

EAST LITTLE HAVANA GREENPRINT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting #1, December 15, 2004

8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Jose Marti Park

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME

The meeting began at approximately 9:30 a.m., ½ hour behind schedule. Mildred Majoros, Project Manager, Miami Office, the Trust for Public Land, and Project Manager for the East Little Havana Greenprint Project, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Steering Committee and thanked each participant for his/her willingness to assist in this important endeavor.

She acknowledged that many studies of this area had been done in the past with no results to show for them. Ms. Majoros explained that it was the intention of The Trust for Public Land to have this project show immediate implementation and results. Therefore, the first community meeting scheduled would be a tree planting and urban forestry meeting at a location in the area. In this way, all stakeholders from the East Little Havana area would experience the beginning of the project even before the full greenprint plans are done.

BUILDING A TEAM: GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

Several members indicated that they were unable to stay the full day. Therefore, the “icebreaker” exercise originally planned for this meeting was abbreviated and members were asked to give their names and affiliation and answer one of the following questions:

1. What three people most influenced your life?
2. What is your greatest achievement?
3. What is your greatest joy?
4. What do you most enjoy doing?
5. What three words would you want said about you?
6. If you were independently wealthy what would you do?

In this way, members got to know each other a little better before beginning the “business” portion of the meeting.

Members attending:

Mauro Bermudez, Jose Marti Park
Pablo Canton, City of Miami, East Little Havana Service Center
Jose Casanova, City of Miami Planning and Zoning
Jane Caporelli

Sallye Jude, Miami River Inn
Alex Montalvo, Citizens for a Better South Florida
John Ise, Abriendo Puertas
Jacqueline Rodriguez, Miami Dade Empowerment Trust, Inc.
Steve Wright, Office of Commissioner Joe Sanchez

Sallye Jude of the Miami River Inn pointed out that this area is a history of building in South Florida and suggested that this group take a tour at some point during their deliberations together.

The group then took a short break.

GREENPRINT PLAN: BACKGROUND AND COMMITTEE TASKS

Ms. Majoros gave a presentation about The Trust for Public Land and about “greenprinting” (Exhibit A)

Following this presentation, members made the following comments:

1. East boundary – I-95 should be east boundary – but SW 1st Avenue includes Jose Marti Park
2. West boundary – should be at least 17th Ave – current is 12th – this will now change further west
3. Industry in East corner that shouldn’t be there
4. Need to consider Miami River dredging as affecting economics and benefits
5. City of Miami looking at zoning – need to confer with the consultant in that effort (DPZ is the consultant)
6. Identify proposed project sites that are online for development
 - public rights of way (ROW)
 - Integrate rooftops with greenway
 - much development coming this way
 - empty lots are being lost to development
7. Need to do a sidewalk inventory along with tree inventory and open space
8. Look for opportunity to widen sidewalks or change the type of sidewalk

AGENDA REVIEW/ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF COMMITTEE/WORKPLAN

Janice Fleischer, Facilitator, introduced herself and reviewed the Agenda for the day. (Exhibit B) Ms. Fleischer indicated that the Agenda would be shortened to accommodate several members who needed to adjourn early. She reminded the members that this Committee is scheduled to meet only six (6) times and she asked for suggestions to avoid this conflict in the future. She told members that there was much work to be done in the meetings scheduled and indicated that the next meeting would be no more than ¾ of a day. Team members made the following suggestions:

1. 9am to 1pm with no lunch for half-day meetings.

2. Wednesdays better for future meetings
3. Next meeting – ¾ day at most
4. Meetings always at Jose Marti Park

Ms. Majoros indicated she would honor these requests as much as possible.

Ms. Fleischer then reviewed the contents of the notebooks provided to each member and asked them to bring them to each meeting. She then went over her role as a facilitator (Exhibit C), members’ roles as participants (Exhibit D), the different models that can be used by large groups to make decisions (Exhibit E), the benefits of using a consensus-based collaborative model (Exhibit F), and proposed Consensus Rules and Meeting Guidelines. She asked if anyone had any comments or suggestions regarding the rules and guidelines. None were forthcoming.

Using the Consensus Rules, Ms. Fleischer asked the members to rank the proposed Consensus Rules. The ranking was:

5	4	3	2	1
6	2	0	0	0

The Consensus Rules were adopted by consensus (Exhibit G).

She then asked members to rank the proposed Meeting Guidelines. The ranking was:

5	4	3	2	1
7	1	0	0	0

The Meeting Guidelines were adopted by consensus (Exhibit H).

Ms. Fleischer explained that she would be producing a “Report of Proceedings” for each meeting. This Report is not a set of “minutes” but will contain the results of any exercises the members may have engaged in and a description of the work and comments of members that were recorded on flipcharts during the meeting. In addition to the comments which were recorded for each meeting, members can add ideas for the future or concerns they have on the “Idea Parking Lot”; a large flipchart sheet which will be provided at every meeting. All ideas written on the Idea Parking Lot will also be transcribed and contained in the Report. At the end of every meeting, members will be asked to fill in an Evaluation Form. Evaluations are anonymous and the comments contained therein assist the Facilitator and Ms. Majoros in improving meetings of this Committee.

Ms. Fleischer recognized that each member may not be able to attend every meeting; however, if a member knows they must miss 2 or more, TPL is concerned that the constituency represented by that member will not be well represented. Therefore, TPL is requesting that each member: a) make a commitment to attend the meetings; and b) designate an “alternate”- one individual from their constituency who is authorized to sit in for the absent member. Designees (original members) and their Alternates are expected to



keep each other informed and to keep their constituency informed of the work of the Committee.

