

**BROOKSVILLE VISION FOUNDATION (BVF)
STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING**

VISION PLANNING MEETING

**Brooksville City Council Chambers
201 Howell Avenue
Brooksville, FL 34601**

MINUTES

September 12, 2013

4:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members and Guests

Members and guests present:

Bill Geiger, Community Development Director
Steve Gouldman, City Planner
Dale Ravencraft, GPI Southeast/Civil Tech Engineering
Alan Garman, GPI Southeast/Civil Tech Engineering
Matt Lowman, Lowman Law
Don Lacey, Coastal Engineering Associates, Inc.
Robert Buckner, BVF Treasurer/Buckner & Associates

Introduction of Vision Process/Review draft Vision

Presenters: Cliff Manuel
Steve Gouldman

In the absence of BVF Chairman, Cliff Manuel, Steve Gouldman, City Planner, began the meeting by stating that State law requires that every municipality and County have a Comprehensive Plan. Contained in that Comprehensive Plan are elements, or chapters, such as housing, land use, transportation, recreation, etc. Those elements are to guide how a City develops. The City will be updating, modifying or changing the Comprehensive Plan in the near future through an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). Most Comprehensive Plans include a Vision, or goal. From that Vision flows all the policies and strategies. The addition of a Vision may create the necessity for modification to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Gouldman advised that the City of Brooksville's Comprehensive Plan does not include a Vision, adding that the "Vision Process" started through the Brooksville Vision Foundation over two years earlier. After a few meetings of brainstorming and identifying things that the BVF would like to see included, he developed a draft Vision statement. The Vision addresses the same elements as the Comprehensive Plan and will be included as the first pages. From that Vision, everything flows.

City Planner Gouldman asked for input of what they would like to see added or modified in the draft Vision proposed. He added that the BVF had put forth many ideas, including a desire for a walkable community, open spaces, maintaining the City's historic character, providing multiple transportation options, sidewalks, bikeways, promoting the rail lines, encouraging high quality housing, focusing on housing affordability, advancing cultural activities, supporting ethnic diversity, promoting education, and preserving and further enhancing urban environmental settings.

In response to Mr. Buckner's question, City Planner Gouldman confirmed that the Vision, as well as the Comprehensive plan, is meant to be more general in nature and not include specific details. There will then have to be policies created to achieve the Vision. Community Development Director Geiger contributed that the Vision needs to be general but yet be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies that are in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Geiger mentioned an example being the one-way pairs and the possibility of converting them back to a two-way network. Although the Comprehensive Plan is not that specific, it is an idea or project that would be consistent with the goal of fostering commercial activity and improving transportation in the downtown area.

Robert Buckner questioned where the CRA's redevelopment program would be incorporated in the Vision. Mr. Geiger advised that the City has a Community Redevelopment Plan which is very specific and covers only the CRA redevelopment area unlike the Comprehensive Plan which encompasses the entire City. A capital improvement budget is established annually to incrementally implement the Community Redevelopment Plan, Vision document and the Comprehensive Plan. City Planner Gouldman added that the CRA grant is an example of a project that has flowed from the Community Redevelopment Plan. Mr. Buckner asked if the CRA area could be expanded, particularly down the main corridors leading into the City. Don Lacey stated the City could look at expanding it. Bill Geiger agreed, but stated that there are statutory requirements to consider when addressing the expansion of CRA areas. Mr. Gouldman added that a special district could be created that would encompass the corridors or other areas and the City would need to determine what the development guidelines will be for that special district such as certain setbacks, open space, landscaping, etc. It does not have to be in a CRA district.

Discussion ensued regarding the difficulty developers and business owners have in going through permitting or zoning processes through larger governmental entities. Robert Buckner offered his opinion that he was happy when the City went back to having their own building department a number of years ago after a period of having the County do the city permitting. Don Lacey agreed, citing Southern Hills as an example of the City working with developers and builders to ensure that they were given City services.

In response to Mr. Buckner's comment that the City needs to increase its tax base, Community Development Director Geiger informed the BVF Visioning Committee that the City has increased its tax base over the last decade. He offered that adding to the tax base is an on-going effort but this Vision will encourage projects that will bring density into the City, such as housing developments. Mr. Geiger stated that there is

infrastructure in the City which requires repair and replacement as needed. Unfortunately, the cost of those upgrades falls on the current tax base population. If the City can expand and have more property owners paying into the tax base, the amount paid by each individual decreases.

Alan Garman pointed out that there are a lot of vacant commercial lots in the City, which would already have streets and water/sewer infrastructure in place. He felt that although development of property is easier and less expensive in the City than property in the County, there must be a reason developers are not coming here. He felt that there needs to be a level of education, especially to developers, to instruct them about the City's services that are available and the competitive rates that are offered.

Matt Lowman brought up his concern regarding some of the blighted properties and dilapidated buildings around town. Community Development Director Geiger advised that Unsafe Building Abatement Code requirements and property maintenance violations are enforced through the Building Official and the Code Enforcement Division, with procedures involved that include due notice to property owners.

City Planner Gouldman stated that he would like to have one more meeting to go over the Vision map which includes "centers" such as historic mixed use, residential, industrial, and manufacturing among many others.

Approve next meeting date of September 30, 2013

The BVF Vision Planning Committee set the next meeting for September 30, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Community Development Director Geiger pointed out that based on input from this meeting and the September 30th meeting, a revised document will be presented to the Brooksville Vision Foundation for formal approval for submittal to the City for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan. The revised Comprehensive Plan, by means of the EAR process, will go through general community review, then to City Council for approval and eventual submittal to Department of Community Affairs.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.



Jennifer J. Battista
Brooksville Recording Secretary

Minutes approved 10/17/13