

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of The Town Clerk

MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 15, 2002 REGARDING THE TOWN HALL SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by President Jack McDonald at 9:30 a.m. On roll call, the following Elected Officials were found to be in attendance: Mayor Lesly Smith; President Jack McDonald; President Pro-Tem Sam McLendon; Councilman Brooks; Councilman Norman Goldblum; and Councilman Allen Wyett. Also attending for all or part of the meeting were: Town Manager Peter Elwell; Town Attorney John Randolph; Assistant Town Manager Tom Bradford; Finance Director Jane Skittone; Planning, Zoning & Building Director Robert Moore; Fire-Rescue Chief Kent Koelz; Zoning Administrator Paul Castro; Town Engineer Jim Bowser; Police Chief Michael Reiter; Police Major Gary Sallenbach; Planning Administrator Tim Frank; and Town Clerk Mary Pollitt.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Town Clerk Pollitt. The pledge of allegiance was led by President McDonald.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilman Brooks made a motion to approve the agenda. President Pro-Tem McLendon seconded the motion. On roll call, the motion carried 5-0.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF TOWN HALL SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY

Mark Marsh from Digby Bridges, Marsh & Associates and Bridges, Marsh & Carmo, Inc. introduced Digby Bridges, Jim Carmo, John DePalma from McMahon Associates Traffic Engineers, and Jorge Sanchez, Phil Maddux and Daryl LeGand from Sanchez & Maddux Landscape Architects.

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Mr. Marsh introduced the three dimensional model that represented the goal to study the district to determine how the new development would meet the criteria of the existing district.

The following is a verbatim transcript of Mr. Marsh's comments:

"The study intended to establish conceptual architectural solutions, and the key word is conceptual, I keep referring to that. These are concepts that we are showing you here. The only affirmative or designed portion of this is the new fire station, but everything else that we are going to show you here is basically a conceptual design. So these architectural solutions which take into account overall district and neighborhood impacts as opposed to sites specific concerns. As you recall, we were developing and designing the fire station on a site specific location, and hence the need to look at the district as a whole. I think that we, hopefully, will show today that was a correct direction by the Town Council to have us look at the overall district rather than just a site specific.

"The paradigm of this project is really the northwest end of Worth Avenue, and Digby can show you some photographs there. We feel that collage of buildings best depicts the kind of feel of what makes the Town of Palm Beach unique. We have come up with a phrase, oppidum silhouette. This was a challenge to us, and I have to thank Digby. He was actually the brain child of that word 'oppidum'. It is Latin for 'town'. We felt very uncomfortable by referring to this as an urban setting or urban edge or using the urban context, so we came up with this word 'oppidum silhouette' which we will use throughout the presentation.

"The architecture that exists on Worth Avenue is really what we have termed an active architecture. It is integration of buildings, pedestrians, vehicles, and I think it depicts this combination of massing and architectural solutions which I think could be related or promoted within this district. I think Mizner was the best, and I'll just quote from the brochure:

'Making a building look traditional as though it fought its way from a small, unimportant structure to a great, rambling structure'

and that is just paraphrasing. What we are seeing here, I think the concepts are the availability for this district, to create this architecture that is not foreign. It grows over time, it evolves, and I think we will try to demonstrate that primarily through the three dimensional model.

"The issues that contradict what we are proposing here are obviously some of the current zoning criteria which we refer to in our report and we'll get into more detail....that tends to inhibit what I think we are all looking for in this district, and I think it is important to counteract these restrictive ordinances through creating incentives for, not only you as a

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public entity, but also for private development and create a distinctive charm and ambience which I think can be created and reinforced in this district.

"The intent of this project or this study is to describe the manner in which the ethos of the Town of Palm Beach Town Hall Historical District, as it is embodied by component structures, can be successfully recreated, preserved, and enhanced with a view of the District's heritage as well as its future, and the key word is future. What we are showing you here, again, is a concept, but I think hopefully it could be used as a guideline for the future.

"What we have done is come up with three, and we've termed them architectural solutions, or elements that we have defined in this study, and they're basically traffic, the traffic patterns, both vehicle and pedestrian, the zoning as it controls the architectural solutions, and the third is the landscaping and hardscaping issues.

"I'll speak just general in traffic, and I'm going to turn it over to John DePalma just to give you an explanation of what we've done and I want to put up the caveat that this is a preliminary study. It's not a full blown traffic analysis. It's a study, so there are factually correct elements of that study but it is not a full blown traffic analysis. What we feel in traffic is that the current patterns around the district, primarily around the east and west sides of Town Hall, are very aggressive. They are aggressive by the fact that we have two way traffic on the north end of Town and south end of Town and as it comes to the district area, there is a one way, two lane bypass, and it's what we have called a speed funnel, and I think that all of us have used this building enough to recognize that there is a hazardous situation crossing from the west to the east to Town Hall and our feeling is that the automobile has really dominated this area. The Police Department did, a few months ago, put out a speed recording devices, and I actually, personally, saw vehicles going at 55 mph. I think the Chief told me that they had some in excess of 60 mph that have gone through the area. We recognize that as a very serious problem for the success of this area, and what we are going to do today is going to propose traffic calming elements. These are elements that are very passive, not active, not stop signs, not speed bumps, not any of these contrived traffic elements that have now become common in other cities and towns around here. We want to create safety, again the safety element - the speed limit is crucial for safety - currently it doesn't exist or it isn't adhered to so we want to address that issue. With doing that, we feel the patterns we are going to show you here will allow for some increased enhancement within the area, both for pedestrians and in terms of landscaping to some of the reduction of roadways to again supplement some of the shortfalls in terms of pedestrian circulation of landscaping.

"The most important thing is with the new addition of the fire station, there is going to be a loss of on-street parking in this immediate area, and John will show you that what we are proposing is to re-instate some angled parking which historically has been present in the Town almost from the first day the automobile arrived. By doing that, we can actually

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mitigate some of the losses and it is almost an even swap.

The following is a verbatim transcript of John DePalma's comments:

"As Mark said, we integrated pedestrian safety and traffic flow as well as evaluating the loss of parking by the proposed fire house. What we did was to evaluate the traffic patterns over a couple of different days and on weekends between Brazilian and Chilian, and actually expanded the study a little bit. If you look at your entry ways, they are basically single lanes with some turn lanes between Royal Palm Way and Worth Avenue. So, what we did to extend, if you will, the themes down the middle of South County Road between Brazilian and Chilian, is to look at some controlled, channelized medians between Royal Palm Way and Worth Avenue that extends the character of where the Town Hall complex is, both north and south.

"The pedestrian feature is something that was very crucial to this project, integrating it with the architecture and the walkways along the corridor. We traded bold outs, actually bringing the pedestrian conflict and the civilian traffic closer together. That also creates a narrower path for the pedestrian to cross from one side to the other. As you saw on the document, some of the issues that Digby Bridges and Marsh illustrated was the pedestrian safety across the corridor, the fact that people have to almost run if you will to get across the street. I actually saw that in some of the newspaper articles recently. So what this concept does, it creates that theme of pedestrian safety as well as integrating the civilian traffic.

