

City of Dunnellon
Special City Council Workshop

<https://dunnellon.zoom.us/j/96854936369?pwd=OHd2VGs2SWdlTmxhcDhsUjRjZ2k1Zz09>

Webinar ID: 968 5493 6369

Date: June 09, 2021

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Place: City Hall

20750 River Dr., Dunnellon, FL34431

Dunnellon Special City Council workshop held on June 09, 2021 at Dunnellon City Hall with Social Distancing Modifications.

Anyone attending the workshops may be required to wear a mask/face covering. All attendees may be subject to screening to include a temperature check.

Public Comment

Anyone who wished to provide public comment was able to do so by participating in the City Council meeting in person, or via the Zoom "AUDIO ONLY" platform and/or telephone, by speaking during public comment portions of the meeting when recognized or by submitting written comments, evidence and/or written testimony in advance of the meeting via email to the City Clerk at mroberts@dunnellon.org

Members of the public who would like to participate were encouraged to register in advance by Noon on Wednesday, June 9th.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor White called the meeting to order at approximately 3:34 p.m. and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked if any invitee or volunteer present would like to open with prayer. No one came forward so he called for a moment of silence.

Roll Call

The following members answered present at roll call:

Bill White, Mayor, Seat 1

Louise Kenny, Councilwoman, Seat 2

Anita Williams, Councilwoman, Seat 3

Valerie Hanchar, Vice-Mayor, Seat 4

Jan Cubbage, Councilwoman, Seat 5

Staff Present

Mandy Roberts, City Clerk

Jan Smith, Finance Department

Troy Slattery, Public Works Department

Julie Danowski, Clerk's Department

Michelle Leonard, Assistant City Clerk

Teresa Malmberg, Community Development
Ken Metcalf, AICP, Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A.

Legal Counsel
Absent

Proof of Publication

Ms. Roberts announced for the record the agenda for this meeting was posted on the City's website and City Hall bulletin board on Wednesday, June 02, 2021.

Mayor White covered meeting etiquette with the public and with Council.

Agenda Item Number 1 – Historic District Enhancement Plan Technical Assistance Grant Review With Kenneth Metcalf, AICP, Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A.

- Village Center Concept
- US 41 Redevelopment Strategy
- Historic District Connection to Water Oriented District (River View)
- Historic District Enhancements (streetscape, wayfinding signs, lighting, etc.)

Mr. Metcalf provided the background and history of how this plan began and has progressed. He discussed walkability and keys to pedestrian friendly streets along with photo examples of other towns. He discussed the need to incentivize businesses along U.S. 41 to be open to development along the corridor. He provided progression images of redesigning the corridor, depicting what it could look like after development.

Mr. Metcalf discussed the city owned property options and said the current City Hall would be the best option for a village center. He discussed other physical improvements for the rest of the Historic District. He said FDOT has proven willing to work with municipalities to make street improvements, and he showed various designs for a mixed-use building on the City Hall property. He discussed parking and various options for adding additional parking throughout the area. He talked about the necessity and options for re-locating the boat ramp and trailer parking. Mr. Metcalf also discussed the boardwalk concept located along the Withlacoochee River and why he felt businesses and residences would be in support of this idea.

Mr. Metcalf covered affordable options for streetscape, sidewalks, wayfinding signs, benches, bike racks and lighting. He finished by discussing various funding sources and said this is a conceptual plan funded by a DEO Technical Assistance Grant. He said it is up to the City Council to decide what parts of the plan they would like to focus on and when to begin implementation.

Agenda Item Number 2 – Public Comments

Jeff Bushca, on behalf of Dunnellon Chamber of Commerce, asked where Mr. Metcalf would rank the uniqueness of Dunnellon in comparison to others he has worked with. He feels Dunnellon is very unique and we should play it up. Mr. Metcalf replied it is fairly unique and has a highly under-utilized asset; not every historic community is sitting right next to a river like this.

Juliane Mendonca, 11894 E. Blue Cove Dr., said she is disappointed in the lack of involvement of the residents and businesses and is concerned that Dunnellon is relying on expensive consultants rather than its' citizens to determine the vision of the city. She said she feels the presented plan is an unacceptable vision and inappropriate, as the U.S. 41 corridor should not be the focus. Ms. Mendonca left the meeting before Mr. Metcalf could respond, but he reminded everyone that the plan was funded by a grant and it is important to have a professional plan as developers or any stakeholders need to have something to review for guidance. He respectfully disagreed with comments regarding U.S. 41 and feels it is a critical element as it too is a part of the Historic District.

Brenda D'Arville, 11661 Camp Dr., asked if there was ever a discussion of a community center as opposed to a village center. Mr. Metcalf said it was ultimately up to the City and negotiations with a potential developer could incorporate such a space.

Council Comments:

Councilwoman Cabbage said the U.S. 41 commercial stretch is a necessity for the residents who frequent those businesses for day to day life and it is not practical to wipe it out. She asked why the area along E. Pennsylvania was not addressed during the plan research and said she felt the bingo hall would be a better location for the village center. Mr. Metcalf agreed stating E. Pennsylvania wasn't part of the plan as it is not a part of the Historic District. He also agreed those businesses are necessary, but they are not ideal in a Historic District. Mayor White added there is a definite boundary of where the Historic District is and the boundary does not include the east side of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar thanked Mr. Metcalf for his work on the conceptual plan but stated she is not interested in the concept of changing the City Hall and boat ramp location. She stated she could not see the feasibility of some of the ideas, but could definitely see where pavers, cross walk changes and signage would enhance the area. She said she would like to see investors or developers enhance features we already have.

Councilwoman Kenny said the scale and feasibility is more than we can financially handle. She said there is a lot of public interest in enhancement, but she doesn't think that includes two story buildings. She said the uniqueness of the city and the natural beauty is where we need to focus our attention and she would have liked to see more signage and colors to enhance artistic unity.

Councilwoman Williams agreed that the boat ramp shouldn't be moved and felt Mrs. D'Arville made a good point about the community center.

Mayor White thanked Mr. Metcalf for the work he put into the plan and asked what happens after the finished product is presented and how it works if we don't want to implement the plan in its entirety. He asked if the City would have to apply for a grant or hire someone to assist in writing one. He asked how much extra money would be required to help the City write and file such a grant.

Mr. Metcalf concluded by saying a key feature of the plan is to generate tax capital for the city, which is why redevelopment of U.S. 41 is essential. He explained this is where the tax capital would be generated, and the City could utilize that money to do the other historic development and improvements. He said grants are competitive and the state normally selects about 25% of those submitted and they don't typically fund the same community twice in a row. Mr. Metcalf said his firm is paid by the grants and suggested the City may want to consider hiring a part time employee to write other grants. He said the state doesn't evaluate the current plan, but will be interested in the City's plan when application is made for the next grant.

Scott Kiefer, 9075 N. Cedar Cove Rd., said people are not coming to meetings because they work. He said he is an owner in the Historic District who received no survey as a homeowner; only the renters received it and he felt they could care less. He said he would like the board to consider a rezone of the Historic District and felt the city owned church property might be a good choice for a community center.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:21 p.m.

Attest:

Amanda Roberts, CMC
City Clerk

William P. White, Mayor