



Wednesday, February 11, 2015 3:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present: Chairman O. Barakat, and D. Goldstein

DIA/OED Staff Present: Aundra Wallace, Jim Klement, Alex Rudzinski, and Karen Underwood, DIA Executive Assistant

Representing Office of City Council: None

Representing Office of General Counsel: Susan Grandin, Cherry Shaw and Jason Teal

Chairman Barakat called the 2nd workshop to order at approximately 3:05 p.m.

I. DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE ORD. CODE THAT DEAL WITH ENFORCEMENT:

A. Chapter 518 – Jacksonville Property Safety and Maintenance Code

Mr. Teal provided a handout of Chapter 518, part 5 – Downtown property maintenance code requires property owners to maintain the outward appearance of their properties. Robert Prado, Municipal Code compliance Division Chief would be the contact person.

i. Part 5 – Jacksonville Downtown Property Maintenance Code

B. Chapter 307 – Historic

Mr. Teal provided a handout of Section 307.110 - Maintenance and repair of landmarks, landmark sites, and property in historic districts. These sections shall supply to maintenance and repair to landmarks, landmark sites, and contributing structures in historic districts, as well as all properties that have been officially listed individually or as a contributing structure with a historic district on the National Register, or deem eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Chapter 656 – Zoning

Mr. Teal commented that the Downtown Zoning Overlay is an attempt to urbanize the zoning code. There has been modifications to the zoning overlay to cover specific issues i.e., surface parking lots where an effort was made in order to regulate vacant properties downtown. In the comprehensive plan, one of the goals of the City is promote the upkeep and maintenance of Historic properties.

II. Means of enforcement processes

- a. Civil Citation – Chapter 609 is a judicial ordinance. The process requires a warning to be issued first and the fine is up to \$500.
- b. Special Magistrate – municipal code enforcement. When an inspector goes to the property and report that the owner is violation, a letter will be sent for a special magistrate hearing date. If the property is not repaired, it will be \$250 a day for everyday that it continues to grow until the violation is fixed. Once fines start rolling, there is a lien on the property. Mr. Teal distributed and discussed a handout of the Tax deed sale process flow chart, City-held tax certificates.
- c. Injunctive relief – filing lawsuit, safety code and enforcing test. This process happens when the others did not work. They are tested by an asset search, to see whether or not property owner has additional properties that they owned.

III. Types of and process for establishing code enforcement liens

- A. Nuisance abatement liens – Different from code enforcement liens and cannot settle because tax payer dollars have been spent to improve the property. Mr. Teal discussed the processes.
- B. Administrative liens – Roll-in fines.

IV. Foreclosing on a code enforcement lien. Jason Teal discussed

Robert Prado, Chief, Municipal Code Compliance Division stated that at the beginning of the enforcement process their division has to notify violators of the violations on the property. He referenced the City of Baltimore code enforcement having eight 8 full time investigators that locate ownerships to provide a notice in their hands to understand what the issues were with their buildings. He noted that communication with a property owner allowing dialogue is currently lacking in the City's code enforcement. The officers currently have a limited amount of access to research the owners and there is not a professional investigator on staff. It would help the division if they could have the resources to allow them to research when not having accurate ownership information.

Board Member Barakat asked Mr. Prado if the code could be modified to make their job easier and if there was anything they could do to change the process. Mr. Prado responded that the current process works well.

Mr. Prado explained where they were with the building located at 218 W. Church Street. Cherry Shaw, OGC commented that a foreclosure of law suit has been filed and one of the property owners that were sued is represented by Council. There are two 2 potential resolutions either the owner agrees to bring the building into compliance or the City continues with a foreclosure process and the outcome would be similar to the Bostwick Building process.

Mr. Prado stated that the department has six (6) CPAC zones and within those zones designated neighborhoods, downtown is a part of a designated neighborhood.

Board Member Barakat opened the floor for public comments

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kay Ehas commented about historic properties downtown and asked if the DIA could think about a policy to prevent buildings from deteriorating in the future. Mr. Prado responded that there was not a municipal code enforcement organization in the State that repairs buildings.

Jason Teal stated that he was not aware if there was anything in Chapter 307 that authorizes the City to go in and preserve the historic feature that is not otherwise a violation of the property safety code.

Lisa Sheppard, Historic Planning Department commented that they have information forthcoming regarding the potential national registered districts downtown. She mentioned that the receivership program seemed to be the best solution based on the City's tract record for Downtown.

Board Member Barakat suggested a 3rd workshop to be determined in the next couple of weeks with Mr. Prada, Mr. Teal and Susan Grandin. He will be following up with Guy Parola to conduct research and would like for him to put together a concise summary of what was learned so far to provide some improved recommendations.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Barakat adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:29 a.m.

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. Please contact Karen Underwood, Downtown Investment Authority at (904) 630-3492 or by email at karenu@coj.net.