"Mark used the word 'traffic calming'. While it is true in the traditional sense of the word 'calming', it slows the traffic down. What this particular plan actually does is integrate the current posted speed limit of 30 mph and maintains that through the corridor. As Mark indicated, the Police Chief recorded people doing 55 and excess of that. Well, it's posted for 30. This particular channelized, median situation integrated with both angled parking and pedestrian safety features such as crosswalks that might be enhanced with pavers and the like, will certainly add an enhanced safety feature to that program and integrate the whole portion of your plan of traffic and pedestrian ways as well as creating some additional on-street parking spaces due to the loss of the fire house. We feel the angled parking will give some benefit to increase spaces along the east and west sides of South County Road.

"In addition to this thing, we know that South County Road is a State arterial through your community. We have met several times with the Department of Transportation - their traffic experts as well as several people in their policy making level of the Department. They are quite receptive to the plan, and they would encourage the Town to speak with them as this study progresses to evaluate some of the conditions that can take place along this particular artery, but they are quite receptive to the particular plan.

"In addition to meeting with the D.O.T. about their receptive conditions of these plans such

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as a narrower roadway width, on-street parking, and improved pedestrian facilities, they are also receptive to the Town taking over ownership of the corridor. We have to discuss obviously the boundaries of where that might exist and also deal with the State redirection of State Route A1A through the community, but they are receptive to the particular plan and the ownership transition issue.”

Mark Marsh's comments:

“If I could just address a few things John didn’t discuss—the Fire house emergency response pattern has dictated, basically, how the circulation really works in the district. This is the proposed apparatus bay where the largest pieces of the equipment will be stored and the response would be to come, obviously, west and north along County Road going either east along Australian or north.

“Now, the patterns we are trying to create here that I want to address in a little bit more detail—what we are proposing is that the current two-way roadway which exists on the east side and on the west side, especially the Town Hall block—we are proposing to reduce that to effectively a one and a half roadway which is very similar, or almost exact, to what currently exists on the west side of the Mizner Fountain Park with the parallel parking. Initially, as I mentioned earlier, in response to losing the on-street with the new proposed fire station, we had looked at doing angled parking throughout the whole district. However, with the angled parking, it was reducing this effectively to a one lane and both ourselves and John’s office and D.O.T. and some of the Town’s staff felt that it would really create a congested situation. So what we have done is re-instate parallel parking with a one and a half lane roadway which is sufficient for safe getting in and out of the parking area and still allowing a flow of traffic through that area. What we feel very strongly about, is the angled parking which was at one time existing on the west or east side of the fountain block which now is just turned into a parallel parking situation. We feel strongly that it should be converted back to the angle parking which currently exists on the west side. By doing this, as I mentioned, we can mitigate some of the loss of parking around Town Hall Square area. I think it works quite well. There haven’t been any problems that we are aware of or made aware of, and I think it could really create better parking, achieve this calming affect that we are talking about. As John mentioned, it’s not a structured type of calming, it’s more just allowing traffic to slow down and achieve the traffic speed it’s supposed to in this area.

“I think there are other circulation areas that we have identified that are problems, and the north end of the fountain is an intersection that we felt, through the study, was a very hazardous and a very bad traffic pattern. What we have, again, is a speed funnel of traffic coming north at quite a fair clip coming into an intersection that is really not defined in terms of pattern. There is some current striping here at the north end, but you are coming into – from one way traffic to a two way traffic situation. You’re also trying to achieve pedestrian patterns across this intersection, and what we are proposing here is to introduce an island,

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not dissimilar to what is currently at the south end of Town Hall. The reason for this is to create a by-pass which for traffic, especially the emergency vehicles that need to go south, that there is sufficient radii to achieve that turn, but also for the civilians or citizens to be able to make that turn south. It delineates the traffic that wants to go north; it delineates the traffic that wants to come south, but more importantly, it now achieves some of the bulbous extension, which John mentioned, which will create a much clearer and definite and safer pedestrian pattern.

"The issues about traffic being displaced from this area to adjacent residential streets or to South Ocean is real. There is a minimal displacement or we would predict there would be a minimal displacement, but again, in terms of traffic, it is so minimal that it really doesn't represent a sufficient impact. We feel that by what we are doing here, is recapturing or re-instating the original or close to the original vehicular pattern that was here. Over the years, as I said, we have given way to the automobile. Everything along the current east and west sections, especially around Town Hall which obviously the park gives us some relief on the north, is totally dominated by the automobile. We feel very strongly that this is not a good and positive situation and could be improved and enhanced. What we are doing here is really not restricting traffic, we're just re-instating it back to the type of patterns that existed before we all got quite crazed and paved from curb to curb.

"What I would like to do now is go through some the architectural solutions vis a vis some of the zoning issues."

President McDonald asked for comments from the Mayor and Town Council members before Mr. Marsh continued.

Councilman Goldblum's remarks:

"There is already on the north end of the park...is that going to be enough to allow the fire trucks to swing through there?"

John DePalma:

"Yes, it was designed to accommodate the flow of the fire truck—the largest vehicle that would be able to use that facility to circulate around the middle island on South County Road."

Councilman Goldblum:

"The same radius that is on the south end of this building?"

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John DePalma:

"Both of these have been enlarged slightly—you can see the yellow— it encroaches in the existing gray area. It's been made to accommodate the vehicular path."

Councilman Wyett:

"I want to compliment on paying attention to what I call kamikaze drive here in Palm Beach. You literally take your life in your hands as you pointed out trying to cross at either end of Town Hall, and likewise you have a lot of problems with the north end of the park, so I very much would like to see the idea of slowing the traffic down which does go 40 - 50 miles per hour with no regard to the pedestrians whatsoever. People go right through those striped lines which State law says you are supposed to slow down and stop for pedestrians."

Councilman Brooks:

"Yes, gentlemen, I'd like to compliment you also on making the attempt to solve this. I would be interested in discussing the possibility, as you mentioned, Mark, of the Town taking ownership from Worth Avenue to Royal Palm. Maybe you or Mr. Elwell could discuss the bureaucratic hurdles that would be involved, and an estimate on the time so that also we would be able to put the signs in the middle of the road that pedestrians have the right of way when they are in the crosswalk as distinct from now when pedestrians are in a war zone."

John DePalma:

"I think that in one of the staff meetings, the Chief mentioned or referred to the current pedestrian signage that is on Worth Avenue. They are very successful. I think we could address those issues as well."

Councilman Brooks:

"Mr. Elwell, I don't think he answered the question on the ownership. How does the Town assume ownership on that stretch?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"We could discuss that with the D.O.T. From the initial conversations that Mr. Marchman and his associates have had with D.O.T., they, at least, seem willing to discuss that. I think that one thing that we ought to bear in mind, is if you, as a group, wish for us to pursue that with the D.O.T., it is very unlikely that they would look at such a short segment of roadway for the swap. I think that what we need to look at, for the continuity of A1A coming through

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the Town, would be the segment of South County Road where it meets Ocean Boulevard to Royal Palm Way would be very likely what the Town would assume responsibility for and in exchange for that, D.O.T. would assume responsibility for Ocean Boulevard from that same point where it meets South County Road up to Royal Palm Way and then the 100 block of Royal Palm Way. We'd be looking at a much larger transaction, if you will, but the same concept, and I think it's certainly worth exploring if you want to pursue the implementation of this."

President McDonald:

"So the answer, Mr. Brooks, is there is no answer yet."

