

Proceedings of a workshop meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida held on the 19th day of April, 2005, at 5:30 p.m. at the Price Martin Community Center.

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| PRESENT: | Mayor | Karl N. Flagg |
| | Commissioner | Mary Lawson Brown |
| | Commissioner | Hernan Azula |
| | Commissioner | James Norwood, Jr. |
| | Commissioner | George Sanders |

ALSO PRESENT - City Manager Allen R. Bush, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Fire Chief Ken Venables; Planning Director Adam Mengel; Parks Supt. Jeff Norton, Main Street Manager Cathy Butler, Codes Enforcement Officer Jeanne Chandler.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bunky Roberts called the Planning Board meeting to order. Present were Chairman Bunky Roberts, Sue Roskosh, Earl Wallace, Margaret Willis, Carl Stewart, Clem Saccareccia, and Ezekial Johnson; a quorum was established.

DOWNTOWN PALATKA, INC. MEMBERS PRESENT: President Chip Laibl, President, stated besides himself, Michelle VanDoren, Mark Miles, Sam Deputy, Walt Riddle, Linda Myers, David Watt, and Martha Pace are present representing Downtown Palatka.

INVOCATION - Reverend Zion Djatar

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Flagg

Mayor Flagg read the following Call dated April 11, 2005:

TO MESSRS: MARY LAWSON BROWN, HERNAN AZULA,
JAMES NORWOOD AND GEORGE SANDERS:

You are hereby notified that a joint City Commission-Planning Board-Downtown Palatka, Inc. special workshop meeting is called to be held at Price-Martin Community Center, 220 N. 11th Street, Palatka, at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19, 2005.

The purpose of the meeting is to hold a workshop meeting to discuss the Riverfront Master Plan and Downtown Revitalization Strategic Plan, and finalize the Riverfront Master Plan.

/s/ Karl N. Flagg
Karl N. Flagg, MAYOR

We acknowledge receipt of a copy of the foregoing notice of a special meeting the 11th day of April, 2005.

/s/ Mary Lawson Brown
COMMISSIONER

/s/ J. Hernan Azula
COMMISSIONER

/s/ James Norwood, Jr.
COMMISSIONER

/s/ George S. Sanders
COMMISSIONER

Mayor Flagg noted the presence of representation from Representative Joe Pickens' office, also. He welcomed and thanked all participating in the workshop, and asked that all join together to recognize the faithful merchants who have weathered all of downtown's incarnations. There have been many ideas put forth from participants over the years. Today they have a mandate to go forward and come to a consensus. He hopes during this revision process that they remain optimistic and with an eye on their mutual goal. Nothing has been predetermined or cast in stone by the Palatka City Commission. The Riverfront Plan must join with the component of the Downtown Revitalization Plan

to create a comprehensive plan. All will be done to enhance the stability of the entire downtown. He asked that all focus on the proposed components, and try to reach a consensus on each. They should talk to each other with greatest respect, and he hopes from this day forward they will all stay focused on their plan.

Bunky Roberts said they have been working with this plan for a number of years. He looks forward to the revitalization of downtown. He is concerned about some innuendos and comments that have been made, and hopes they are corrected tonight. The Planning Board has worked with numerous developers recently trying to move the community forward. They all need to greet this process with a positive attitude. What is here today may not be here tomorrow. Growth and development are coming.

Chip Laibl said the challenge with the downtown merchants is not only promoting business and events like festivals, etc., but there are also traffic concerns with the pending six-laning of Reid Street. They need to look forward to the future and open more lines of communications, and need leaders to come forward with their thoughts. They need to work on revitalizing downtown for their children.

