestime opposed)

NOTE: Jean Monestime had to leave the meeting (8:20 pm), but a quorum was maintained

Item VIII - Discussion regarding the status of a feasibility review regarding the potential acquisition and redevelopment of the Miami Way Theater building located at 12615 West Dixie Highway consistent with the CRA Redevelopment Plan

The Executive Director provided an additional handout that came in the mail recently from the North Miami Historical Society in support of the CRA's purchase of the Theater. He then provided some background on the issue by saying that in September the CRAAC recommended that a feasibility study be done on the theatre, and the memorandum in the agenda packet provides an update on what was done. This includes a significant amount of research, a meeting of stakeholders and an additional visit to the theater. From this work and the opinions of the stakeholders, he feels there is merit in preserving the Miami Way theater or making it a part of something else. He explained that at this time he doesn't know the ultimate reuse will be, but he doesn't want to lose this opportunity. So he recommends pursuing discussions with the owner, and then come back to the CRAAC and CRA Board with any potential agreements.

DISCUSSION

Michael McDearmaid asked who the stakeholders were, and the Executive Director said they included Penny Valentine, Clark Reynolds, Dan Lima, and Andrea Ramos from the City's Parks Department. Mr. McDearmaid felt that this is a perfect opportunity for the City and CRA to work together. He compared this to the Lyric Theater in Miami and hopes the CRA can help bring art-

ists together to create something really unique. This is the kind of partnership where the CRA can truly make a difference.

Clark Reynolds said that it's not just the building that should be considered, but all the properties around there - the whole block is blighted and occupies an important location. He's not sure that it can be used as a theater, but it may be. He strongly supports it. Inez Couch added that the City needs community space, and that they shouldn't have to go to Miami Shores anytime adequate meeting space is needed.

Also, the Executive Director passed out copies of the feasibility study done for a theater in Wichita, Kansas, as an example of what the CRA would try to procure.

MOTION

Made by Duke Sorey, seconded by Michael McDearmaid

A motion was adopted in support of the Executive Director's recommendation that the CRA seek to negotiate the terms for the acquisition of the Miami Way Theater and adjacent building.

Approved 7 to 0

OLD NEW BUSINESS

A. CRA Advisory Committee Membership Appointments/Re-Appointments by the CRA Board as of November 28, 2006, Annual Election of the Chair and Vice Chair, Applications, Disclosures Forms and Background Checks

The Executive Director stated that there are nine members serving with terms expiring in September 2007 or 2008, but that there are still three vacancies. He asked CRAAC members talk to the Board members that appointed them and perhaps suggest they select members with backgrounds that could add to the expertise on the Committee, such as architecture or construction.

B. Update regarding the Draft Timeline for the new City Comprehensive Plan

The Executive Director passed out a handout that was received earlier that day with a revised timeline for the Comprehensive Plan process. He also noted a very important meeting is being held on February 20, 2007, that the CRA will help promote, and encouraged the participation of Committee members as well. Final adoption of the Plan is scheduled for mid-November; things have therefore been accelerated considerably.

C. Update regarding the final negotiations to obtain a Bank Line of Credit in an amount up to \$10,758,300 from Regions Bank

The Executive Director noted that on December 19 Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners granted approval for the CRA to enter into an agreement with Regions Bank, and the CRA is under way with the final agreement on the LOC (in Packet), and expects to bring the final agreement to the board at the next meeting on January 23.

Chair Reynolds asked about when they should have elections, and the Executive Director said it officially should take place in September, but can occur anytime. The Chair and others suggested it be held at the next meeting, and that the item be brought up early when people are still fresh.

Inez Couch and Michael McDearmaid brought up the issue of which day CRAAC meeting should be held to avoid conflicts with other meetings. They suggested the first Monday of every month, and Chair Reynolds suggested making the decision promptly. The Executive Director stated he simply wants the meeting to be on the first week of the month so that it doesn't conflict with the CRA Board meetings.

MOTION

Made by Michael McDearmaid, seconded by Judy Feldman

A motion to change the meeting date for the CRAAC to the first Monday of the every month.

Approved 6 to 1 (Duke Sorey opposed)

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.