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

"I have what I think are some serious objections to the narrowing of the roadways. Already, at the intersection of Royal Palm and South County, when anyone is trying to park or unpark in that block, the traffic tends to back up onto Royal Palm considerably, and I just hate to give up two lanes of road and I think there is—maybe a judgement call in the report—but it indicates that there is only one lane, I believe, between Brazilian and Australian or Australian to Chilian, but actually it is two travel lanes existing there. I hate to see you narrow – I would rather accomplish speed control by law, by police action."

Mayor Smith:

"Going back to the question about D.O.T. taking over South Ocean Boulevard in exchange. Would that also obligate them to take over the maintenance of the seawalls, because the seawalls protect the road? And, if so, do you really think they would do that?"

John DePalma:

"I am not exactly sure I can answer that question accurately, Mayor, but the D.O.T. was receptive in the meetings we had. As Mr. Elwell said, you certainly have to look at a larger traffic study because it involves the circulation, and D.O.T.'s continuity, as Mr. Marsh said, their system. There was even discussion amongst our team that they might even take A1A over Southern Boulevard and go back the other way on the other side of the island. So, there are issues that have to be dealt with. As far as maintenance, D.O.T. is receptive to a lot of different features, but I can't answer your question."

Mayor Smith:

"Right. I think that is not something that they would be receptive to. My other questions were: Looking at the traffic pattern that you are planning on Brazilian Avenue going east,

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between County Road and Hibiscus, are you saying there, because you are placing a traffic island on the north end, that would be a right turn only at Brazilian? Would that be a right turn only, because obviously they couldn't angle across the traffic island to make a left turn on County Road. Is that what you are anticipating?"

John DePalma:

"We've actually produced this curved line which would be continuous across here (inaudible) so this particular motorist is still able to go straight, right, or left. We are not restricting any movement through this intersection. Only, we are channelizing for the safety of the fire truck."

Mayor Smith:

"Right. All right. It just didn't appear that the lines were lining up. And the other thing is, what about the parking places on the east side of Town Hall? The way I saw the plan, there were five places including one handicapped. There aren't many percs to this job, but one of them is parking in front of Town Hall, and there are six of us sitting here at the table."

John DePalma:

"Yes, we've taken a very conservative approach. We feel that we could get a sixth here. We have recognized that we will lose a couple in the north end, but I think it is possible to reinstate at least one more. The issue on the handicapped, this is something we talked about to staff, and for purposes of this report, the ADA or access to the building...the attempt will be to maximize what we can get. I think physically we can get six. We just wanted to be conservative. I know we are on hallowed ground there."

Mayor Smith:

"Yes, absolutely, but you are also looking at doing landscaping in front of the Town Hall there on the east side, and I believe that is going to take away the parking. You're talking about moving the Royal Palms over to the east side. That would certainly narrow the road, and I think that is something that I would not consider. Frankly, I like the Royal Palms where they are, but that's my opinion."

John DePalma:

"One of the other items in terms of jurisdictional change or proposal to change from an F.D.O.T. back to the Town, is the possibility that F.D.O.T. may do some improvements prior to their abandoning or turning it over to the Town, so there are some real positives that I think we should pursue."

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Town Manager Elwell:

"Yes, just quickly on the question of the seawalls, I think there certainly would be many details to be discussed and worked out with F.D.O.T. if we were looking at a swap. I don't think the seawalls, Mayor, would be a complication there. I don't...I wouldn't anticipate D.O.T. seeking any control over those, primarily because of the cost of maintaining them and because most of them are in private ownership other than what the Town owns along Mid-Town Beach. The others are in private ownership, and D.O.T. has that same situation along much of A1A where the seawalls are privately owned."

Councilman Wyett:

"...a parking problem. Do I also detect that on the west side of Town Hall that we are losing some spaces?"

Mark Marsh:

"No, we're actually in a net situation.... same as before."

Police Chief Mike Reiter:

"I agree, of course, that in this general area there are a number of problems for pedestrians. Vehicles do, typically, speed in the north bound lane just to the east of us now. I think that is partly because if a motorist is coming north on County Road and count, prior to getting here, two stop lights; they are in a one lane traffic situation, and the first opportunity that the road opens up, is right here next to Town Hall, and there is a natural propensity for some people to accelerate when that occurs. Enforcement action is a band aide. As long as an officer is there writing tickets, we get a higher level of compliance. We have been successful so far in our attempts to slow down traffic at cross walks with the signage that we have put in a number of places, primarily Worth Avenue. I hope to ask the Department of Transportation to give us a waiver for certain cross walks on an experimental basis to put the same signage in place where they own the roadway. I hope to do that at the end of the season when I have all of my data collected.

"I do have some real concerns about emergency vehicles leaving the police station and the fire station. As you all realize, a one and one-half wide lane with parallel parking, if a large vehicle backs out of the parallel parking, they must stop the flow of the traffic in order to return to the traffic flow themselves. That does present a hazard for fire rescue vehicles that are already committed to the block in front of the police station. In going north there, one vehicle could slow them up and I have real concerns about that."

Mayor Smith:

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"I thought I remembered, Chief, that the parking was changed by the Police Department because of the concerns about the parallel parking. Is that why you changed it three or four years ago?"

Police Chief Reiter:

"Yes, it has been sometime longer than that, but that is the reason, and that's when the sub-post office was located there where there were a large number of short trips, and we had a large problem with double parking there as well, but the parallel parking did slow traffic in that area. That is the primary reason that we changed it."

Mayor Smith:

"Right, and how many parking spaces are there now in front of what is the Café '1 Europe building? Four or Five? Seven, existing. Parallel parking will give us nine-two more spaces. So, I think it might be in that area you would have to leave it, because of the concerns of the Police Department the way it is."

Fire Rescue Chief Kent Koelz:

From the beginning when we were working with the architect Mr. Marsh there, I had just a few concerns as far as getting in and out of the station. I've looked at both our existing station the way we have it now and the proposed station on the Beaumont Parking Lot and I do not feel there is any difference in our response, as far as coming out and being able to go north or south, east or west. It looks relatively the same. The only concerns that I do have and Chief Reiter and myself talked as recently as yesterday about this is that parking area in that north block. As Chief Reiter stated, once we commit, we are able to make the turn coming out of the Fire Station, we would be coming out facing west and make the turn and go straight up Australian, if we knew the block had traffic problems. Once we make that commitment, if someone were to panic or whatever--of course this could happen now with parallel parking and the street could be blocked, but that was my only concern, blocking traffic once we were in that block."

Councilman Goldblum:

"Chief, we're not going to lose any time going south on South County, coming around that radius and going..?"

Chief Koelz:

"No, because we do that right now. We come out the Fire Station, go up to the north end, make a turn and come all the way back, because our trucks are not able to make that turn and

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go directly south. So, it is the same difference as pulling out from the new facility as the old."

President McDonald asked for public comment regarding the traffic and safety portion of the presentation.

Public Comments

Leslie Evans, owner of the Daily News Building, Member of the Royal Poinciana Business Assn. and the Palm Beach Business Group and a member of the Greater South County Road Association.

"I just wanted to say, first of all, without rambling too much, but I heard the word 'sensitive, sensitive, sensitive' here from the presenters. I don't think they were that sensitive. There were never any meetings with any of the property owners nor with any of the merchants in this area, and in their acknowledgments, they acknowledged the South County Merchants Association which does not even exist. So, I just wanted to say they should have listened to the people who have buildings here, who work here, who actually live in Town here.