Mayor Flagg reiterated that this is a workshop, and it is important that the City Commission, Planning Board and Downtown Palatka members all interact. They have to abide by the Florida Sunshine Laws. What they may have to say may be being heard for the first time by their co-commissioners, because they cannot speak about these issues out of the sunshine. If they try to please everyone in the room, they may as well adjourn now. They need to find common ground, to reach consensus. They need to have some flexibility in their thinking. There is no one person in this room with the whole plan. There may be some here who feel they have been left out of the process but there are others who say the process has been open all along. They need to resolve their issues tonight.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW - Margaret Willis said in 1991 a Main Street survey was prepared that had an emphasis on attracting downtown development and parking facilities. In 1994 the City and Chamber of Commerce submitted an economic empowerment zone application to help achieve previously identified growth objectives. In 1996, another survey was prepared and refinements were made to the existing plan. The riverboat committee was formed in 1997. A Putnam County summit was held and additional objectives were set. In 1998 The 100 block was purchased by the City to assist with meeting objectives geared towards riverfront and downtown redevelopment. The Main Street Economic Restructuring Committee prepared a 1999 report citing eight major areas of concern, including downtown revitalization and development. Meanwhile, in February 2000 the City received a development proposal from Zirkelbach Construction called Regatta Point Marina. Zirkelbach presented additional information to the Commission on some prior marina developments they had been involved in, and discussions were held on tax incentives and abatements in Sept. 2000. The Zirkelbach plan was updated in November, and then February 2001. In March 2001 the Planning Board recommended the hiring of a professional planner or marine engineer to develop a Riverfront Master Plan. The Commission approved the recommendation and Mr. Zirkelbach's plans were put on hold, but the Commission did want to move forward with development of those plans, which included a marina. The city also began talks with the Housing Authority on the acquisition of the Frank George Apartments as part of the overall redevelopment program. A special meeting was held by the Putnam County Commission in April of 2001 to discuss special issues, and one specific item on destination marinas on the riverfront with public access, and a tie-in with Countywide recreational opportunities. The City Commission approved the hiring of a professional consultant to prepare a grant for EDA funding for a Riverfront Master Plan in April 2002. The consultant was hired and a grant was awarded, and the City used that grant. An RFQ ranking committee was approved by the Commission in March of 2003. EDSA was ranked the #1 firm and negotiations were held with them. A contract with EDSA for development of the Riverfront Master Plan was approved by the City Commission in September, 2003. An update on the EDSA Riverfront Plan was provided to the City Commission in December of that same year. In 2004, the City Commission approved Downtown Palatka, Inc.'s request to hold project team meetings to develop specific recommendations to be included in a comprehensive five-year plan for downtown

revitalization. While an Executive Summary has been presented, there has been no action taken to date on those recommendations. There has been well over a decade of planning and talking that has lead up to tonight's workshop, and hopefully to implementation.

Chip Laibl added that as of today, the City Commission has neither adopted the Plan nor have they chosen to implement it yet.

EDSA Riverfront Master Plan - Mayor Flagg said this plan has not been adopted by the City Commission, but there is a conceptual design and synopsis for the Riverfront Park and upland area. The EDSA consulting team met with the City and its residents, and their analysis was attached to the Plan. It includes several strategies for economic redevelopment. People from the outside can't tell people on the inside about economic redevelopment, but this plan gives a blueprint for beginning the revitalization. The City Manager will speak to the issue of the selection process. Any plan has components that may be favorable or unfavorable. If they can come to a consensus on some issues, they need to move forward on them. Rather than going through the components of a proposed plan, Mr. Laibl is going to present an overview of where their plans mesh. It is felt that the EDSA planners may not be feeling the heartbeat of the community. He asked that anyone who has a question, please place it in writing, and it will be read aloud and, if requested, anonymously.

Mr. Laibl said after EDSA was hired and presented their plan, Downtown, Inc. got together and felt that it fell short in their eyes. They wanted to see a more holistic plan attached to it. It was their wish that the Commission would adopt their plan and establish an oversight committee for the TIF funds. The document that was put together cites the need for a five-year economic development and strategic plan, that they felt wasn't in place, which would ensure economic redevelopment. There were six teams created. They had about a 45-day turn around on this, and came up with a good working document. They have struggled to get this implemented. The two main ideas were that a five-year plan team should be established to provide direction for economic redevelopment and sustained growth, which will report monthly to the City Commission and provide oversight to the downtown revitalization process. It should contain 2 representatives each appointed by the City Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Palatka Main Street, Downtown Palatka, two each from the North & South Historic Districts, two at-large real estate persons, two county commission appointees, and two mayoral appointees. Second, they requested that the Palatka City Commission appoint an oversight committee that shall serve as an advisory committee to the Commission on the CRA, containing five members as nominated by Downtown Palatka Inc., one representative each from the North and South Historic Districts, one representative east of 5th Street, one west of 5th Street, and one from the County Commission. In order to restore confidence in the leadership role, a city staff person should be appointed to serve as a facilitator and to keep track of both committees.

Mr. Miles asked if acceptance of these recommendations can be done fairly quickly along with the marina and other development, as it needs to go with the overall plan. Mayor Flagg said when the Commission accepted the report outlining the teams, it was his impression that the makeup of the teams was approved, and they were looking for a plan being developed to either provide consensus with an existing draft or to counteract whatever that component was so they could move forward.

