

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP OF  
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2021**

Present: Commissioner Robert D. Bender, Chairman, District 4  
Commissioner Jeffrey W. Bergosh, Vice Chairman, District 1  
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5  
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3  
Commissioner Douglas B. Underhill, District 2  
Janice Gilley, County Administrator  
Alison Rogers, County Attorney  
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor  
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Report prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bender called the Committee of the Whole (C/W) Workshop to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The C/W was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that the meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on February 6, 2021, in the Board's weekly meeting schedule.

3. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Commissioner May led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

4. Board Items.

I. OLF-8 Master Plan Update

A. Board Discussion – The C/W viewed and discussed two PowerPoint presentations, which were also provided in hard copy, titled *OLF-8 Master Plan*, presented by Terri Berry, Project Manager and Environmental Project Coordinator, Natural Resources Management, and *OLF-8 Phase 2 Plans Update*, presented by Marina Khoury, DPZ CoDesign, and the C/W:

(1) Heard a review from Ms. Berry regarding:

- The OLF-8 Contract and Scope of Work
- The Financial Analysis including work provided for in the scope and out-of-scope work
- What to expect from the presentation
- The timeline for OLF-8 actions and goals
- Commissioner actions needed

(2) Discussed how the actions were determined and the goals for the workshop;

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

(3) Heard information on the following topics from Ms. Khoury, which were addressed in the PowerPoint she presented:

- The scale comparison of OLF-8 as related to Downtown Pensacola, Navy Federal Credit Union, and ST Aerospace
- Goals and priorities of the project, which include attracting over 1,000 high paying jobs, and providing long-term value and a return on investment to the county and Beulah
- The relationship of the project to the Escambia Comprehensive Plan
- Directives provided by the Commissioners
- Assumptions for the project
  - Available Developable Acreage
  - Full Economic Impact
  - Creating a flexible Master Plan
  - Estimates of Job creation by building typology and industry sector
  - The potential impacts for jobs on site
- Plan Updates
  - The framework for the plan
  - Comparisons of the Commerce Plan, Hybrid Plan, and Market Plan
  - Comparisons of the network of roads and trails
  - Comparisons of block intensity
  - Modular block types
  - Flex zoning and block flexibility
  - Scale and mix
  - Traffic Impact Comparison
  - OLF-8 Outreach and Engagement

(4) Heard information from Peter Bazeli, Weitzman Associates, LLC, regarding the Economic Impact of Jobs Creation based on work and findings completed by the Haas Center;

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

(5) Responded to the six questions posed by DPZ, as follows:

a. What is the ideal timeline for build-out?

- Heard comments from Commissioner Barry regarding the possibility of divesting the property in phases, with the first phase happening relatively soon to get the funds back in the peoples' coffers, starting the process with the frontage on Nine Mile Road, and the importance of maintaining flexibility
- Heard comments from Commissioner May concerning the importance of starting the process as soon as possible to create good paying jobs and improve the lives of citizens, and that he will lean on FloridaWest and their advice
- Heard comments from Commissioner Underhill regarding the need to be cautious about appearing desperate to get rid of the land, and that his focus is on the quality of the project and how it ends rather than how soon it can end; heard further comments regarding infrastructure needs that should be addressed now
- Heard comments from Commissioner Bergosh concerning the importance of not rushing the project, how selling the frontage might help recoup funds, and the need to maintain the maximum acreage for job creation
- Heard comments from Commissioner Bender regarding reaching the low-hanging fruit by selling the frontage, which would also help give Beulah some of its needs and wants; heard further comments concerning the length of time the site will take to develop
- Discussed workforce and affordable housing and how the market will likely dictate what is built

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

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b. How much land should be devoted to commerce use only?

- Was advised by Commissioner Bergosh that he would like to see the maximum amount of acreage devoted to commerce minus what is needed to sell to recoup the investment
- Was advised by Commissioner Underhill that he recommends starting with a portion of acreage common to all plans and moving forward from there
- Upon inquiry from Commissioner May, was advised by Scott Luth, FloridaWest, that while there is no easy answer, he hopes that a significant portion of the property (at least 200 acres) is held onto to allow for maturity and to have acreage when opportunities present themselves
- Was advised by Commissioner May that the design is so fluid that there is not an exact number from his perspective
- Was advised by Commissioner Barry that he feels that maintaining flexibility is important and that if the Board was able to express some intent on entertaining Requests for Proposals for the frontage, that would be a successful outcome to start and would allow for a potential project with huge potential if one presented itself
- Heard comments from Commissioner Bender regarding his appreciation for the plans put forward during the Workshop and that he sees potential in the plans with 56-61% commerce

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

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c. What, if any, housing types would you consider?

