Neighborhoods
DEPARTMENT
Serving Jacksonville
Block by Block

Office of the Director

Mayor Peyton's quarterly meeting with CPAC chairs
4:30 p.m., April 4, 2006 – Mayor's Small Conference Room

SUMMARY

Attending:
Mayor John Peyton
Roslyn Phillips, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Kerri Stewart, Executive Director, Jacksonville Housing Commission
Derek Igou, Interim Director, Neighborhoods Department, and Chief, Property Safety Division
Lorrie DeFrank, Chief, Neighborhood Services Division

CPACs:
Urban Core: Chair Dr. Janetta Norman
Greater Arlington/Beaches: Chair Tom Shouvlin
Southeast: Chair Charles McBurney
Southwest: Chair Lee Martin
Northwest: Vice Chair Gadson Burgess
North: Chair Tommy Ruffin

Mayor Peyton opened the meeting by saying he was looking forward to the opportunity to recruit CPAC members at an informational session about CPACs in the Main Library immediately following this meeting. It is part of Neighborhood Services' campaign to solicit CPAC membership and encourage neighborhood organizations to have representation on CPACs. CPAC chairs are invited.

He said he also wanted to spend time talking about the proposed new Department of Housing and Neighborhoods and solicit chairs' ideas about the proposal.

Chairs raised the following discussion items:

Urban Core:
CPACs: Dr. Janetta Norman asked if changes to the CPAC format are planned?
The mayor said no changes are planned to the CPAC network, which he values. He said he would like to attract new talent to CPACs so the chairs "don't feel they are doing it alone."

Greater Arlington/Beaches:
Lone Star Road: What is the status of work?

Update from Public Works: Lone Star Road from Arlington Road to Mill Creek Road is being fully reconstructed as part of the Better Jacksonville Plan. Traffic is on new pavement on the south side between Mill Creek Road and Lillian Road. Lillian is temporarily closed between Arlington and Bert. Although the projected completion date was last November, several change orders have kept the work going. The current estimated completion date is mid-June.

CPAC membership: Chair Tom Shouvlin said he invited the YMCA to join the CPAC and will ask if the Full-Service Schools coordinator would like to join to give regional reports and put neighborhoods in touch with their assets. He said new Superintendent Wise recently attended a CPAC meeting.
The mayor encouraged all CPACs to invite the superintendent to a meeting.

New Ways Grants: Tom asked about the possibility of reinstating funding for the Jacksonville Children's Commission grants that were disbursed through the CPACs.
Acknowledging that the grants were worthy, the mayor explained that tough budget cuts are necessary to maintain the current level of public safety, which is 52% of the city's budget. He expressed optimism that the grants could return in a few years.

Southeast:
Charles McBurney invited the mayor to the Southeast CPAC's bus tour on April 21.

Losco Road proposed development. Losco Road is currently at 107% of capacity and has an "F" level of service.

Julington Creek Marine Development: Fourth revised proposal presently for review. Third revision was opposed formally by Southeast CPAC. Fourth has raised concerns.
The mayor said there are still policy concerns regarding high-rise buildings near water and that efforts are under way to rewrite the entire zoning code.

Charles mentioned concerns about city staff attendance at CPAC meetings.
Action: Neighborhood Services to follow up.

Southwest:
Eyesore on Blanding: Northwest corner of Blanding Boulevard and 103rd Street – vehicles for sale as well as furniture, dogs, vegetables, etc. Old Pic 'n Save building received storm damage in 2004. Remainder of building is vacant and has become an eyesore for the entire community.
Action: Derek Igou said Property Safety will take care of that.

Spaceport at Cecil: What's the possibility of a spaceport being developed at Cecil Field?
The mayor said that is not a priority and is speculative at this point. However, with FCCJ specializing in aerospace technology at its Cecil Center, aviation remains integral at Cecil Field.

Chair Lee Martin thanked the mayor for the four-way stop at Wheat and Firestone roads.

Northwest:
Community center: Vice Chair Gadson Burgess said the district could use another community center and suggested property at Edgewood and Moncrief.
Action: Neighborhood Services to follow up.

North:
Chair Tommy Ruffin thanked the mayor for partially restoring library hours.

Community center: Tommy again brought up the lack of enough community centers in North Jacksonville. He said he spoke to new Parks Director John Culbreth about the concern and suggested that seven acres of land near Highlands Middle School be used for a center. He said he also sent Councilwoman Yates a letter about it.
The mayor said budget circumstances present real challenges for parks programs and that the city relies on City Council to prioritize projects with money it has to use for parks.
Action: Neighborhood Services will follow up on the possibility of using property near Highlands Middle.

9A and Heckscher Drive: Proposed interchange would be a traffic nightmare. When operational, the Mitsui OSK Lines cargo terminal will generate 1,400 tractor trailer trips per day for the area without any significant (if any) changes to existing roadways. Tommy said residents are not opposed to the terminal but are worried about the traffic.
The mayor said Heckscher will be widened substantially from 9A to I-95 as part of the Better Jacksonville Plan. That will be a highly intensive industrial area.
The mayor asked for a status report on that project, including lights, funding and a time chart.
Action: Neighborhood Services will follow up with Public Works/Better Jax.

Update: According to John T Davis, JTA chief engineer, Heckscher Drive, Phase 1 (August Drive to SR-9A) was completed in the 1st Q, 2005. Their schedule for the Heckscher Drive, Phase 2/Zoo Parkway (Drummond Point to August Drive) project is:

Design in progress with completion - 3rd Q, 2006
R/W acquisition in progress with completion - 4th Q, 2006
Construction - State SIS Funding is not available until July 2009. Therefore, construction could begin in the 4th Q, 2009 and be completed 4th Q, 2011. If advance funding could be provided by some agency, or a SIB loan could be obtained to advance fund the project, construction could begin as early as 3rd Q, 2007 and be completed 3rd Q, 2009.

One major issue that could affect the project schedule is a property owner's desire to add an overpass to the roadway to accommodate development of a new port between Broward River and Dunn Creek. They have asked the developer's representative that a decision be made not later than May 1, 2006 on whether or not this overpass is to be added and a commitment for funding of all additional costs. If the overpass is added and funded, additional design would be required and the "early project completion" schedule would shift to provide construction completion in the 2nd - 3rd Q, 2010.

Additional information:

The mayor specifically said 9A to I-95. Where are Drummond Point and August Drive?
August Drive is the entrance to the Cruise Terminal, south off Heckscher Drive. Drummond Point is the land mass on the west side of Broward River. The total project involves widening the 2-lane roadway of Heckscher Drive between I-95 and SR-9A to 4-lanes. Heckscher was already 4-lanes from I-95 to Drummond Point (just west of the bridge over Broward River).

Does the BJP project go all the way to I-95?
Not really. See response above.

Would that requested overpass go to a public port?
Jax Port is working with the property owner to possibly develop the port for future use by Jax Port.

What is that project?
An additional cargo port, possibly another container or a "roll-off" (vehicles) port. Jax Port can provide more detail.

Proposed new department:

Roslyn Phillips told the chairs about the advantages to neighborhoods of combining neighborhood and housing services. She said that although some of the services overlap, Neighborhood Services lacks funding to implement programs to address community needs. Consolidating the departments would free up funding and create a synergy to be responsive to needs of neighborhoods, including implementing Neighborhood Action Plans and Town Center Initiative projects.

Kerri Stewart – who has been appointed director of the Department of Housing and Neighborhoods, pending City Council approval -- said combining the services would provide the best way to leverage state and federal dollars for affordable housing to benefit the entire community. In response to Dr. Norman's concern, she said there will be no change in the way dollars are allocated for affordable housing in the proposed new department. She said current services, including those provided by Property Safety and Neighborhood Services, would be retained and enhanced under the new structure.

Roslyn called it a holistic approach to revitalization in neighborhoods which would include opportunities for economic development.

CPAC picnic:
Lee Martin said the Southwest CPAC would like to host a CPAC picnic this year, possibly in August at Little Talbot Island. He will get with the other chairs to discuss and plan the event.

Closing:
Mayor Peyton again expressed appreciation to the chairs for their service and said succession and recruiting new people are important to the CPAC process.

NEXT MEETING: **Tuesday, Aug. 1**