Commissioner Norwood said it was his understanding that the plan was accepted, but there were some areas that needed to be worked out and Mr. Laibl and Mr. Bush were to come back with recommendations. It was incumbent on those two men to get on the agenda and bring a recommendation back. Commissioner Azula said that is what they were all expecting; they needed to work out the details and bring back a firm recommendation from both men. Commissioner Brown concurred. The report was accepted, but some of the details needed to be tweaked. She has sat through many years of discussions on this, and it is time for them to get started.

Commissioner Sanders said he concurs with the rest of the commission; this is the first he has seen this proposal in front of them tonight. Mr. Laibl said the final executive summary was read at the Commission meeting.

Mr. Roberts said committees meeting with committees on committees are a stopgap; this is a layer of bureaucracy. They don't have five years to plan; they maybe have two years. He didn't realize riverfront development was going to be carried all the way down St. Johns Avenue. Riverfront development is very important to him. By implementing the Riverfront Master Plan and cutting a deal with the PHA to get rid of the Highrise, they can develop the riverfront and two adjoining blocks.

Mayor Flagg said the Riverfront Development Plan was designed to be a catalyst for the development of the rest of downtown. You have to start somewhere. If the scope is too big, and is the entire 12 blocks long and two blocks wide, it doesn't work. It has to have a starting point in order to move elsewhere. It has to be done in multiple phases. The wisdom was to start it along the Riverfront, which would kick off development for the rest of downtown. This has been discussed many times over the years. Even when the highrise was opened, there were ribbon cuttings and parties thrown, but now everyone says that's the worst thing that could be there. At one time it was a catalyst for redevelopment, but times have changed. They don't need to lament over what was, but what needs to happen now.

Mr. Laibl said the first proposal included a restaurant and a lot of shops on public land, and it seemed that the first couple blocks would be competing with the existing Downtown. It didn't look friendly. It really fired up Downtown Palatka, a group that had been almost dormant for years. They want to see some strategic planning. The main issue isn't so much the riverfront, but also the proposed traffic flow. This is the County Seat, and if they take the business district and traffic to Hwy 19 that will affect downtown. He agrees that the next two years are critical due to proposed growth.

David Watt said the purpose of the five-year plan is not to wait five years to do something, but to begin doing something now. They don't want another five-year delay.

Martha Pace concurred with David Watts. This is what the public would like to see; they want to see a plan five years in advance in one-year increments. The waterfront is the most important thing in this county to them, and needs to be addressed from the public viewpoint as well as the merchant viewpoint. The plan that came forth didn't address how the public feels about the waterfront.

Commissioner Brown said one of the biggest problems is a lack of communication with each other. There are things that happen that everyone should know about. They find out about things through different sources, and they need to band together to put forth a united front. Some of the things they are asking for in these recommendations, the City has been doing all along. They've been A "Champion City" for some time, which has really helped out with the grants. The St. Johns River is one of the 14 designated Heritage Rivers in the Nature Palatka is the hub for Greenways and Trails. Tallahassee is looking for new ways to promote the Trails project.

Clem Saccareccia said all those points are very true; people are looking at their riverfront, and it should remain somewhat intact. She knows development will come, but they need to keep their green space.

Mayor Flagg said it is important that they stay focused on what the community wants, and not what individuals want. In the initial stages they need to agree on something. There are groups who want nothing, some who want everything and some who want some things and not others. The riverfront is not in the Mayor's back pocket. There are many people who are very discouraged; they been working on plans for many, many years.

Sam Deputy said he agrees on the communication point. There are many downtown property owners who don't know that they are paying into a tax increment fund that is there for their redevelopment. There are only 10 years left on the district before it goes away. They need to involve citizens in the process, which will make the community stronger. He likes the citizen involvement process. Mayor Flagg said that has been the intent of the Commission all along. It is important that none of them think that the way

the Commission feel is not how the community feels. Some of them are more strong-willed than others, and they impose their opinions on others.

Mrs. Pace asked if the Commission intended to approve this with changes, and wanted Mr. Laibl and Mr. Bush to get together. Mayor Flagg said the meeting was to bring the views of both groups to the table and come out with a plan. They aren't in everyone's head. Mr. Bush and Mr. Laibl have stated the meeting has taken place. They saw the plans as being compatible, and believe they don't interfere with each other. There are some issues that some people aren't going to budge from, one being the marina. They need to come to a consensus on some of the more contentious issues. The City has no problems with the TIF oversight and five-year development plan committees. Mr. Laibl said he'd like to see it adopted by the City Commission. Mr. Bush said there are really only one or two issues that need to be worked out tonight.

