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COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE December 19, 2002 Meeting Notes

CITY STAFF ITEMS

Don Lamm, Deputy City Manager, noted that the Bluffs Rezoning RFP will go to the City Council for consideration on January 6, 2003. The staff report will also include the Community Redevelopment Advisory Committee's recommendations to pursue a study of the economic impact of the proposed 19th Street Bridge crossing of the Santa Ana River.

MEETING NOTES

Approval of the November 21st meeting notes was postponed to allow Committee members additional time to review the attachments.

SCHEDULING OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee was asked to confirm its meeting schedule. After discussion regarding the possibility of accelerating the meeting schedule after the holidays it was agreed that future meetings will be held on the 4th Thursday of each month. Three more meetings of the Committee are anticipated:

- January 23, 2003
- February 27, 2003
- March 27, 2003

WORKSHOP – ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

The facilitators introduced the workshop by noting that this is the second in a series of five sessions that will lead to the development of a vision and action plan. The first session (November) examined past events and their significance for this Committee's task. Tonight's session will focus on current trends affecting the Westside and adjacent study areas. The third, fourth and fifth sessions will be devoted to building a common vision and action plan.

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The central theme for tonight's meeting is the development of a "Mind Map", which will help to organize key trends and conditions and identify relationships between sub-components of major trends. The following ground rules were identified for the Mind Mapping exercise:

Mind Mapping Ground Rules

- Brainstorming process
- All views are valid
- Trends can be contradictory
- Whoever identifies the trend decides where it goes on the map
- Trends can be positive or negative



The Committee then broke into small discussion groups. Each group was asked to select one major trend or theme and identify: 1) things we are doing now to address the trend; and 2) things we would like to do in the future. Each group then gave a 3-minute synopsis of its conclusions.

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Group 1

Issue: Community Improvement/Land Use

Things we are doing now:

- CRAC is addressing this issue
- City government – limited financial commitment
- Some new improvements
- Rezoning discussions
- Limited code enforcement

Things we would like to see done:

- City must make major financial commitment to improve:
 - Streetscapes
 - Roads/utilities/pedestrian walkways
 - Eliminate blight
 - Stronger code enforcement
 - Housing density
 - Land use
 - Stronger law enforcement
 - Transients
 - Graffiti
 - Pedestrian/auto traffic
 - Develop City Center and supermarket shopping areas
 - Continuity in long-term plan & commitment to stick to it
- Allow mixed land use – residential and commercial

Group 2

Issue: Deterioration

Things we are doing now:

- CRAC is meeting
- Code enforcement, pot holes, undergrounding
- City involvement
- Reporting crime
- Rezoning – HUD funds for remodeling

Things we would like to see done:

- Encourage redevelopment
- Better structure public transportation

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- Encourage owner occupancy
- Encourage civic pride
- Improve education
- Increase police presence

Issue: Overpopulation

Things we are doing now:

- Enforce municipal codes – no garages as apartments
- Developing new codes: parking/unit
- Lack of education
- County health

Things we would like to see done:

- Request less freebies
- Limit apartment occupancy (for example 2 adults per bedroom)
- Tear down obsolete apartments

Group 3

Issue: Demographics

Things we are doing now:

- Working with City Council to rezone Bluffs
- Citizen activism

What else we would like to do:

- Rezone the Bluffs to residential (low to medium density)
- Move the charities

Issue: Deterioration and Blight

Things we are doing now:

- Efforts to increase code enforcement failed
- Underground utilities and street improvements
- Individual property ownership improvement
- Low cost housing loans and grants

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What else we would like to do:

- Study other successful revitalization efforts in other cities – Long Beach, Brea, etc.
- Work to make CRAC successful, respected
- Hold City leaders accountable for making Westside revitalization a priority

Group 4

Issue: Overcrowding, Crime, Changing Demographics

Things we are doing now:

- Redevelopment discussions (group feels that very little is being done)

Solutions:

- Enforce laws that we have
- Creative up-zoning
- Gentrification, consolidate rental properties & develop larger managed rental properties – lower density
- Development incentives – i.e., low interest loans

Issue: No Downtown – which causes a fractured sense of community

Things we are doing now:

- Nothing...

What would we like to do:

- Like to see a creation of centralized area
- A focal point – artists district, live/work zoning designation
- Historical vehicle district? Like “hot rod night” downtown. Right now people would be afraid to park their vintage cars in this area
- Corner of 19th & Placentia shopping center must be cleaned up or rebuilt
- Get rid of blockades – put in pass gates

Group 5

Issue: Deterioration

Things we are doing now:

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- Poor maintenance for buildings
- Infrastructure
- Lack of a defined plan (if you don't plan you plan to fail)
- Code enforcement
- Ineffective ordinances
- Soup kitchen
- Rules?

Things we would like to do:

- Right to expand is ok / so businesses don't leave
- Charities ok if they can play by our rules
- Redevelop smaller parcels
- Mixed use is ok – we just need a better plan with a new set of rules

The whole Committee then discussed the common themes in their group presentations. The trends on which there was **broad agreement** included the following:

- Deterioration
- Overcrowding
- Demographic change
- Code enforcement problems
- Negative impact of charities under current rules
- Charities serving non-local people
- Community Redevelopment Advisory Committee is a vehicle of change
- Need for the City to have a plan and direction for improving the Westside
 - Responsive, not imposing
 - Proactive, not reactive
- Enhanced, proactive law enforcement
- There is a distinction between transients and the working poor
- Desire to “upscale” the Westside in all areas

The Committee did not have broad consensus on the following issues, and **more discussion is needed**:

- Rezoning (how and where)
- Multi-use
- Definition of “upscale”
- Meaning of “demographic change”
- Intent for 19th Street/Placentia Ave.

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NEXT STEPS

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23rd from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Costa Mesa Senior Center, 695 W. 19th St.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:05 p.m.