Most correspondence and meeting announcements will be accomplished through the use of email. Ms. Fleischer asked members to check their email frequently and respond as appropriate.

Ms. Majoros spoke to the Committee about the importance of their promoting the Plan and the Community Meetings which will be held in conjunction with the development of the Plan. She expressed her concern that the Community be well represented on the Committee and asked if there was anyone missing from the table. Members made the following suggestions for additional members to the Committee:

1. Ada Merrit School Representative
2. Riverside Elementary School and Centro Mater (Both Charter & other)
3. YMCA
4. Front Porch
5. Merchants from Flagler and SW 8th Street
6. Representative from Development community
7. Miami River working community (Marine industry)
8. Rosa Placencia-Amigos for Kids
9. Regis House
10. Senior Housing Representative
11. Representative from Commissioner Barreiro's office
12. House of worship representative
13. Make sure committee not weighted with too many city representatives

Ms. Majoros indicated she will accommodate these suggestions as much as possible while balancing the Committee and ensuring it does not get too large for viable deliberations to take place in the short time allotted. She went on to explain that the first Community meeting is scheduled to occur sometime in late February / early March and will be followed by a tree planting event. Members were asked for suggestions to ensure turnout and success of this meeting. The following comments were made:

1. Tree Planting event excellent
2. Change locations for each public meeting
3. Community advocacy group – The Human Service Coalition – Little Havana Advocacy Coalition; these groups could help get folks out to the meetings
4. Make sure you have food and childcare during public meetings
5. People need to see something happening to become involved
6. Tie in with existing Community events – community fair
 - **Clinica Peñalver (Health Fairs and events)**
 - **Miami River Day (March 19, 2005)**
7. Miami-Dade Water and Sewer-take rocks/debris away from right-of-way

SWOT EXERCISE

Ms. Fleischer explained that this Committee would be tasked with developing a 15 year Vision for East Little Havana which will be used in drafting the Greenprint Plan. To begin the process of visioning, she asked members to think about and write down the “strengths”, “weaknesses”, “opportunities”, and “threats” (SWOT) of doing a greenprint plan. Members were given post it note pads and pens and asked to write one idea per sheet and indicate what it was by putting an “s”, “w”, “o” or “t” in the upper corner of the pad sheet. Ms. Fleischer collected the notes as they were generated by the members and placed them on flipcharts.

The results of this exercise are:

Strengths

- Location of the area
- Proximity to downtown
- Proximity to courthouse
- Proximity to Miami River
- Excellent transportation
- Unique neighborhood
- Location
- Resources
- Reduce crime by keeping kids off the streets and in parks
- Hidden strengths
- Character of neighborhood
- Establishes network of concerned individuals
- Location
- The Miami River
- Reduces crime
- Stimulates sense of community
- Increases property values
- Increases sense of well being

Weaknesses

- Lack of access to owners to positively influence them for community
- Legal status of residents
- Lack of government to buy land for open space
- Lack of homeownership
- Traffic patterns rush people through
- No areas large enough to develop parks
- Fractured planning
- City doesn't understand parks are for people not for city use
- Lack of interest from community
- Cost of greenprinting could be used for more immediate needs
- The area is mostly multi family rental
- Lack of pride/ownership of the area
- Cultural barriers

- Communication barriers
- Residents may be leery of the process
- Proper communication needed
- Out of touch with real needs of community

Opportunities

- Hot market
- Community benefit agreements
- To increase shade
- To make streets more pedestrian oriented
- To educate the residents and merchants about the importance of trees
- The living cultures
- Attracts business development
- Developers
- City use (non)? profit to run programs in parks
- Areas like SW 1st Street have wide sidewalks which could accommodate trees
- Public schools image needs to be fostered
- Former residents have become affluent- give back to area
- Sierra inner city program
- Greenprint creates framework for additional funding
- Bond money to preserve historic property
- Set up development through a revolving fund
- City can use green space for programming after school, elderly
- Transfer of development rights
- Opportunity to discover community's urgent needs
- Funding resources

Threats

- Lack of enforcement by local government
- Greenspace maintenance and care
- Tree death
- Poor turnout by community
- Lack of interest in greening
- Doesn't satisfy short term needs of residents
- No funding for green development plan stops a plan
- Private industry uses greenprinting plan to further development agendas
- 80% of new development is in speculation so future problems?
- Community perceived as dangerous
- Public safety real or perceived
- Greenprint doesn't create sense of greenspace , no real 'green feel'
- Zoning
- Multifamily high rise developments will add to the overpopulation in the area
- Tree canopy could block street light
- Reduction of the existing open space
- High land values
- Out-migration of the lower class due to increasing rents
- Developers
- Developers will soon take over all open lots

ADJOURN

At this point, due to members' schedules, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be scheduled sometime near January 24, 2005. Announcements will be sent out along with a Preliminary Agenda for that meeting.

At the next meeting, the SWOT results will be reviewed and the Committee will move on to develop and designate its CORE VALUES, then draft a Vision Statement. Once the Vision Statement is finalized, Issues will be listed and categorized, Objectives will be developed and action steps.

IDEA PARKING LOT

*“Revolving fund to save historic properties.”
-Anonymous*