"I have a couple of major concerns about this. I still have not heard what the net loss of parking is with the Beaumont lot and some of the work they are doing, but it looks like they are going to lose four parking spots right on the street here in front of the Beaumont lot which concerns me. In looking at my building which is at the corner of Brazilian and South County, they have expanded green space which looks like it is going to cost at least one spot on Brazilian and looking at a couple of the spots next to Town Hall, it looks like they might lose some spots.

"My concern here is that I don't think they have really done their homework. You don't need to have...there are other things you can have besides traffic lights and speed bumps to slow the traffic and calm it a little bit, and this can be worked out with F.D.O.T. because I have worked with F.D.O.T. on Royal Poinciana which, you know, I have been a pain in your neck on that, but we've worked with them on a certain number of things. What you can do, is you could put brick pavers there where there are sidewalks. You can put calming strips...you know when you go to a toll booth, you hear strips, you hear a noise. That causes people to slow down. That was never looked at as far as I know.

"As far as overhead lights or lights that would be on the sidewalk that would be flashing to warn people that there is a cross walk, you may not be able to put anything in the street right now because of F.D.O.T., but you could put a flashing warning light on the sidewalks. Looking at some of the plans that they have, they have a new cross walk coming over the north end of the park there which to me is just ludicrous. Right now, you have one which goes in front of the antique store over there on the north part of that intersection, but they're

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showing a new island there with a cross walk across it. What you are doing, you are adding one more cross walk to an area that is already extremely dangerous, and I think, frankly, that ..you talk about suicide or kamikaze, I walk around this area every day. I would never consider walking across right in front of my building over there. I think what you need to do is to be able to enforce or somehow show the existing cross walks. Just adding another one does not solve the situation.

"I think another concern here that I have with traffic is that they totally failed to look at ..you're probably taking away 30 to 35 parking spots with the Beaumont lot. You are also building more offices here in Town Hall for Planning, Building, and Zoning. The old adage is: 'If you build it, they will come.' I guarantee if you build those offices down here and expand it, you will have more employees; you will have more traffic; you will have more people; you will have more cars. The Police Department used to be in this building..moved across the street. They now have already expanded. They're getting more people. I understand that, but, you know what you are doing? You are adding more square footage, and you're not adding any parking spaces. My concern here is with a lot of traffic, and I have contended this for a long time, and they have never done a traffic study. A lot of the problem here, especially during season, is not necessarily the cars driving on the street, but it's the cars driving on the street looking for a parking spot. I myself have gone around my building four, five, six times on many occasions to try and find a parking spot. How much does that add to the traffic count? In the pictures that they have, the elevations, it's showing the Scotti Building which is Café 'L Europe, it's showing a second floor on that--not one additional parking space. I know this is a rendition. Over here where the gas station is, Gray's Mobil, that shows a two story building there. It doesn't show much parking, which concerns me. Above C. Orrico it shows a second floor being added. It doesn't show any additional parking there. My concern here is that you are adding a lot of square footage here. You are obviously going to have people coming to those offices. You are going to have people working in those offices. You are going to increase the traffic, and there is no parking, and the fact without parking, you are just going to increase the trips on the street.

"I think what they need to do is go back -- I thought the strategic planning that they had --the focus groups were very, very valuable. I think they should show the courtesy and the sensitivity to the Town here to maybe have an open meeting where people can come in -- the merchants. Again, to me, it is shocking that I own one of the major buildings here at Town Square, and nobody has ever bothered to ask me from this group what I think about this. Well, neither have they asked any of the merchants, and, again, I find it rather disturbing that they misquoted a group's name here. There was never a presentation at the Greater South County Road Association asking for any input. I have a number of other problems with this too, but I will defer this. I still think that without addressing the parking, the traffic problems only get worse with what you are planning to do here.

"I would throw one other thing which is probably crazy, but maybe it's time to start thinking

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about taking the Planning, Building, and Zoning Department and moving that to West Palm. You have the Public Works over there now, and that seems to be working. Right now, this is congested, all of the Town here. Australian is a mess, and Chilian with the Town cars. Walk down there. Walk down Australian, and you would think you were walking down a branch of the Police Department with all of the Police cars. What are we doing to our neighborhoods here? With their traffic suggestions, they are talking about putting more traffic on Ocean. I mean I don't know if those people there really want to see the trucks coming down there. I just think this really needs some more study, and something that they said they were bringing in, sensitivity, which I see nothing of."

Polly Earl, Director of the Preservation Foundation:

"I understand your kind of taking this in sections, but we have a comment that is both general and, of course, relates to sections, and so, perhaps, this is an appropriate time to read it to you. You have received this as a letter from the Preservation Foundation officers and executive committee members who were vitally concerned and involved with trying to comment and analyze this study, but I would also like to read it into the record:

'On behalf of the Preservation Foundation, we are writing to offer our comments on the proposed oppidium silhouette plan by Digby Bridges, Marsh & Associates to be considered by the Town Council at its January 15, 2002, meeting. As you know, the Preservation Foundation has a long standing interest and major investment in the Town Square area beginning with our funding of the exterior restoration of Town Hall in 1989 and continuing with our purchase and redevelopment of the former gas station.

'Palm Beach's landmarked Town Hall Square is a significant historic area, and the character of its architecture is, despite some infill, of outstanding quality. The oppidium silhouette plan proposes to altar many historic features of the square as well as redefining its pedestrian and traffic orientation. We believe the first principles of historic preservation, as recently articulated by David Farrow, Administrator, Bureau of Historic Preservation from Tallahassee, in his Landmarks Commission Workshop, October 17, 2001, right here, rely on defining the critical features of the landmarked area. After study of the oppidium plan, our conclusion is that it does not adequately define the critical features to be preserved in our unique Town Hall Square District and does not reflect a careful analysis of the Garden Club's plan which was approved and adopted by the Town in 1929. In particular, we would like to cite from the Garden Club plan the following statements which we believe are as pertinent today as they were in 1929, and I quote: County Road is and always will be the important artery. It serves this purpose with better effect and with less damage to abutting properties than any other route. The concentration of general

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traffic on a limited number of streets is a plan that will provide safety and quiet for residents of Palm Beach.

‘We also question why the oppidium plan does not address the question raised before the Landmarks Commission and the Town Council of whether the Town Square should become a single, defined zoning district. Also, we would question in view of the number of public parks being created in the general area, for example, the Town’s new County Road Park and the Earl E. T. Smith Preservation Park, why there is not an examination of whether redevelopment should emphasize more or less parking.

‘We do not wish to adopt a negative tone. Instead, we recommend a constructive approach of further study by citizens and Town groups of this very important subject based on accepted principles of historic preservation and the cogent principles of the Garden Club Plan. Our Historic Town Square provides a beautiful and dignified center for important governmental and supporting commercial functions of our Town. Mizner and Harvey and Clarke gave us a Town Center with appropriately monumental features that we all cherish. Changes in its appearance and functions may be inevitable but need to be studied with the utmost care.’

“Thank you.”

Eric VanGary, General Manager of the Valet Park International and American Flyer:

“There is already a parking problem, pull up problem, even with the red zones instituted there (Amici’s and Café L’Europe). During the peak times of the year and peak times of the evening, there is just not enough room to handle the amount of cars that are coming into these very busy restaurants this time of year. To take away spots and to take away room on the road, would make it very unsafe...even more so than it is now. With emergency vehicles pulling up to the front of these restaurants, it’s already difficult to get cars to the front and to move traffic around these vehicles. So, there is an issue there with emergency vehicles when there is anything going on at these restaurants.

