



# MINUTES

## City Commission Workshop: Master Plan

4:30 PM – Thursday, November 16, 2023 – City Hall

APPROVED 12/14/2023

**CALL TO ORDER: 4:32 P.M.**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Gary Ashcraft, Commissioner Nan Cobb, Commissioner Willie Hawkins, Vice Mayor Emily Lee and Mayor Michael Holland

### **1. WORKSHOP ITEM WITH DISCUSSION, PUBLIC INPUT AND DIRECTION**

#### **1.1 Presentation by MIG, the Master Plan Consultant**

Tom Carrino, City Manager, introduced Jay Renkens and Blair Guppy with MIG. He explained they would provide a presentation regarding the initial findings. He stated they want to engage with the Commission and hear their impressions. He noted they would not open the workshop to public comment but at some point would adjourn the workshop and then the public can go out and look at the display in the hallway and engage with the consultants one on one. He explained that staff can only record in the Commission Room; therefore, they will have to adjourn and then go out to the hallway.

Blair Guppy explained the framework plan to provide a blueprint for how they will look at the downtown as a whole as well as the Waterman site. He noted the number of stakeholders they have already spoken with and provided an overview of the area to be included in the master plan. He also reviewed the timeline for community input and development of the plan. He indicated they would begin looking at the Waterman site on their next visit and by the spring of 2024 reveal a draft plan for the Waterman site. He noted feedback they have received both online and by mail. He added they have also had one on one meetings and commented on their community listening meeting. He noted the wide variety of involved people and specifically cited the importance of the lake and the waterfront. He cited the history of the City as an agricultural area and various aspects of the area. He suggested the concept of the City as a regional base camp and development as the "best family-friendly waterfront downtown in Lake County and the region."

Mr. Guppy provided an overview of the existing waterfront noting its assets and opportunities. He commented on some ideas provided regarding the waterfront. He suggested extending the waterfront walk and how that could benefit the downtown and create a waterfront destination. He cited the possibility of utilizing the railway corridor to connect the downtown to the larger region and create a railway promenade. He discussed the use of public/private partnerships and expanding the use of the community building. He suggested creating a pavilion at the other end of the waterfront promenade to act as another anchor for the area. Other suggestions included activities such as a public market, artisans and art markets. He cited the goal of encouraging more people to come to the downtown area. He noted how each street has a distinct terminus at the waterfront and provided examples of what has been done in other communities. He cited the ongoing improvements to both Bay and Grove and the need for more pedestrians. He indicated they had visited with students at the high school that afternoon and noted that people don't walk or bicycle but they scooter. He stated the

youth had said they would like to come downtown just to grab snack food. He emphasized the need to insure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in the downtown area.

Mr. Guppy noted they have been looking beyond just the downtown area and cited the natural assets the City has that can be used to attract people to the downtown area. He then commented on the need to connect the waterfront to the neighborhoods. He stated that McDonald and Bates are key streets to connecting the waterfront and downtown to the eastern neighborhoods. He cited a number of existing assets on those streets and suggested the need to expand the existing downtown character. He cited a number of ways to provide more interconnectivity. He listed existing inventories and potentials as follows: event/recreation /cultural, hotel, multi-family housing, professional office spaces, and retail/restaurant spaces. He added that the youth were very interested in events but were unaware of what is already offered.

Mr. Guppy emphasized their intention of obtaining public input during this visit. He provided a QR code that individuals could scan to participate and provide online feedback. He cited the need for everyone to view the displays and provide them with input.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked how people can get to the website with Mr. Guppy explaining they are working with City staff to distribute information at the City's events.

Jay Renkens indicated the flyer has the information on how to provide input. He noted their visit with the high school students that day. He added they would continue to reach out to youth as well as others.

The Commission asked to have the information sent out in the water bills with Mr. Carrino indicating that would be done.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked about them reaching out through social media with Mr. Renkens indicating they would work with the City's communication staff to get the information out on the City's existing sites.

Commissioner Hawkins suggested enlisting the student government at the high school with Mayor Holland indicating they met with a group that day through the Key Club sponsor. He commented on how well the students participated. He noted the principal was also in the meeting.

The Commission asked if there would be more community input sessions with Mr. Renkens indicating they probably would have more in February or March. Mr. Guppy commented on them participating in more of the City's First Friday events. He noted that the students indicated they attend those and do volunteer at them as well.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked if they are able to tell where the comments are coming from with Mr. Rankin indicating that the first meeting included location.

Commissioner Hawkins commented on the need of trying to insure that everyone has the opportunity to comment and noting that not everyone is online. It was suggested that they encourage participation by the Chamber of Commerce. It was noted that Georgefest was coming up and could be utilized.

Mr. Renkens indicated the need to use different venues such as Georgefest as meetings tend to attract the same people each time.



Vice Mayor Lee asked about the possibility of shortening the timeline with Mr. Renkens indicating they are shooting for April and stating that he did not see the ability of getting it done sooner.

Commissioner Cobb suggested for people to come to the next meeting with ideas for what they want not what they don't want.

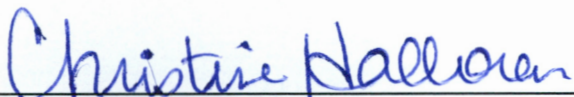
Mr. Renkens commented on how they are trying to obtain more positive feedback to determine what people want.

Commissioner Cobb noted the need to have positive meetings, not negative. She also commented on the need for the trails to help with connectivity and how that will benefit the City.

Mayor Holland reminded the audience to go out to the hallway to view the display and provide comments to the consultants.

## 2. ADJOURNMENT: 5:11 P.M.

*\*These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to [www.eustis.org](http://www.eustis.org) and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.*



CHRISTINE HALLORAN  
City Clerk



MICHAEL L. HOLLAND  
Mayor/Commissioner