Mrs. Pace said the plan she has seen had a marina and shops on the waterfront. Mr. Bush said that was changed some time ago. The restaurant had been pulled out, the size of the marina was reduced from 300 to 149 slips, and much of it was changed. EDSA may have used certain things in their renderings like a hotel or restaurant, but that is not written in stone. That was just a rendering. What it looks like in the end will be up to what a developer proposes to do. A committee will be established to look at the plans and oversee the entire process. There will be many issues to iron out, such as the components, even the construction of the buildings. Mrs. Pace said she wants to see that nothing will be placed on the Riverfront Park from the bridge all the way to the City Dock. Mr. Bush said that is the agreement. The only thing that will be considered is the first two blocks. Once the developers' proposals come in, the groups will sit down and look at them, and chose the ones they like, and then they will sit down with the developers to begin tweaking them. Everyone will have his or her say.

Mrs. Pace asked what the additional \$15,000 for EDSA would be for. Mr. Bush said that is for EDSA for additional studies for a marina. They have an application on hold for a grant for marina permits. Mayor Flagg reiterated that nothing is a done deal at this time. No official action has been taken on the EDSA plan as of this very moment.

Linda Myers said she is here today as a Downtown Merchant. She is also a County Commissioner. She is also here as a citizen. Looking for 'perfect' shouldn't get in the way of why they are here. They need to preserve the economic Development to secure the future of Palatka. They want the next generation to thank goodness for what they are doing now to secure the future of Palatka. The citizens who have spoken with her want to know what the comprehensive plan is, and how the Riverfront integrates with the entire city of Palatka.

Mr. Miles said it was interesting to listen to everyone discuss their personal opinions, but their committee consensus is five critical points they will lay out. They accept that there will be development. This evening there are already two issues the Commission needs to address, and they need to make the meeting between Mr. Bush and Mr. Laibl happen. Mayor Flagg said the meeting has taken place. Mr. Bush noted there are still two issues to be tweaked. Mayor Flagg said the City Manager and Downtown President are not the only two people involved in this process; this is not something only two people need to decide. Mr. Miles said the City Manager should be responsible for ironing the issues out. Mayor Flagg said it is not his sole responsibility to accomplish. This is why they need to work something out tonight. The City Commission is the one that is waiting for this to be brought back to them. They will take it up with the paperwork is filled out to get on the agenda.

David Watt said it sounds like the approval for these committees to be formed and for these committees to start meeting is imminent, and asked if these committees can go forward from this point on. Mayor Flagg said it still needs to come back to a future City Commission agenda. The deadline is the May 28 meeting. Commissioner Norwood said the CRA and TIF recommendations hadn't been made until last Thursday night. Mayor Flagg said the reason the City Commission hasn't authorized the EDSA plan is because the Downtown Merchants have brought legitimate issues to the table, so everything has been put on hold. The City Manager needs to know precisely what the Commission wants

him to do. Already the Downtown Merchants have empowered their President to represent the Downtown Merchants. This is an open process where everyone has a voice.

Commissioner Norwood said the public is invited to all committee meetings. There are no committees that meet out of the Sunshine. The public is invited to have input. They are here today because Downtown Palatka came in and said they had some problems with the EDSA plan. They need to come up with a Plan. They came here tonight to build a consensus and move the process forward. The history is they've been planning and planning, and are about to start moving forward. He doesn't want to stall this for the next six months, year or five years. Both plans have merit. Both need some improvements. A marina may or may not be in their best interest. They don't know. They need to improve signage and hanging baskets, but that won't get people downtown. What they did yesterday isn't important; what they do today will make a difference.

Walt Riddle said they are talking about presenting the EDSA plan for approval, yet the paperwork they received with a physical drawing seems to be outdated, as it still shows the restaurant. He has not seen an updated or current EDSA plan. Apparently the plan has changed. When EDSA developed the plan, they indicated that the retail area was the one they were contracted to deal with. People asked about a marina in front of the FFI property; their response was that they weren't asked to consider that. They weren't asked to consider St. Johns Avenue past 2nd Street. It's a very good plan for the area they were asked to deal with, but that's the only area they were asked to deal with. It almost builds a wall across 2nd street; west of that area was ignored. They want to see a consolidation of ideas. Much of this plan hedges on the placement of a marina. The placement may need to change.

