

MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

September 14, 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Joanne Simone
Antonio V. Arserio (Excused)
Arlene R. Schwartz
Anthony N. Caggiano, Vice Chair
Tommy Ruzzano, Chair

Also Present:

Cale Curtis, Executive Director
Larry Vignola, Assistant Executive Director
David Tolces, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman

The regular meeting of the Margate Community Redevelopment Agency having been properly noticed was called to order at 7:11 p.m., on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, by Chair Tommy Ruzzano. Roll call was taken. There was a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was held in the City Commission Chambers and was also accessible virtually through Zoom technology.

1A. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL - (8/17/2022 Regular)

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the item title, Ms. Schwartz made the following motion, seconded by Vice Chair Caggiano:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

ROLL CALL: Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The motion passed 4-0.

2. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Richard Zucchini, 380 Lakewood Circle East, commented there was a discussion about driveways held at the last City Commission meeting and one commissioner had suggested a driveway study be done and they also expressed concern about a concrete jungle. He questioned why those concerns were not raised when 968 apartments had been discussed previously for the City Center. He suggested having an independent committee to provide additional expertise for the City Center development whereby the board members/commissioners would submit their ideas to the committee, and the committee would provide regular public reports to the Board. He said additional and professional expertise that was knowledgeable about development was needed for a project of its size.

Joey Ruiz, 6217 Margate Boulevard, owner of Way Back When, said he had heard that the City planned to hold a Trunk or Treat event and he asked if the Margate Shopping Center (Ace Plaza) could participate in the event by bringing families there to showcase and promote the businesses. He spoke about the variety and quality of the businesses in the plaza, and he said his store had been mentioned on three major television networks.

Chair Ruzzano congratulated Mr. Ruiz on his television exposure. Ms. Schwartz said she also enjoyed watching his TV clips. She said she supported people walking over to the plaza and she suggested having some signs or traffic diversion on Margate Boulevard to make it work.

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, commented that the event drew thousands of parents and children that stood in line for hours for the event in the City Hall parking lot and, while it was always the MCRA's desire to showcase the businesses, the event presented a huge logistical challenge and safety issue to try to parade the line across the street for the 3-hour period. He recommended that the event be kept located in the City Hall parking lot and to not continue on into the shopping plaza. He invited the businesses of both plazas to set up parking spots for the event in the City Hall parking lot. Mr. Ruiz said that there would be some families that would be walking down Margate Boulevard anyway and they would stop at the plaza stores. He suggested having a police officer on duty to maintain control as they walked over to the plaza.

Ms. Schwartz commented that there were ways to re-route traffic via Seton Drive and City Hall, and she suggested that consideration be given to closing Margate Boulevard for a few hours and detouring traffic. Vice Chair Caggiano said his preference would be to have a police officer for crossing the street rather than closing it down.

Ms. Simone suggested the plaza consider holding its own event on a different date so the focus would be on the businesses and the plaza. Mr. Ruiz commented that the event would require a Temporary Use Permit. His preference would be to combine their event with the city. He said a lot of people would walk across the street.

Chair Ruzzano said he would really like to see it happen and to have the police assist with walking people to the plaza.

David Tolces, Board Attorney, commented that certain considerations would need to be taken into account for a combined event because the event was being held on City property and the plaza was owned by the MCRA, including potential liability because people were being drawn to cross over Margate Boulevard to move from one location to another, as opposed to people deciding on their own to go the plaza.

Chair Ruzzano asked the Board for a consensus. Vice Chair Caggiano said he would love to see it happen and he did not have a problem having a police officer to ensure safe crossing. He suggested the event be held in conjunction with the City as opposed to sponsoring the event. He questioned how parking would be handled and whether the parking lot would be closed. Mr. Ruiz said several business owners he talked to thought it was a fantastic idea, and he would get that information in the following days.

Ms. Schwartz said she was fine with it, and she suggested publicizing it in such a way that indicated that the Ace Plaza was also holding an event rather than saying it was in conjunction with the City or MCRA. Ms. Simone said she did not have a problem with it if the logistics could be worked out, but she said a final decision could not be made that night because they did not have enough information on the plans.

Mr. Curtis said he heard the direction was to try to make it happen and that he would follow up with the City about logistics and report back to them.

3A. **RESOLUTION 690: APPROVING FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 ANNUAL BUDGET AND AUTHORIZING THAT ANY FUNDS REMAINING FROM FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 BUDGET WHICH ARE UNENCUMBERED AND UNEXPENDED AS OF THE LAST DAY OF THE FISCAL YEAR SHALL BE RE-APPROPRIATED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE OR PROJECT OR REALLOCATED PURSUANT TO EXHIBIT "A"**

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the resolution title, Vice Chair Caggiano made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Schwartz for discussion:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

Ms. Schwartz referenced several items in the budget and asked about the variations in the amounts shown over three years, i.e., 2021 Actuals, 2022 Amended, and 2023 Adopted.

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, explained the differences between the proposed budget, amended budget and adopted budget. He said the proposed budget was based on estimated expenditures. There was a brief discussion about when actual numbers for 2022 would be available which he said would be February/March when the annual audited financial report was completed.

