

COUNCIL UPDATE MAY 2016

...from Jeff Hmara's Point of View



VILLAGE STRATEGIC PLANNING

In April, the Village Staff and Council updated the previous year's Strategic Vision 2016-2031 and Action Plan for 2016-2017...and, on May 3, 2016, about 40 RPB Residents provided their input to the updated plan through the fourth Citizen Summit in RPB...public participation was about level as previous year and needs to be expanded to increase the representation across our diverse community...once the public input is merged, the updated Strategic Plan will be finalized and posted on the RPB Website, in about a month...

So, what's in the Strategic Action Plan for this year?

After a lot of discussion, Council prioritized the list of proposed 2016-2017 actions to provide direction to the Village Staff...some of the Top Priority Projects/Actions for the coming year include: Commons Amphitheater; Mobility Plan and Fee; Cultural Center Expansion; Senior Living Complex....and, the High Priority Actions include: Senior Citizen Needs Assessment and Report; RV and Boat Parking Lot (Phase 2); Southern Properties Park and others...each Action has its own schedule, against which progress will be measured and reported to Council and posted on RPB Website, quarterly...

It's important to recognize that the actions align with and are assigned to specific Strategic Goals and, consequently, with Strategic Vision for RPB in 2031. Most importantly, the accomplishment of the planned actions will move the Village toward its Goals and long-range Vision...the annual Action Plan also provides a basis for budgeting each year, which aligns spending with the overall Strategic Plan, Goals and Actions...and, the Quarterly Progress Reports will let us know if we're on schedule or not and prompt adjustments,

if needed...for additional details see royalpalmbeach.com/strategic plan in June for updated RPB Strategic Plan.

PBC SALES TAX INCREASE PROPOSAL AND INTRA-LOCAL AGREEMENT

When this sales tax increase was first proposed, late last year, it had a much simpler focus. Originally, the proceeds from a 1% increase in Sales Tax was to allow the County to catch-up on infrastructure work that had fallen behind during the Great Recession. The proceeds would cover repair and replacement of county roads, bridges and buildings. The Cities would also get a portion of the proceeds for similar types of infrastructure work. Subsequently, the proposed Sales Tax Increase morphed into something much more complex...however, just last week, the County removed two of the most controversial elements in the proposal, returning it to the original intent. It's important to keep in mind that all of the actions of both County, School Board and Cities taken to date, merely allow the proposal to appear on the November Ballot for PBC Voters to decide whether to allow the Sales Tax Increase or not.

On April 21st, the RPB Council agreed to sign (Mayor) the required Intra-local Agreement to do its part to move the Sales Tax Increase proposal along to the November Ballot. RPB Mayor's signature does not indicate Village support for the proposition, but merely allows it to be voted on by all PBC Voters. Yesterday, May 10th, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners met with PBC School Board and agreed on two changes to the specifics of the proposed Sales Tax Increase; first change was to allow the 1% increase to end earlier than 10 years, if it generates \$2.7B in a shorter time; and, the second change agreed to was to allow the School Board to withdraw from the joint agreement if the County does not give final approval by June 7 and if the cities (representing 51% of County population) don't follow suit by June 10.

Because of these latest changes, RPB Council will need to decide once more to approve or disapprove the revised version of this Intra-local Agreement, at the upcoming May 19th Council Meeting.

PROPOSED AMPHITHEATER FOR COMMONS PARK

This amphitheater concept was chosen by Council as a Priority Project in the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan...we have had a lot of success with our first couple of years of major events in Commons Park...Council agreed that to continue with these events and make them even better by learning from our experience and by being creative with our improvements, an amphitheater is warranted.

One specific reason to consider building this amphitheater is to eliminate the recurring cost of renting a temporary stage for each event...by building a permanent facility, the amphitheater will pay for itself, at some point...rough estimate of amphitheater cost is between \$650K and \$800K, of which \$300+K is a state grant.

Another, and perhaps, an even more urgent reason is to reduce the “spillover sound” from the music and other event-related activities taking place during each live performance event.

Several Commons park neighbors have complained and more than 100 have signed a petition asking to reduce the sound and the frequency of ‘loud events.’”

During our West Fest Event, earlier this year, I used an APP on my smart phone for sound measurement while standing about 200 feet or more from the front of the stage, the sound meter showed measurements of 86 and 82 dBA...and, each time I took a reading, the APP displayed a warning: *If you are going to stay in the area for any time, you should wear earplugs...*also, it was our experience that in order to carry on a conversation we had to raise our voice levels, and sometimes shout to be heard by one another at a distance out to 300+ feet from the stage, ...this doesn’t seem to be conducive to creating a community environment, where you can get to know one another...a primary objective of these events...so, what can we do?

Here’s what the project architect recommended:

- **DETERMINE OBJECTIONABLE NOISE LEVELS – MAKE IT BETTER THAN CURRENT TEMP FACILITIES**
- **CONTROL OF SOUND SYSTEMS**
- **ORIENTATION AND ENCLOSURE OF NOISE PRODUCERS (SPEAKERS LOCATIONS)**
- **CREATE AND ENFORCE OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS AND RESTRICTIONS**
- **LANDSCAPE AND BERMS**

The architect presented two alternative conceptual designs, each with different features, and the Council chose the one pictured below for further development...



The project architect has a sound engineer on staff, who will be running sound tests in the area and, based on the results, he will guide the detailed design work on the amphitheater. The design is scheduled to be completed in May, allowing a Planning & Zoning Commission review and a request for contractor bids, in July.

AS USUAL, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON THESE OR OTHER TOPICS AFFECTING US IN RPB, PLEASE CONTACT ME AT: jhmara@royalpalmbeach.com or (561)371-3581.