Mayor Flagg said he doesn't want to see the Commission tarred and feathered because a marina is presented to them. Before they can sign off on a plan, the Commission wants to see the least controversial plan adopted so they can move forward. Mr. Riddle said he is concerned that the plan is not a plan that someone is going to be bidding on, to place that motel in that place, or that marina in that area. He is concerned that EDSA's rendering is the one that a developer has to follow. That needs to be clarified.

Margaret Willis said she has participated in all of this process for quite some time. She was a member of a process team, she was a member of the planner RFP team, and a member of one of the Downtown Redevelopment Strategy team. They have an agenda in front of them and they need to move forward. The time for posturing is over; they need to get on with the agenda and hear the five points.

Commissioner Azula asked what the City is doing to help the downtown owners benefit from all this; no matter what they do, if the people who already have businesses in downtown can't get any help, riverfront revitalization won't work. They need to have a merged plan to address everyone up and down St. Johns Avenue. The Riverfront is not the golden fleece. All the downtown needs to be considered, or they need to separate the components - downtown and riverfront. Some of the downtown merchants have never even been approached.

Martha Pace said they did have five points that they agreed on that need to be presented. They deal with any development downtown. She has other questions specifically about the riverfront.

Bunky Roberts agreed with Commissioner Azula, and said they have to begin in steps. The spin-off from the waterfront development will draw people, and the merchants will benefit from that. They have to take it one day at a time, one step at a time. St. Augustine has a municipal marina and a sharp downtown; one fed the other. There is a condo-marina atmosphere there, and it has done very well.

Five Point Recommendations

Mr. Laibl stated point #1 is Preservation of current events such as Blue Crab, Azalea Festival, Mug Race, rowing regatta, bass fishing tourneys, etc. They don't want it interrupted whatsoever. Commissioner Norwood said a lot of Blue Crab events take place

in the 100 block. If it is developed, Blue Crab needs to come in and talk about where the tents will be moved to so the festival can still come off.

Mr. Bush said the drawing EDSA presented is nothing more than a drawing; it is a rendering of possibilities. They don't know what the final drawing will look like. They want to choose, with Downtown's help, what components they want to include. In speaking of festivals, the two blocks will likely be gone, and then they will sit down and decide where the festival tents will go. Congressman Mica's office has provided money to re-do the Riverfront Park, and they can take festivals into account when the plans are being drawn up.

David Watt said they are suggesting that the developer understand that Blue Crab is part of the quality of life they have come to love in Palatka. They need a place to have Blue Crab activities. It needs to be part of the plan.

Commissioner Brown said they are going for tourism, and natural beauty is what Palatka has a lot of. They want to keep the natural beauty and untouched areas.

Consensus from all three groups was reached on #1.

Point #2 - Do not take away from the public the view shed of the river. No piers, marina, anything that may clutter the riverfront. Specifically, no marina.

Mr. Miles said as these plans are formulating, it is a matter of remembering that the view shed is for the citizens of the community. There may be a way to develop a marina someplace else, but the view shed in the park is critical to the merchants of downtown Palatka and citizens of the community. There was discussion about the possibility of a 25-slip dock in front of a motel, or redevelopment of the city dock to accommodate the concept of the marina.

Bunky Roberts concurred, and said he has been looking at the river from his office for many years. Commissioner Norwood said, in listening to the history, the Marina has always been a part of the plan. When meetings were held in 1999 and 2000, a marina was part of it. The consensus he is hearing now is they don't want a marina. He wants to be sure they can read questions about the marina.

Commissioner Myers said there is a nice view shed, and they need to preserve that public access.

Mayor Flagg read the statements and questions. (filed).

Answers - Downtown District is Middleton Shopping Center to Riverfront, Main Street to Oak Street. If other citizens would like to be involved in Downtown business, there is a way for them to become members.

Mayor Flagg noted that the Marina plan has not been adopted.

As to the question on where the plan begins and ends, Mr. Bush said the commission voted to have EDSA do a master plan for the riverfront part and the two blocks east, with the idea that development of it should be the catalyst for downtown redevelopment. The EDSA plan is just conceptual. When developers come in they may want a 50-slip marina by the bridge. Whatever they propose they need to justify as having a real impact on downtown revitalization. It can be moved one way or another, or removed altogether.