- Was advised by Commissioner Barry that he does not support single-family detached, but that he would wait to see how much traction the other options can get
- Was advised by Commissioner May that he does not support tax incentives for businesses if workforce housing is not made available
- Was advised by Commissioner Underhill that he supports housing that lends itself to a lifestyle that is not automobile centric and is more pedestrian; he also generally supports diverse communities that promote commerce and community instead of dividing it and thinks that workforce housing should not have negative connotations
- Was advised by Commissioner Bergosh that he does not support residential development, but that if he has to compromise on housing, he would be willing to accept some high-end single-family or something creative like loft over retail, but that the most important aspect of the project is job creation
- Was advised by Commissioner Bender that he is supportive of a large portion of land for commerce, but that small scale residential would be acceptable, and he favors townhouses, 2 over 1, senior housing, small multi-family (4-pack), multi-family, live/work, and mixed-use housing types, as presented in the slides; Commissioner Underhill agreed with the housing types as well

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

(5) Continued...

d. How will public input be incorporated for the final plan?

- Discussed the amount and type of input received in the process so far as presented by Travis Peterson, Impact Campaigns
- Was advised by Commissioner Underhill that public input should be the driving force of the overall plan and that he will be supportive of a plan that the people of Beulah want
- Heard comments from Commissioner Bergosh and discussed concerns over emails involving DPZ CoDesign and Navy Federal Credit Union, as well as meetings held that the County's project manager was asked not to attend
- Was advised by Commissioner May that there is never too much public engagement and that all citizens should be included
- Was advised by Commissioner Barry that he supports as much genuine public input as possible, but he has concerns that all input received has not been genuine; further advised that he is happy to listen to all speakers, including those that have dissenting opinions
- Heard the request from Commissioner Barry and Commissioner Bergosh to be provided with all of DPZ's emails related to the project for review
- Discussed the Myths Versus Facts information put out by DPZ and how that came about; also discussed the perceived negative connotation of the phrase "commerce park"

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

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e. What are the desired job types?

- Was advised by Commissioner Barry that he supports all job types presented by DPZ (Aviation, Medical Devices, High End Manufacturing, Financial Services, Logistics and Distribution) and essentially anything that is contained in a building
- Was advised by Commissioner May that he wants to live up to the commitment to create good, meaningful jobs for the citizens of Escambia County with salaries of \$60,000 a year and up
- Was advised by Commissioner Underhill that he supports any good paying job that is legal, moral, and ethical and that it would be foolish to limit the categories
- Was advised by Commissioner Bergosh that he wants to see high-tech manufacturing jobs and clean jobs in beautiful facilities that will support families who will spend money in Escambia County
- Was advised by Commissioner Bender that he sees this project going after jobs or businesses that we don't have another place to put in Escambia County, such as ones that need more acreage, as well as how the area distinguishes itself to bring those high-paying jobs here
- Discussed what employees and corporations may be looking for in relocating, as well as the request from the School Board for a portion of property for a new school or schools

f. Is the proposed project timeline acceptable?

- Discussed and agreed that additional conversation is needed before the timeline can be set with regards to the Planning Board portion

(6) Had an extensive discussion regarding the emails from DPZ, the meetings the County's project manager was asked not to attend, DPZ CoDesign's role in the project and process, and concerns about whether a small group was unfairly influencing the design process;

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AGENDA ITEMS – Continued

I. Continued...

A. Continued...

(7) Heard comments from Theresa Blackwell concerning the Beulah Coalition and their role in the process; and

(8) Agreed to review the requested emails and revisit the conversation at the Regular Board meeting on February 18, 2021; and

B. Board Direction – None.

5. Adjourn

Chairman Bender declared the C/W Workshop adjourned at 12:39 p.m.