

MINUTES OF THE GATEWAY PHASE II – THE PACES FOUNDATION WORKSHOP FOR THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE FLORIDA HELD AT 2775 GARRISON AVENUE, February 11, 2020, at 6:00 P.M.

The following were present: Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Ashbrook, Hoffman, Langston, and Lowry. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, and Sgt. Jake Richards from the Port St. Joe Police Department were also present.

Agenda

Gateway Phase II – The Paces Foundation

Mayor Buzzett welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Michael Bauer, Director of Community Development for the PACES Foundation, thanked the Commission for having the Workshop. He noted the additional 16 units PACES is hoping to add will be Hurricane Recovery Units and not units for Phase II.

Major concerns were additional traffic in the residential neighborhood, inability of individuals with prior criminal records being unable to be approved for housing, and the lack of local residents to qualify to live at Gateway.

Citizens to be Heard

The following individuals expressed their concerns, both for and against, the addition of the units.

Rodney James, Letha Mathews, Ben Turrell, Jr., Tan Smiley, and Valeria James.

Michael Bauer, Judy Williams, Beth Mixon, and Rick Haymond answered questions posed by the local citizens.

Mr. Bauer offered the suggestion of a Right Turn Only Lane when exiting the Gateway Complex as a solution to the traffic.

Discussion Items by Commissioners

Commissioner Langston stated he did not disagree with the apartments being there, but is concerned about traffic, the management of the apartments, not rushing into something to make the situation worse, having another entrance way, and the possibility of another road behind Gateway.

Commissioner Ashbrook feels the proposed turn should decrease traffic while being an alternate site over wetlands, and there needs to be another look at other alternatives for the project.

Commissioner Lowry noted this is a chance to have additional units at Gateway, he would hate to see the funds leave the community, supports what the community wants, and is all for it. He feels traffic needs to be slowed down.

Commissioner Hoffman was impressed with the suggestion of a Right Turn Only Lane, noted that incoming traffic is the issue not the outgoing traffic, and construction workers will increase the traffic in the neighborhood. He questioned why a unit could not be designated for a law enforcement person, and why something could not be worked out on a sliding scale rather than two of the officers having to move because of a change in their salary.

Judy Williams shared that an apartment can be requested for law enforcement.

Rick Haymond shared that Federal Guidelines must be followed concerning income and are matched to the area they are providing services in, noted that the Low-Income Tax Credit Program is good, but communities need to work with the developers upfront on these projects.

Mayor Buzzett stated that no one is against housing, the City is compassionate towards people who are having housing issues and noted this is a difficult decision. Should the project go forward, he would like to see a construction entrance, and have the 16 units available before Phase II is approved. In response to the concessions requested by the PACES Foundation, Mayor Buzzett would like to see everyone pay at the beginning and get the reductions at the end of the project.

Motion to Adjourn

Mayor Buzzett thanked everyone for attending the Workshop and adjourned the Workshop at 7:05 P.M.

Approved this 18th day of February, 2020.

Rex Buzzett
Rex Buzzett, Mayor

2/18/20
Date

Charlotte M. Pierce
Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

2/18/20
Date