She asked about the lack of interest income in the escrow fund account and capital improvement fund and Mr. Curtis explained the bonds had matured. There was a brief conversation about the City Center line items shown in the budget, and Mr. Curtis explained those funds would be reallocated at the Board's direction after the litigation ended.

Ms. Schwartz asked why the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) extended to 2027 when the MCRA was scheduled to sunset in 2026. Mr. Curtis explained that the CIP was a 5-year plan and there had been talk about the MCRA being extended. Ms. Schwartz said extending the MCRA would be irrelevant since it would not be receiving funding from the County and other agencies. Mr. Curtis explained that the MCRA had a different set of objectives and tools to

accomplish them. She suggested the return of a separate Economic Development Board that had five members who were not city commissioners. Mr. Curtis said an Economic Development Board would not have the same authority as a CRA did under state law.

Ms. Simone said she would like to see funds added for a public art program that could include statues in the parks and other common areas, as well finishing the utility box project. Mr. Curtis said the budget could be amended at that time or in the future once an art program had been developed and presented for their consideration and approval. He said his preference would be to gather information and put together a program and to bring it back to them with a budget amendment. Ms. Simone agreed with his recommendation.

Richard Zucchini, 380 Lakewood Circle East, recommended the MCRA have an electronic billboard to advertise activities in the City because it would be a better way to reach the residents than through flyers. He asked about funds that appeared in the budget for the proposed City Center development. Chair Ruzzano explained.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The motion passed 4-0.

3B. **RESOLUTION 691:** APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT FOR LEGAL SERVICES BETWEEN THE MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND WEISS SEROTA HELFMAN COLE AND BIERMAN, P.L

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the resolution title, Vice Chair Caggiano made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Schwartz:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, said the agreement allowed for a one-year extension and he asked the Board if they would consider amending the agreement to extend it through the duration of the MCRA in 2026, noting that the amendment would contain an out-clause. He said the amended agreement would be brought back to them for approval. Vice Chair Caggiano made the following amendment, seconded by Chair Ruzzano:

AMENDMENT: TO EXTEND TO THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Richard Zucchini, 380 Lakewood Circle East, asked whether the developer had filed an appeal. Attorney Tolces said the developer had an additional two weeks in which to file a notice of appeal. Mr. Zucchini asked whether the MCRA had applied to extend the MCRA. Chair Ruzzano said there had been discussions but no official action taken.

**ROLL CALL ON
THE AMENDMENT:** Ms. Simone, No; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, No; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The amendment failed 2-2.

**ROLL CALL ON
ORIGINAL MOTION:** Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The motion passed 4-0.

Attorney Tolces thanked the Board and stated that it was an honor and a privilege to serve as the MCRA's attorney.

3C. **RESOLUTION 692:** APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE BUSINESS LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND THRIFT CITY MARGATE, LLC, LOCATED AT 1041 NORTH STATE ROAD 7, MARGATE, FL

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the resolution title, Ms. Schwartz made the following motion, seconded by Vice Chair Caggiano:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The motion passed 4-0.

4A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: REVISION TO THE MCRA MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2022

Chair Ruzzano read the item title and introduced the item.

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, explained that the October MCRA meeting was scheduled for October 11, 2022, but several Board members were scheduled to attend the Florida Redevelopment Academy that day. He suggested moving the meeting to the week of October 17th. Following a brief discussion about possible dates, Vice Chair Caggiano made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Schwartz:

MOTION: TO MOVE THE OCTOBER MEETING DATE TO OCTOBER 18, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Absent; Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes. The motion passed 4-0.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, provided the following capital project updates:

Atlantic Boulevard Streetscape Improvements--The grass on the medians had been sprayed and several elevated dirt mounds to provide contour were created in the median area across from Palm Lakes golf course. An electrical contractor had been trenching in electrical sleeves for the future installation of electric for up-lighting of the medians.

Serino Park Renovations—It was in the final stages of permit approvals and issuance and the demolition and construction could possibly start by month's end. A ground breaking ceremony was being planned.

Margate Boulevard Improvements—Staff continued to work with the consultants on the project design.

S.W. 6th Street Improvements—Staff had been working with the consultants to finalize their proposals and recommendations for presentation to the Board in October tentatively.

5A. TENANT UPDATES

Ms. Simone asked about the status of the opening of Holy Cow ice cream. Cale Curtis, Executive Director, said the interior renovations were moving along but an opening date could not be confirmed.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the rent status of Wings Your Way. Jim Nardi, Advanced Asset Management, said they owed one month and a small balance from the prior month.

6. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Simone: No comments

Ms. Schwartz: No comments

Vice Chair Caggiano: Commented about the excellent food and interesting artwork at Swirl Wine Bistro noting that it had recently moved from Coconut Creek to Margate. It had also been featured on a recent Margate Delish video. He recommended going on YouTube or Margate's Facebook page to see the many great restaurants in Margate.

Chair Ruzzano: Commented about a few other Margate restaurants that had received positive media exposure, including Spanky's Cheesecake Factory and Shaved Way Subs. He suggested exploring possible available funding that some local banks had for use in conjunction with CRA's for residents and businesses.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Rita Rodi, CRA Coordinator



Tommy Ruzzano, Chair