Mr. Deputy said the plan in the packet is not the current one; that is where the confusion is coming from.

As to the marina, Mr. Bush said he won't go forward with anything without bringing it back to the Commission. No negotiations have been opened with any entity on the Riverfront. Tax increment funds are audited on an annual basis by Davis, Monk and are accounted for in the General Budget. The EDSA proposal does not require the acquisition of any property other than the Frank George Apartments; The City is prepared

to move forward with an RFP once consensus has been reached. The City Manager plays a role in negotiations on the marina, as does the Commission. All meetings involving the City Commission are held in the Sunshine. There will be no negotiations until they get to that phase.

As to the question on the Tilghman House, Commissioner Brown said the City purchased the Tilghman House property and the property from River & Laurel up to the Tilghman House with the intent to build parking on that location for people using the Dock and adjacent facilities. The Tilghman House was in such good shape, and they weren't ready to build, they decided the citizens and Palatka Art League should occupy it. At some point in time, it should be understood, that it was purchased for that purpose. If it ever should come to that, the house can be moved.

Per Mr. Laibl, businesses that are not in the geographical boundaries can join Downtown. As to what downtown merchants are doing for themselves, Mr. Laibl said they hope to improve on storefronts with TIF funds. Commissioner Brown said staff is researching how to abate the cost of rising ad valorem taxes when properties are improved.

Mrs. Pace said it is no surprise that she doesn't want a marina where it is suggested, and doesn't see helping a private business compete with a current business that is already here. There is already a marina here, and additions are in the planning. She hasn't seen a demonstrable need for a marina. She doesn't understand what the City would gain by having a marina, or why the City would spend tax dollars to put in a marina. There are two marinas here now. She is not against private development. She wants public land to stay public. What will the City get from the marina in exchange for what it is giving up? She feels strongly about public money being used to fund private enterprise.

Mayor Flagg said the City is not involved in building a marina, but only in the permitting process. Access will be through the park. Mrs. Pace said a marina needs services, and those will impact the use of the park. People with money feel they can get what they want. She doesn't see the value of a marina. People are going to come here because growth is coming.

Mr. Deputy asked if this marina is built and is connected to public land, what is the plan if the marina fails and it is on city land? Will a developer hold the City hostage to make his business work? They are risking the future of the City for obligating public land for a marina.

As to the question on the current marina, Scott Largacci, audience member, said he grew up in E. Palatka and is in the process of purchasing the Boathouse Marina at this time. They plan a full-service expansion and to add 30 - 40 slips, depending upon what the City does.

As to the questions, Mayor Flagg said they will be distributed to the proper departments for answer.

Developer David Keister, representing himself and a developer, said they have been involved in several downtown revitalizations. If the riverfront is redone they accomplish nothing; things need to be done in tandem. But you need to start. When an RFQ is put out, responses will come back to reflect what they believe the City is looking for. He understands that the City is looking for someone who understands that what they submit is not necessarily what the City wants. They need to work with all stakeholders. Both developers he is working with understand the concept of "view shed." They both said they need the catalyst. Both developers have talked about investing their funds in improving the public land. They are asking that nothing be removed from the table; leave everything open for discussion. If putting in upper scale condos, those folks are going to want to park and see their boats. They also understand people want to look down St. Johns Avenue and get an unobstructed view of the river. These developers understand the importance of everything they have talked about tonight, and are willing to work through an RFQ process to revitalize downtown, including the possibility of their purchasing some of the buildings to refurbish.

Point #3 - They don't want the City to give an unfair advantage via tax breaks, low rents and long leases to new business, and favor them over old businesses. Commissioner Brown said they are looking at trying to attract new business downtown, and those are some of the options. Mr. Miles said they just don't need to give away the store. The developers are looking to come in and spend big money, and are looking to attach some pretty good conditions and demand some high prices for the benefit of the City.

Mr. Bush said, in a case like Mr. Keister's, they haven't talked about giving any sweetheart deals. Mr. Keister said some of these folks have already met with Mayor Flagg and Mr. Bush. They have looked at EDSA's plan. They are looking at clarification on the scope of the process. This meeting has in no way influenced anyone. He has met with nine different developers on the downtown process. These two just aren't afraid of the RFP process. They are doing this to make money, but aren't looking or the City to give away anything.

Point #4 - Keep high the standards of the public values and quality of life. Anything done must preserve the current standards.

Point #5 - RFPs should be reviewed and approved by the 5-year planning committee and TIF committee if TIF funds are used. Mr. Bush said if TIF funds are involved, he sees no problem with the TIF committee's review.

Mr. Watt said the intent is the ability to interact with developers of the RFP. Mr. Miles said the downtown merchants should be proud of their work, and are working for the benefit of all. He'd like to see the Commission adopt all five of these points, and would like to see that adoption placed on their agenda. Commissioner Norwood clarified that the review by committees would come with a recommendation. Approval is a word that needs adjustment. Mr. Bush said Point #2, language should be changed that if proposals come in and it compromises the view, a committee should be appointed to sit down with a developer and try to find something that will work. Commissioner Norwood said there needs to be give and take. Mr. Watts said that is the intent of the five points; they want to preserve what they already have. Mayor Flagg asked for clarification from Downtown Palatka on Point #2 -- are they asking that no marina be even considered? Mr. Laibl said they don't want it to be site specific. The 100 Block is for sale, and it may be that a marina would be located right in front of it. They want room to move.

Mr. Deputy said they haven't seen any alternative plans. They aren't saying no, but they haven't seen anything else like putting it down by the city dock. Mr. Bush said the RFP should specify that the final location of a marina, if any, is to be negotiated. Mayor Flagg said there are some taboo areas that they don't even need to consider, like the area in front of St. Johns Avenue, etc. Mr. Watt said if a developer wants to have a marina in their concept, they want to know how it preserves the view shed. They can't just say preserve the view shed; they want this developer to get to know them before a proposal is made.

Developer Mathew Barrett, St. Augustine, said he did the RFQ for the St. Augustine development, and Congressman Mica asked him to come here and tell the story of what took place in St. Augustine. Passions seem to be running high, and that's good, because it will ensure a better final product. St. Augustine had similar issues with a process they began in 1993; some didn't want a marina, some did, and different groups wanted different things. This was on the site of a manufactured gas site; the average time to clean up this type of site is 17 years, but it was cleaned up in 7 years. The process was pushed through by the City of St. Augustine against a lot of opposition. They wouldn't accept an RFP without a motel on-site. They had permitted a marina with 85 slips; the final design came in at 60 slips. They wanted a boardwalk from Kate St. to the San Sebastian River, and a certain amount of public space protected within the development. When they came in they met with city commissioners individually and citizens and groups over 8 months. They tried to find common ground. They made their proposal, and were the lowest bidder with the least dense development. Part of it was a three-floor parking area. They were selected because they spent eight months listening to what the City wanted. The City wanted to enhance their space but not crowd it, and address parking issues. They have big plans for the area. The hotel is the most difficult part of the project to finance; It is important that all incentives remain on the table. St. Augustine wanted a high-end hotel, not a Hampton Inn. This development has lead to a complete redevelopment of the entire

area and has proved to be a boon to area businesses. It has brought many people back into the City. The City of Palatka has done a great job of assembling this property for redevelopment. The RFP can protect the public interests and park areas.

Mr. Bush asked if the project Mr. Merritt's group submitted looks like what they ended up with. Mr. Merritt said there were some changes after the submittal; it has taken two years to finalize.

Mayor Flagg noted these items should be on the agenda for the May 28 meeting.

Mr. Miles read a parcel from the agenda, saying that without a wide range of options for a developer, they won't attract a quality developer. There is consensus on that. They need to be involved in the entire process.

Mrs. Myers said the County has nothing to offer developers but incentives. In this instance, the City has what a developer wants; they have the river. Developers don't think they are sophisticated enough to know what they have.

Mayor Flagg noted people are most apt to take advantage of other people when there is a lot of in-fighting going on. He believes they have a consensus and meeting of the minds on these five points.

Synopsis & Closing Comments - Mayor Flagg said they need to pull together the best components of the drafts and create one plan to move forward.

Mrs. Roskosh said she believes the marina was made part of the plan to bring customers to downtown.

Ms. VanDoren wants it to be understood that hoping for a trickle-down effect of development is not acceptable. They need to focus on all of downtown and not just the waterfront.

Rev. Johnson said what they need is to examine both sides, give the best view and make a decision.

Mr. Wallace said the various groups need to start working together and stop worrying about who is trying to slip in the back door.

Mr. Miles said the need for action is now and the action must continue.

Mr. Watt said he feels emphasis needs to be on recognizing the value of what they already have. They need to not stick with any one particular product. They need to put together the best of the best. They need a long-term planning process.

