



BALDWIN COUNTY WORK SESSION

July 06, 2021

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

5:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Henry Craig
John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Emily C. Davis
Sammy Hall

OTHERS PRESENT

David McRee
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Jill Adams
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Henry Craig called the July 6, 2021 Work Session to order at 5:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Community Assessment Presentation

Georgia College students Ms. Catherine Woodall and Ms. Christina Taylor presented information on their project-the Revitalization of Oconee Heights. Ms. Taylor reported research was done on blighted properties in the Oconee Heights area based on physical appearance of properties including trash, fallen debris, overgrown grass, bushes, etc. The data was compiled and a blight index was created to quantify blight in the neighborhood as a whole as well as individual properties. She stated a mean blight index score was given per road segment in the Oconee Heights community. Ms. Taylor discussed the graphic representation of the properties within the community and reported forty percent (40%) of the properties were very blighted and severely blighted. Community assets were also assessed including churches and community centers which led to the development of the community blight map and asset map allowing the team to come up with an action plan that would be beneficial to the neighborhood. Information was presented on the history of the Harrisburg community, the 2016 Harrisburg Neighborhood Revitalization and Master Plan, the vision for the Neighborhood Revitalization strategy, community assets, key partners, and strategies that leverage local strength, address key challenges and motivate local partners to work together. Five top areas and associated projects were identified - education, healthy lifestyles, jobs and economic development, housing and history and

culture. An action plan of immediate term priority projects, short term priority projects and long-term priority projects were discussed. Ms. Taylor and Ms. Woodall concluded by stating that the Work Plan provides the framework for aligning partners, residents and other resources to implement changes in the community.

Commissioners commended Ms. Taylor and Ms. Woodall for their hard work on the revitalization project. Chair Craig stated the County should put greater emphasis and more resources on blighted areas and the demolition of blighted properties. Commissioner Hall agreed that the County should move forward with addressing blight issues by assessing properties and notifying property owners to encourage voluntary cooperation. Commissioners agreed a determination be made on blighted properties as to whether the property is vacant, occupied, abandoned, unsafe or hazardous. Notices will then be sent to all property owners notifying them that the situation must be addressed.

Ms. Tina Behne addressed the Board with concerns that the County previously said property standards issues would be complaint driven, and it seems now the County will be identifying the properties. Commissioner Hall responded there are two different ordinances – Property Standards and the Unsafe Building Ordinance. Ms. Behne asked how properties become a part of a Land Bank. Chair Craig discussed particulars of how a Land Bank operates.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to adjourn the Work Session at 5:55 p.m. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry R. Craig
Chairman

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk