

**New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meeting
May 28, 2019**

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1. City Commissioners voted 4-1, with Commissioner Michael Kolody dissenting, to send off several minor changes to the Economic Development Chapter of the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan for state and county approvals.

However, Commissioners said they approved proposed amendments to that part of the Comprehensive Plan with the understanding that City Staff will research options for consultants to do a more thorough review of the Economic Development element, as well as others.

The last in-depth look at the Economic Development part of the Comprehensive Plan was around 2010-2011, officials said.

"I think staff has done a great job of cleaning up the text," Mayor Russ Owen noted. "My concern is, do we need to revisit items . . . We are in a different day now than we were then, and before we move this forward, I think I need a more comprehensive look." He added he thought the Commission has given City Staff a lot to accomplish, and this is a case where consultants who specialize in developing local Comprehensive Plans could look at "high performance cities" relating to economic development and see what they have done. If the cost of using outside consultants proves prohibitive, the mayor said the city could then discuss other ways to accomplish what's necessary.

Although Commissioner Kolody dissented from the motion, he also suggested proposed text amendments to the Economic Development portion of the Comprehensive Plan didn't go far enough, and that chapter essentially rehashed what had been written back in 2010. "I think we should put more emphasis on including improvements for economic development to our transportation, our cooperation with our Utilities Commission and our (New Smyrna Beach Municipal) Airport," he commented. "I think we're not moving it forward far enough."

Speaking on behalf of the New Smyrna Beach Residents Coalition, a local citizens group, Coalition President Sally Gillespie encouraged the Commission to bring in consultants with specific expertise in drafting Comprehensive Development Plans to assist staff members who are already stretched thin. "We are very impressed with the work product that staff has been doing," she said, adding that the Coalition would like to see more public outreach for citizens' participation in the Comprehensive Plan review. With that in mind, she said the Coalition's Executive Committee had prepared some suggestions for

changes to the Economic Development Chapter. "The rewrite of that economic element has been terrific, but we are painting a picture of the future here and we would like to be more futuristic in how we approach economic development," Mrs. Gillespie said. She added the Coalition's Committee felt there was a "disconnect" in some areas between land development regulations, municipal codes, maps and the language of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. The City Commission unanimously directed the City Attorney to draft a contract for Khalid Resheidat to serve as Interim City Manager for a period of six months. Resheidat's salary will be increased to match the salary of former City Manager Pam Brangaccio, and to pay him a vehicle allowance equal to what she received, retroactive to May 15, 2019.

Resheidat formerly served as New Smyrna Beach's Assistant City Manager. Brangaccio resigned May 15 in lieu of taking an extended leave under the Family Medical Leave Act to care for her husband, who has a serious medical condition.

3. The City Commission unanimously approved a resolution to sign a "Railroad Reimbursement Agreement" with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The agreement paves the way for new grade crossing and traffic control devices to be installed at the Fairgreen Avenue railroad crossing. The agreement also provides for future maintenance and adjustment of crossing devices.

FDOT recently conducted on-site evaluations of railroad crossings that have been identified as potentially hazardous. Representatives from FDOT's Safety and Rail Offices and Florida East Coast Railway evaluated the railroad crossing at Fairgreen Avenue and determined its signals should be upgraded with two cantilevers, two flashing lights and gates, one generator case, constant warning time, a new cabinet, power, cable and conduit. FDOT will pay for installing the signal improvements using Federal Signal Safety Funds, once those federal funds are approved after October 2019. The total cost of these improvements is estimated at \$410,260.

The city will assume its share of the cost for future maintenance and adjustment of the Fairgreen Avenue grade crossing and traffic control devices, which will amount to \$3,600 per year.

4. The City Commission voted 2-3 to deny a request to remove a Historic Tree on land proposed for a self-storage facility on the north side of Canal Street, west of Hickory Street and east of Pioneer Trail. Commissioners Kolody and Jason McGuirk voted in favor of the tree's removal, and Mayor Owen, Commissioner Jake Sachs and Vice Mayor Hartman voted against it.

The tree in question is a live oak whose trunk measures 39 inches in diameter. A concept plan for the proposed development showed 60 proposed storage units if the tree was removed. Properly preserving the oak, with no construction within the area of its canopy drip line, likely would require reducing the total number of storage units by 10-20, according to city staff. Therefore, they recommended denying the tree removal request on the basis that it would still be feasible to preserve the tree and construct a reasonably sized, self-storage project.

5. City Commissioners conducted the first reading of three ordinances proposing to annex, rezone and change the land use for 7.9 acres on Creek Shore Trail. Second readings and public hearings for the ordinances are set for June 11.

The land is undeveloped and its owner plans to attach the property to the existing Master Development Agreement for the Florida Days residential development. The current county future land use is rural, and its zoning is Rural Agriculture. The proposed city future land use would be Residential Estate to match the Florida Days subdivision. The proposed city zoning would be Planned Unit Development (PUD), as part of the Florida Days Master Development Agreement.

6. The City Commission had the first reading of an ordinance that specifies the width of the Corridor Overlay Zone along SR-44 and removes its current "C" designation on the zoning map. The second reading and public hearing for the law is scheduled for June 11.

The width of the Corridor Overlay Zone is specified as 330 feet north and 330 feet south of the centerline of SR-44. Its two sections stretch from the western city limits to Eddie Road, and from Eddie Road to Myrtle Avenue.

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