

**City of Clermont
MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MARCH 15, 2016**

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The workshop meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission was called to order Tuesday March 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Nick Jones. Other members present were Carlos Solis, Herb Smith, and Tony Hubbard. Also in attendance were James Kinzler, Assistant City Manager, and Rae Chidlow, Planning Specialist.

Assistant City Manager James Kinzler presented a PowerPoint on the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant and the Recreational Trails Grant Program. He stated that Victory Pointe, formally known as the West Lake wetlands project, is the first priority for the Downtown Master Plan from an aesthetic and economic development aspect. He stated that some of key purposes are to improve regional stormwater management, protect Lake County Florida waterways, boost local and state-wide tourism, and improve the environmentally sensitive areas particularly the land connected the Coast to Coast Connector. He stated during visioning sessions two years ago, the residents wanted to see more beautification using natural elements, making the area inviting for residents. Residents also want to see the area prosper and create jobs. He stated that the stormwater in the downtown area is antiquated. He stated that by creating this stormwater pond it allows businesses to maximize the footprint and get the density that is needed in the downtown area. He stated that there will be a trail that goes through the downtown area. He stated that if we push the events into the downtown area, it will create more foot traffic for the businesses. He stated that economic development is the key component of the Master Plan which is why the City wants the West Lake project to be one of the first projects. He stated that it provides for an attractive investment opportunity and it will trigger redevelopment for the adjacent areas. He stated that this will in turn address the visioning session results. He stated that the Victory Pointe project is the foundation for all of the Master Plan initiatives.

Commissioner Smith asked if this was the swamp area near the boat ramp.

Mr. Kinzler stated that it is, and that area will be utilized to collect the stormwater from the western region, creating a filter marsh to clean it before it flows out to Lake Minneola.

Commissioner Smith asked if this will encroach on the boat ramp area.

Mr. Kinzler stated that they will need to move the boat ramp area to the east end of waterfront near East Avenue.

Commissioner Solis asked if East Avenue is the only option for the boat ramp.

Mr. Kinzler stated that they could possibly move it to the western end, however there are restrictions on the grant conditions.

Commissioner Smith asked what the cost estimate was for this project.

Mr. Kinzler stated that originally the budget was at \$8.6 million, however they continue to adjust the design, and it will cost less.

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Chairman Jones stated that he would like to express his enthusiastic endorsement of the project.

Commissioner Solis stated that he is for the improvements.

Commissioner Smith stated that this is a huge start and he is for it.

Commissioner Hubbard stated that this is a good location to start and clean up.

Chairman Jones stated that the benefits to the community as a whole are tremendous and he encourages the city to move forward as quickly as possible.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Nick Jones, Chairman

ATTEST:

Rae Chidlow – Planning Specialist