“By shortening the lanes, between 6:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., as you all know, there is a problem with restaurants this time of year. There is four times the capacity, because it is season here in Town. I don’t see it being safe the way this plan is to be honest with you.

“Café L’Europe sent me here this morning to hear what was going to be said and to voice my opinion on what I heard, and that is what I feel. Amici’s on that corner too, if you took away room at that corner, coming off Royal Palm onto South County, it’s already congested there past onto the other side of South County and onto the road on Royal Palm Way. At Café L’Europe sometimes, you have cars that are pulling down Brazilian because of the congestion up front, and there would be no room for emergency vehicles if you were to

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shorten the roads in that way.”

Councilman Wyett:

“How many valet parkers at peak hours do you employ at each of these restaurants?”

Eric VanGary:

“Café L’Europe during peak hours on Fridays and Saturdays, there are three of us and during the week days there are two of us at all times.”

Councilman Wyett:

“That is part of the problem being a client of both restaurants, and I commend you for trying very hard. This is not a criticism, but the solution is not going to be found on the streets of Palm Beach in more parking spaces because we don’t have them. The solution is, I have observed, is that you need more valet parkers, and it may be an economic problem, in which case, you might have to go from a voluntary tipped to a charge, but you are not moving the cars very rapidly, and the reason you are not moving them rapidly is that you don’t have enough parkers at peak hours.”

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

“I’d like to ask two parts of a question...how much existing parking do either of those restaurants have? Do they have any?”

Eric VanGary:

“Café L’Europe has existing parking and Amici’s does. They rent the bank lots, but that’s not the problem. It’s the problem up front, the congestion on the road at those peak times with regular traffic in and out of the restaurant.”

Ann Vannick, Town Resident:

I was very interested in the study of the historic districts when they come up to see what kind of impact it would have with the location of the new fire station. Unfortunately, I feel that it has a negative impact. The traffic situation that we have is going to go from bad to worse. The problem with the parking is going to be even worse. You go down Australian, it is a Town parking lot. You go down Chilian, it is also a Town parking lot. If we lose the Beaumont parking lot to the fire station, we are going to impact the traffic in the Town of Palm Beach. We going to lose parking. At the same time, last year, we had the opportunity to purchase Gray’s Mobil Station. I still feel that is the optimum location for the new fire

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house and you would have better access going south and north. We could still have the Beaumont parking lot, maybe reserve it for Town Hall and let the residents have their Town...have their historic district intact.”

(Former Mayor) Yvelyne demarcellus Marix:

“I want to make a couple of short comments here, and remind you all that I have lived here fifty-five years. I served, for the Town, eighteen of those years. The rest of the time, I just worry about it.

“I would also like to say for the record is the reason it is a special district, as opposed to not, is one of my children you might say, as I don’t have real ones. One of my ideas was to tell Smith to buy that lot, and I’m glad to say he did. Another one of my ideas was to make this whole area into a special district, because I realized how important it was. I’m glad to say the Town supported me in that effort. So, obviously I feel extremely strongly that we suddenly don’t make it new, different, and anything else. Of course, there are problems, and I am not going to go into all of them, because I do agree with the first speaker. I think he hit a great many of them.

“However, being...I realize it is a bit of a dangerous comment....but I do believe there are people going through here at 60 m.p.h. in front of the police station. It is an enforcement problem, Chief. I do also know that nowadays many communities have resorted to cameras to catch people speeding. Some are real. Some are not real. Some just say there is a camera, and that has not even been brought up. If, indeed, this two block area is such a terrible speed trap, maybe we should have the equivalent of a school crossing guard. Only this would be a Town Hall crossing guard. I do not believe we should destroy one of the finest parts of our Town...one of the bits of its foundation and everything else to just be different. I agree totally this has never been put in front of the public the way it should have been. I think if we talk about referendums lately, if we took a referendum as to whether to change this whole area, it would win ‘no’. I agree the new fire station is going to create a problem, especially a traffic problem. The new park, which I am sorry to say they tore all the trees out of for no reason on the side of the road, is now another parking lot, and it’s almost fully used by the Town. I do support the idea that maybe a great deal of our Building Department should be moved onto some property we have in West Palm Beach. Maybe not all of it, maybe the administration can stay here, but when you come here at any time of day, you see that is part of the parking problem...dozens and dozens and dozens of people who have come back the third time to pick up their permit, and they are using the parking spaces. Maybe if the permit parts were even kept in West Palm. I think we have a great many possibilities that we should examine before even considering destroying what I think is my favorite, favorite part of Town.”

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Lory Volk, John L. Volk Foundation, Inc.:

"The first speaker was very eloquent and I was really very appalled to hear that there was no conversation with what directly affects the business owners in this area and shame on all of you for not doing that. I found it interesting that you are looking at the master plan for the City of West Palm Beach remembering clearly that the master plan for the City of West Palm Beach goes hand in hand with parking. There is plenty of parking on Clematis Street but there is also abutting parking garages.

"The third or fourth speaker, the gal who spoke about the fact that we need to keep a parking lot here makes sense to take Gray's Mobil and I think that the Fire Chief would be happy and you would be able to ingress and egress with the most important part of what this project is which is working with your emergency vehicles. The other thing that I found relatively appalling was the fact that I saw a rendering of what this 'historic district' should look like. I couldn't imagine putting second stories and changing the ambience of what is listed in the Town of Palm Beach as one of the first commercial districts. Never mind, not speaking to the residents on these quaint, curious, historic streets abutting Town Hall. That again is an appalling factor being that those are historic districts or streets that are potential historic districts if not individually listed. So, I concur actually, once, with Polly Earl, and I do think that this should be studied on the historic nature of it, and the comments that were made first and foremost by the business owner should be the most importantly weighed at this time."

Mark Marsh:

"It's a lot to respond to. First of all, I apologize to those individuals who weren't part. We had over a dozen meetings with various groups, and Jorge set up most of those meetings, but we did invite eight or ten groups to participate. Again, I apologize to those who weren't invited. It was not an intentional move.

Jorge Sanchez:

"We met with several groups in the area. The ones that we felt that were most accessible and that sort of thing. I can't recollect exactly, didn't we invite the South County Merchants Association?"

Mark Marsh:

"Yes, we did. They were represented by Ken Brower and one other person."

Jorge Sanchez:

"Yes, right, we did invite them. They sent two representatives and we went through it, and

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my impressions of that meeting was that it was very favorable as far as their reaction to it. The intention here is not to solidify absolutely anything this morning or this afternoon whenever this meeting concludes, but it's to bring an idea forth and to invite the Town to participate in it."

Mayor Smith:

"I think the criticisms of the process so far are actually premature. This is the very first Special Town Council meeting to review this plan. The first time that is being seen by the public with the input from the Police Department and the Fire Department, so this is step one. This is not where the Council is going to make a final decision. I think, Mr. Evans, I think your concerns were well voiced. I think they were things that should be raised, but I think the criticism for missing the name and everything else we can get to later. We want the input from everyone sitting here today and their concerns so the Council can move ahead with what is going to be the right project and changes, if any, to the Town Hall area, so we'll temper the criticisms. I get mad when people mis-spell my name, and so they called your organization by the wrong name. Let's overlook it today and move ahead in a positive fashion. I think we'll all do better."

Mark Marsh:

"If I could just clarify a few things, I think one of the speakers mentioned an alternative site for the fire station, and the issue of parking. There is a parking issue. We did a study a year and one half ago which the Council didn't act on. It is still there to address some of the parking problems. Nobody in their right mind would agree there is no parking problem. There is a parking problem. We just try to find solutions and long term solutions. These are not just band-aid solutions. The siting of the fire station is directed by the Council. That is the only available site, currently, to us. I just wanted to clarify that, and we are taking what we are given, unfortunately, in trying to work with this.

Step Two

"In terms of the architectural solutions vis a vis zoning, as Mrs. Earl mentioned, we didn't want to go head on with the zoning. We all feel that this district is a special district that should have its own criteria. The current zoning which is C-TS is a zoning which is totally inappropriate for this district as the nature of the district deserves. What we are showing here are concepts. Please don't get attached to the schemes or solutions, they are just conceptual. I want to remind everyone that the only real element within this district, partly, is the proposed fire station.

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“What I would like to do.....in terms of jurisdiction...the concern we have, and we mentioned earlier, is that we feel that, yes, this is a very unique district. It has an incredible collage of architectural styles, and that’s what creates the ambience or the uniqueness, but we feel strongly, as I say the word ‘strongly’, that this could be supplemented and reinforced, not by necessarily these concepts, because most of what we are going to show you is private property. We can only respond on behalf of the Town on the public owned property, but the potential solutions I’d like to just go through in a district. These again are architectural solutions.

“We identified that the Palm Beach Historic Inn has the only arcade or portico in the whole district, and again going back to the oppidium silhouette which we have mentioned and the Worth Avenue examples, we feel that is one of the most positive elements within the district for pedestrians and for character, not discounting the obvious quality of the Town Hall itself and other buildings that have historical value within the district. That particular element really sets the tone; it’s unique; it’s something as I mentioned earlier, it’s Palm Beach’s almost signature to have these arcades and porticos. So what we are proposing in conceptual form here is to emulate the arcade element which as I mentioned is only existing on that southwest end of the Historic Inn. Through the new fire station which is on the opposite side of the block, the north end, our initial scheme if some of the public and the Council will recall, was a very (inaudible) proposal that came and utilized the setbacks, removed the required setbacks, and brought the building right on to the property line.

“What we have done now and through our investigations, and I would just like to respond to the City of West Palm Beach, the only thing with that ordinance was included in the report for is the fact that they have, I think, been pioneers, allowed people to encroach into their rights-of-way, and in fact build over rights-of-ways, which is something that is a very difficult challenge to identify the Town from. So, that was the only point of that reference. The idea here would be to create porticos or arcades and in the proposed fire station, we have added an arcade along, in effect, the north half of the building, obviously leaving free the response area for the emergency vehicles. This wrap could be reflective of what occurs on the Historic Inn and again create a sense of presence within the right-of-way. All these areas and green illustrated on the sketch are encroached areas into rights-of-way which currently are not allowed under C-TS zoning, but I think we could, without a full ordinance change, accommodate that type of development, but our belief is that C-TS is inappropriate for this area.

“The police station which we were presenting a few months back got a lot of criticism, and rightly so, because of the current nature or the juxtaposition of the building where it was stepped back and that blue area shows how the building was stepped back, and that was all in response to the current zoning which, again, is a contradiction to what we feel is appropriate development criteria to develop.

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"We mentioned in our report this parallel development rather than the perpendicular. By the parallel oppidum silhouette is that buildings ramble along the street...create a street scape. They don't go perfectly concurrent. The police station is a good example of that perpendicular development where it steps back, and what you have in effect is the landscaping here, and so you have a disconnect between the sidewalk and the building, and I think that disconnect is something that if allowed to continue in the development criteria for the district would create a very negative image and architectural response. So, what we are trying to do here, again, is to just suggest options. In fact, we are bold enough, and I'm going to invite all the public to come up and take a look at this 3 dimensional model. I'm taking the bold move of actually re-addressing the police station with an arcade and changing the architecture, subtly, to a more traditional architecture. Again, this is just a concept. I don't want anybody to get...it's not a final solution, but it is a suggestion where, again, you could introduce arcades. As mentioned by one of the earlier speakers, if you are bold enough to say that with the removal of some of the restrictions of contradictions in the C-TS, we could encourage private development like Cafe L'Europe or the Scotti building...maybe encourage them to move and develop to their front property line...maybe increase the two story mass, not dissimilar to Worth Avenue which again has such a strong presence and really frames the area.

"Obviously, the styles within the district are so diverse. We've got the Palm Beach Daily News Building which is a magnificent building; we have the Roddy Building, and in terms of the Grays, this is one that has been a subject of much discussion. In our study, obviously, this is the one building or one site that doesn't really contribute to the historic character of the district, and what we are proposing here is that on the west side of the park is the Daily News Building, the Roddy Building, C. Orrico Building; and again just a concept of what we feel is more appropriate development could be for that property.

"Now, we have told a lot of the people we have discussed this with...citizens...and there is just about an equal response for the Grays as against it. It is almost split down the middle. We're saying: 'That's fine.' If Grays has to stay there as a service to the community, why can't we introduce an architectural solution which allows for passage way. Most of us have been to Europe and seen the service stations that exist in the larger cities and the quainter cities. They have a logo on the outside of the building. You drive under or through the building to the actual service or pump areas. It doesn't have to be a main street, U.S.A. type cookie cutter gas station where you have this huge area of concrete then the pumps sticking out for full view. We feel the edge can be defined; the service could be maintained, and the district as a whole would benefit from that.

"The opportunities on the Bustani Building which has compatibility is the possible introduction of an arcade or the possibility. Again, shade is so important for us. We forget we live in the tropics, and yet most of our visitors come here this time of year. It's beautiful, and it's pleasant, but there are others of us who are here full time, and I think that the

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ambience that the portico element or the arcade offers is something that is worth investigating. We're not saying it's the only solution, but we would definitely like to encourage that as an architectural solution. With that, I'll ask Jorge Sanchez to come up and go through the landscape/hardscape which is the third portion of our study."

Councilman Brooks:

"Mark, I'm sure you are aware of it, we have attempted to purchase the Gray's Mobil Gas Station and that has been unsuccessful. I'm just wondering how realistic it is to think that we can move it eventually. There will be tremendous environmental problems concerned with that. The other thing I think we have to keep in mind and no one can be a mind reader here, but I would suspect Royal Poinciana will undergo some renovation, rehabilitation .. Who knows if the Testa family wants to keep that? I don't know. I'm not suggesting they do or they don't. All I am saying is that if the Town is without a gas station, especially one like Gray's which makes every effort to accommodate their handicapped people or elderly people who have some mobility problem. I understand the desire, and I would like it too, but it may be a bit unrealistic at this time."

Mark Marsh:

"We agree. Service is important. I think what we are looking at and we have to look ahead to the future, is that the most optimum use of the property?"

Councilman Brooks:

"And I think the answer is 'no'."

Mark Marsh:

"And that's all we are showing here, but at the same time we strongly feel there is a solution where you could maintain the service within the building, and, in effect, disguise it so that it doesn't have the negative impact that currently exists."

Councilman Wyett:

"I have a suggestion for the future development of Gray's station. Hiding the station is a good idea, and we must have a gas station. However, what are you providing for parking in this area? Especially with your suggestion that over a period of time we could see some second story development of the whole district. Mr. Evans makes a very good point that parking is totally inadequate. You know that if you want to go to lunch at Hamburger Heaven. You're often discouraged when you can't park."

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Mark Marsh:

"I understand totally. I think, again, just as a concept, there would be provision for on-site parking behind the other side. By reducing the amount, currently, this whole apron is pretty well used for access to the gas station...of the current Gray's site. So, again we could increase the amount of parallel or angled parking."

Councilman Wyett:

"I still don't think you've got what I'm trying to get across. Adding 5 or 8 or 9 cars is not going to solve the problem. Your attempt to make up where you are taking parking from Town Hall and saying that you can create it other places, that's admirable, but before this Town can consider a zoning change or allow future development, we have to attack the major problem which is parking in this area. Not only parking for the residents, the visitors, but the employees, and you'd have to come to me and say...Mr. Evans had a very good idea. He was going to provide a building on the Gray's station site with underground parking. The question we need to say 'Is how much parking you need in this area for the next 50 years?'. If we find we don't have enough, and you don't need much of a study to understand that, you may have to adopt the European approach or the San Francisco approach of putting parking underground, including under the public streets as you see in the Champs Elysee in Paris and you see it in a number of other cities. We have no additional space, we all know that, to build new roads. We're not going to tear down buildings to create parking lots all over the place, so that I would like you to come back with an overall parking approach that will solve the problem from now to eternity, so to speak, but I'll settle for fifty years, and tell us what we really need and not use a band aid which is going to fall off in the shower."

Leslie Evans, Town Resident:

"I would just like to throw out a couple of possible considerations. In looking at the aerials, there is quite a bit of space above the police station. Has there been any look at possibly parking, a ramp to go up there, and using the roof there for parking? That's one suggestion. The other one in reference to what Councilman Wyett had suggested, I did have Gray's Mobil under contract and apparently my contract came over to the Town through unusual circumstances, but my idea was to take that property where Gray's Mobil is, do a large underground parking lot with the Town, with the Town's parking lot behind there. I thought that if you would take that and use the space for Gray's and the parking lot behind it..making a large underground parking lot and maybe go up two or three stories. You've got a six story condominium facing the Town parking lot, and there are only windows from those units which are from the bathrooms, so nobody is looking at anything, and if they were, they would be looking at a parking lot. I thought that the consideration of the Town, if they could do a master plan for parking – underground for that whole block and maybe go up two or three stories– there are parking lots in Miami which are absolutely beautiful. Instead of looking

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at cars out there, we could do something to beautify, and that should be one of the solutions that you should look at for parking. That and to use the roof of the new fire station, possibly, the roof of the police station if that would be feasible, but somebody's got to get some parking."

Mark Marsh:

"Unfortunately, the current police station roof/structure is not sufficient for parking. We looked at that for expansion, and the fire station is effectively three stories. It would be difficult, given the very limited land area, to get the ramp system up. We did, as you recall, have a sub-grade parking lot on that originally.

"I think that the suggestion on Gray's—we have a proposal or an old study showing a 2 ½ story parking garage that was underground that achieved 138 parking spaces on the current city parking area just west of Gray's. I think definitely can be tied in with some of these suggestions."

Mayor Smith:

"When you were looking at the expansion of the fountain area, did you consider doing underground parking under the whole fountain area? If so, how many spaces would it take?"

Mark Marsh:

"We didn't to be honest. The only concern we had was in studying the underground parking for the fire station—the initial plans. The cost was so exorbitant."

Mayor Smith:

"I think as part of the on-going thing we should look into and we should get the figures on what it would cost, exorbitant or not. I think that we have to remember that we have a parking problem, a traffic problem in Town five months of the year. The other seven months, or six months, there is no problem. You can park any where including Worth Avenue, but I think in order for the public to really understand what we are looking at, we should have the figures, and then decide whether or not the Council wants to take action on doing underground parking. As far as the Gray's station is concerned, we don't have, we can't buy it, we don't own it, so we can't really put it in the equation right now."

Town Manager Elwell:

"I'd like to build on the Mayor's prior comment about this being the initial meeting; getting initial feedback; you giving your initial consideration to it; there's a long way for us to go yet

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before the Council will be in a position of making decisions about what you see before you today. In that vein, I just want to remind everybody that the Strategic Planning Board has requested a traffic and parking study. We've had some preliminary discussion of that. We're collecting some data, and we are going to put the Council in the position of being able to authorize some form of a study, and we will determine, later in the spring, the scope of that, but certainly we can be mindful of these kinds of issues as we get into that study which is already anticipated to make sure that we are analyzing the potential implications of decisions that may come from this plan, proposal, or concept and be looking ahead, around the curve, as to how we might address that, particularly as it relates in this discussion to parking. The other thing that I wanted to caution everybody and remind everybody is in the context of the Mayor's comment that there was a certain, specific charge to Digby Bridges, Marsh & Associates, and they delivered this today. They are participating in this. They will help us in the further consideration of this concept, but there is not only the additional parking questions that have come up in the most recent part of the conversation but other questions too that will need to be addressed before you are in a position to take action, and this initial consideration will help us frame that. I just want to be careful. We have heard a couple of comments in the last five minutes about additional things that Mark Marsh ought to do. You ought to be looking at this....you ought to be looking at that, and I think we need to determine..you, as the Council, need to determine what is to be further examined to help you make decisions about this, and then there may be additional pieces of work we need to assign to folks, including staff, to pursue that."

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

"Another question in regard to the traffic and parking study that has started...Is there any indication as to whether that will include the feasibility of the hydraulic lift, second story, if you will, mechanical step which would almost double the existing parking lot?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"There is nothing excluded at this time. There is no tentative scope of work. There is the desire among the Strategic Planning Board and certain others in Town to see a broad comprehensive traffic study. In the initial discussion of that, there has been some thought that maybe something less – a traffic and parking study with a more narrow scope of work might be sufficient and certainly less costly. We're going over the next several weeks to develop the scope of work, and it could include that concept."

Councilman Goldblum:

"As I see it, the biggest hurdle we have to do, before we go any further on this, is the parking even more so – the traffic study, and I would like to go back and find out what can be done on giving us sufficient parking in this area, and then we can take the aesthetics of the

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building, whatever we are going to do with any of the buildings, and go forward at that point. Parking has to be satisfied first, and that has been our problem since I have been on Town Council. We do not have sufficient parking in this area, and we have to correct that first."

Councilman Wyett:

"I agree with Mr. Goldblum, and I also want to point out there is another major consideration. We've had a new fire station under consideration now for almost two years. We first started with the Gray's location. We then moved it to the Beaumont location. We are being faced with a strong need for more space here in Town Hall. If we made the decision today, which we are not, you are almost two years away from a station opening approximately. It is obvious that this study is going to take some time, and one of the reasons this study was mandated by this Council is that we wanted to make sure we were doing the right thing before we actually proceeded to build a fire station. I think that we also have to determine how fast we need to approve the fire station, and while I'm throwing that out, a thought occurred to me last month. I think I discussed it with Peter. The idea of swapping land with the fire station with the Beaumont lot with the Gray's station. I brought that up when there was some discussion going on as to which is the better location, and I said I didn't know which is the better location. I still don't know, but if for some reason the fire station would be better suited at the Gray's station, there is a good, logical reason and economic one to swap. The fire station would get to maybe a better location. It would be adjacent to our Town parking lot, and the gas station would get a new site with a new station and would not be in a discussion with us of what kind of renovations we're going to allow them to do. We might, at that particular point, be able to get a gas station ala the new mode you described and satisfy everybody's needs. I am just throwing that out. Maybe it should be studied simultaneously."