Commissioner Norwood said this process works because people come together. He thanked the Planning Board, Downtown Merchants and public for making them think long-term about the City. They need to move while the opportunities are available to them. Growth is going to occur, whether he likes it or not. Palatka changes every day. They have to be prepared to adapt for change. They don't want the change to change them.

Commissioner Sanders said he's been here since 1967 and has operated a business for many years. They need foot traffic to be successful, and that will only come with development, such as the FFI property proposed condos. They will shop the closest venue. A town cannot grow with empty store fronts. Malls are successful because of the foot traffic. If they cut something out because they don't like it, it may hurt downtown. Developers have the money to help downtown. He is delighted with the work of the merchants in putting their presentation together. There have been many studies put together on this, which died for lack of follow-through and interest.

Commissioner Myers said the process is about inclusion and communication, and understanding the values of who we are and what we have. The County's comprehensive

plan includes the City of Palatka, and she wants to be able to look back and say the process was worth the results.

Mr. Stewart thanked the Mayor and Commission for bringing this workshop together. The process has worked well.

Mr. Deputy said he'd like to be able to say the plan takes in all of Palatka. They have more than one area of redevelopment. He is looking for a plan that takes in everyone, so everyone gets something out of it. They need to keep the lines of communication open; the city needs to look at better lines of communication directly to each citizen in the form of a monthly newsletter. He wants more communication from the city keeping them informed on the process.

Mr. Riddle said he has gratitude for those who laid the groundwork for what led them here tonight. He's been here some 30 years. There's been a history of attempts at development and a lot of effort by city commissioners and staff and various Downtown Palatka organizations. He hopes they've made progress tonight.

Mrs. Saccareccia said they've been here for 30 years, and Downtown since 1989; she wants to see something done in her lifetime.

Commissioner Azula said he came to Palatka in 1974 from Columbia SA. He is grateful to the community and the community is his family. They can't do what they do without the volunteers who serve on their boards, with no rewards and many times a lot of grief. He thanked all those who are interested in the town. He loves his town.

Mrs. Pace thanked those who allowed her to participate in this process. She is not a downtown business owner but believes she is part of the community. Downtowns have always had problems. To adopt a bad plan is better than doing nothing. She hopes they will not do that. The St. Johns River is a gem and there is a gorgeous view coming into town from the bridge. She wants to make sure they think twice about the plan. It's not just about the money; it's about preserving the beauty. They need to learn from other people's experiences. She is not for a marina, and believes in free enterprise.

Mrs. Willis said she plans to make it a personal objective to continue with this process and hopes everyone else will do the same. She doesn't want to come back in 14 years with another history.

Commissioner Brown said she loves this town, was born here, and plans to die here. She has two businesses downtown, one 90 years old and one 11 months old. She wants to have some time to process everyone's comments. She thinks it is wonderful they came together and sat down to work things out.

Mr. Roberts said he has listened to the all the comments, and at first had some apprehension about this meeting, as he had some issues with some folks in the room. He is glad the process worked. He is working with one of the finest Planning Boards he has ever worked with. There is no reason this can't work. Some people have come at this with a personal agenda, but tonight those were laid to the side so they could come together with a plan.

Mr. Laibl thanked the public and all boards, and especially the Downtown Merchants and Sam Deputy. They've worked very hard, and he believes they were listened to tonight. He believes they finally had a seat at the table. He promises to do the City proud.

Mayor Flagg said publicly they are asking the City Manager and Mr. Laibl to meet and do the final work to come back to the Commission with. All concerned will know the incremental steps and what they anticipate happening in the chronological order they need to address. Downtown Palatka still needs to go through the process of filling out an agenda request to get on the agenda for the next meeting. They need to dispel rumors by going to the source. They are the stewards of the City and it is crucial that the plan be not only in their minds and hearts, but the Comprehensive Plan needs to be continually tweaked. They need to create a Downtown Master Plan, and the Riverfront Master Plan

should have been referred to as phase one of a multi-phased plan. It needs to be built upon. The cards and questions will be turned over to the Clerk and they will all be assimilated and distributed to those who need to provide answers. They will not place another plan on the proverbial shelf. They must move forward.

Mr. Laibl thanked Mayor Flagg for calling this meeting and providing leadership during the meeting. He is glad to have come to a consensus.

Mayor Flagg asked staff to use current statistics and comments to shape a plan. Everything done by the City of Palatka will be done above board. He hopes other groups will follow suit. It is not his role to make promises to anyone about anything.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. by Mayor Flagg.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR