

COUNCIL UPDATE for DECEMBER 2015...from Jeff Hmara's Point of View

A LOT OF DEVELOPMENT GOING ON, IN AND AROUND THE VILLAGE OF ROYAL PALM BEACH

With the local economy recovering at a steady, albeit, slow pace, we are seeing a lot of proposals for building in our village...the decisions to approve or deny a developer's application to build in RPB must follow a comprehensive process to ensure that it fits into the documented "big picture" of our village... the big picture is described in the Village Comprehensive Plan...this plan lays out what can be built in each section of RPB, so that development will be intentional, not random or haphazard...Comp Plan is required by the state and is updated periodically to provide consistent, balanced growth, in keeping with the Village's character and citizens' needs into the future...Comp Plan also requires proof that a proposed development will have adequate infrastructure and open space to accommodate the growth it brings...for example: enough roads, schools, parks, drainage, fire-rescue and police, other facilities...another big picture document guiding growth in RPB is the Village's Strategic Plan and Vision Statement...it is reviewed/updated each year as part of our strategic planning process by Village Staff, Council and Citizens...so, the Village Strategic Plan, the Village Comp Plan, the Village Annual Budget, all of these taken together with State Statutes and Village Ordinances guide the Council and Staff to legally sufficient, consistent and fair decisions that are likely to maintain our Village's unique character, while taking best advantage, for the Village, of opportunities, such as:

- **Southern Blvd. Property** (just West of Lowes)—200+ acres that was Unincorporated County rural residential surrounded by VRPB and Wellington...it is now annexed into VRPB as a future mix of Single Family, Multi-family, Commercial and Public Space...annexation has been with unanimous agreement of property owners...
- **Cypress Key Property** (just East of Publix on Southern)—about 34 acres of land that is zoned for "mixed use", with the majority being developed as single family, multi-family/townhouses and public space...the 10 acres nearest Southern Blvd. will be a mix of retail and office space, once built out...residential construction is underway.
- **Crestwood North Property** (old Waste Water Treatment Plant on Crestwood Blvd.)—earlier this year this Village-owned property was put on the market and sold to Lennar Homes for development...the sale not only brought a good price (\$35M), but the buyer understood what would be acceptable to the Village before making an offer...as it turned out, Lennar has developed a detailed plan (Site Plan) that looks very similar to what the Village advertised as acceptable...not only did this innovative approach result in a good sales price, but it helped to keep the development compatible and appropriate for the

surrounding neighborhoods and the Village overall...the sale should be complete (closing) this month and the building of 385 homes should start in early 2016

Of course, there are, and will continue to be, other less-than-major development decisions involving smaller, yet important, parcels of land within RPB. For example: Race Trac Gas Station and Convenience Store, proposed for commercially zoned 2.4 acre parcel at corner of RPB and Southern Blvds.; 60 Room Hotel proposed for commercially zoned 3 acre parcel near South Florida Fairgrounds on Southern Blvd. These will continue to get the full attention of the Village Staff and the Village Council, as well. The final decisions on all of these will be based on what each opportunity will bring and what it will mean to the character and quality of life in our community, going forward...all of these intended to move us toward our Vision for RPB.

COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG (Proposed Sales Tax Increase)

County Staff and County Commissioners continue to look for ways to fund backlog on roads, bridges and facilities repair/replacement to a tune of \$650-\$750M over the next 10 years...cutting back on infrastructure maintenance during the Great Recession, to avoid increasing sales/property taxes, has put the County and many of its cities way behind in road, bridge, parks and other facility maintenance...Bonds and Property/Ad Valorem Tax increases were less desirable ways of raising the needed additional funds...County's preferred approach to catching-up is to put a proposed Sales Tax Increase on next November's Ballot and let the voters decide... it was noted that 56 of the state's 67 counties have already increased their sales taxes to pay for infrastructure...

At the last PBC League of Cities Meeting, County Administrator, Verdenia Baker updated the Board of Directors and got a consensus opinion that supported pursuing a Surcharge/Sales Tax Increase for the November Ballot...whether the increase will be ½% or 1% will depend on the total cost of the lists of infrastructure projects...if approved by voters, November 2016, the use of the additional sales tax revenue generated would be limited to the listed/approved infrastructure projects (no new capital projects) and the actual use of these funds would be reviewed by an Oversight Committee to ensure they are spent only for those projects...the PBC School District and PBC Cultural Council may be part of this, since they have infrastructure backlogs, as well.. but, that has not been determined...if there is a sales tax increase, it will be for a limited, although fairly long, period of 10 years...at the end of that time the Sales Tax would return to the current 6%...at this point, it appears that the Fire-Rescue proposal would probably not be part, since it would require a permanent sales tax increase, not one that would have a "sunset"...cities would receive 40% (or less) of the increased sales tax revenue for infrastructure repair/replacement projects, on a pro-rata basis of population...this would help cities with significant road, bridge, park maintenance projects... a major report is due

to the County Staff on December 3rd listing projects and costs. Board of County Commissioners will have to decide in January or February, whether a proposed sales tax increase will be put on the ballot in November.

VACANCY ON RPB EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD

EAB is composed of 5 citizen volunteers, who serve 2 year terms, “at the pleasure of the Village Council”, under the guidance of a Council-appointed Liaison...in addition to the Village Scholarship selection process, identifying 10 RPB Students as recipients, the Board meets monthly to receive reports with specific focus from our School Board Member, our Area 5 Superintendent, School District Staff and Principals/Staff of all RPB Schools...the EAB Members also participate in SAC and School Board Meetings, as well as RPB School Events, throughout the school year...the Board Presidents and Council Liaison also meet with School District Staff to discuss specific items of interest/concern in RPB Schools...if you are interested in serving on the EAB, please complete an Application Form that can be found online (www.royalpalmbeach.com) or at the Village Clerk’s Office.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Don’t forget the Holiday Celebrations in RPB, this month...they are listed online on village website...hope to see you there...

We’re not far from the end of another good year in RPB...so, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your involvement in our community throughout 2015...and wish you and your families a very Happy and Prosperous New Year—2016!