Town Manager Elwell:

"I was going to bring this up later in the meeting, Mr. President, but I would like to just mention now and then come back to it to discuss it with you in greater detail about the fire station since Mr. Wyett has raised that question. I'd like to get some indication from you today before we finish, not an actual vote to proceed, but some indication as to whether you are satisfied. There is certainly going to be months of additional consideration and different things examined and more information provided, and then you are giving further consideration to the concepts that are before you today, and those concepts are likely to be worked with over a long period of time. My suggestion to you would be that if you can look at what is before you and feel comfortable enough that the tentative design of the fire station is such that it will fit with what you are seeking in terms of the character of the area, knowing that there is much additional work to be done on the details of these concepts in order to achieve that character. If you are comfortable with that, then as soon as possible we should receive your direction to proceed to final design and proceed with the fire-rescue station. Again, not asking you for action on that today, but I wanted to have some discussion with

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you so that we can prepare for potential action at the February Council meeting on that question.”

Wendy Victor, resident:

“I would like to thank Allen Wyett for bringing up this point about Gray’s Mobil Station and the whole placement of the fire station. I was here when the Mayor said it was a closed deal, and I’ve heard that several times, but, in fact, I was just one more time talking with the owners of Gray’s Mobil right outside the Council Chambers; have spoken with them several times in the past; I’ve had a meeting with Mr. Elwell about it. I know you have had a conversation, or I’ve been told you had a conversation, discussing the possibility of leasing Gray’s lot and doing an exchange with Beaumont, and the gas station owners are still willing to look at ways to explore getting a better placement for the fire station.

“Now, I have with me the minutes, and I’m not going to go through them, but from the last year and one half how you, the Council, arrived at this 3-2 decision to go ahead on the Beaumont lot, and over and over for the past year and one half, the optimum lot was Gray’s Mobil, and there were problems of concern of Mr. Wyett’s and the environmental pollution there. That was cleared to everybody’s satisfaction. There was a difference in price that could not be resolved, and the Mayor finally said, ‘This is insane to cave in’ so we went ahead with Beaumont and at the February 17, 2000, meeting underground parking, Beaumont, was the way you wanted to go with the fire station. Then the cost of this all started to rise, and you decided against that.

“I’m an alternate member on the Landmarks Commission...we on the Landmarks Commission asked for this study to be done because Beth Dowdle, Vice Chair, brought up the subject of traffic peeling around this corner. The placement of the fire station, the reason for the historic study has always been, ‘Are we doing the right thing?’ This is the big picture. I would just urge you, if possible, to look back at placing the fire station in the right place. I think we as a Landmarks Commission don’t have problems with the design. We have safety concerns. We have design things we want to fiddle with, but how it fits into the historic square is really a function of getting it in the right place, and then getting the traffic, the safety design to work together.”

Councilman Goldblum:

“Mrs. Victor, there is one thing that I don’t think that was cleared up as I recall. That was the environmental study, and there is an open end on that of how much the Town could have been forced to pay. I think that was one of the things that bothered me most, because I have been in that business before.”

Wendy Victor:

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"That was in the May 23rd report, and a copy from the private investor was produced, and you seemed to say that it was all right."

Councilman Wyett:

"There was a report that.....I think Peter was involved with it.....there was a report that the environmental impact ... What may be from gas station problems was relatively minor and could be cleaned up for less than \$100,000. Am I correct about that, Peter?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"I'm not aware of that. It may have occurred while I was gone. Tom may be aware of it and able to speak to it."

Councilman Wyett:

"That was a report that came to Public Works when I was chairman."

Councilman Brooks:

"Mr. Bradford is nodding his assent, Mr. Wyett. This may be before Peter's time."

Councilman Wyett:

"In fact, I think the figure was closer to \$75,000."

President McDonald:

"Well, let's not debate that right now. I understand there are some issues with the Gray's lot, but we don't have the Gray's lot right now. Mr. Wyett can make a motion to condemn the Gray's lot if he wants to and have the Town... is there anyone else who wants to speak to this?"

Deedy Marix:

"I'm Deedy Marix. I think we're getting some very important points, and I think we are bringing up some very worthwhile things. I would like, and I would certainly agree with the serious study of putting parking under the new fire station regardless of where it is. I mean if the department store can do it, we can certainly do it, because it is very important. I think we should look again as to whether it would be at Gray's, if it is possible or not, of course we should; however, I think it is exceedingly important for whatever we do and whatever

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decision we make, it ends up with the fact that we will not be living with one gas station. If you could believe what this Town would be like; what Royal Palm Way would be like—Royal Poinciana Way—if every single person who needs gas or service goes there. Already, it is a danger to go in and out. I mentioned before the meeting, when my husband was dying on the way to the hospital, we got blocked by people coming in and out of that garage. It wasn't their fault. They couldn't help it. They didn't get to the hospital in time by the way, but regardless of that, if you can imagine all the traffic that maybe wants to go to Worth Avenue—that comes up from the south end, they are going to get some gas. They drive all the way through this area. We already agree that it is a difficult area. To go all the way down to Testa's which is already a difficult area in front of the post office. We must have two gas stations. I don't know if Gray's could move to that side and it would be a plausible, feasible thing to put in a new gas station. I know that a great many restrictions about where you can build a gas station because of safety matters. Of course, those are all things that must be looked into. I think the importance of keeping in front of our faces the fact we must have a second gas station. When I first came here, we had four. Now we have two, and we're talking about having one. We don't want more and more people to try to pile on to the bridge which is already open I (inaudible) to make it more difficult and more worrisome so we all have something to do at night when we can't sleep."

President McDonald:

"Everyone is raising good points. Mrs. Victor's points are good. Mayor Marix's points are good and we will be considering all of them, I suppose.

Mark Marsh:

"At this point, this is our third part of the three part analysis, and I would like to turn it over to Jorge Sanchez and have him present the hardscape and landscape."

Jorge Sanchez:

"I have these smaller boards.....(presented them to Town Council). I would like to begin by maybe addressing a few points here. The scale model is very handy because it's very visual. I think that everyone can see the proposed changes pretty much within the scale model.

"One thing that I would like to address— (inaudible) I know that different boards or committees have expressed their interest in stopping any type of change within the area, and we're all talking about the same thing. That's exactly what we would like to do also.

"Change comes in many forms and in many ways. As I was mentioning to someone yesterday, change to show assimilis. Age doesn't show over night. It is something that happens little by little, and all of a sudden, one realizes 'bingo', but that is pretty much what

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happened here. I think that if you take a look at the scale model, you realize...well, first of all, I would like to pass around a photograph that came out of the back of this January 10th Palm Beach Winter Antique Show...the bottom picture, and with that you have several other pictures in your brochure, but that is a handy one which shows pretty much what...just right in the bottom...you can see Memorial Park there. I have been living here since '59, and in '59 there were (inaudible) palms here, very, very tall ones here in front on the north side of Memorial Fountain, and one died, another one died, it looked unbalanced. They were removed. The palms that were farther in also one died, the other one was removed. No one noticed it. It was just something that happened little by little. The hedges that were framing the park as Mizner had designed it, were removed. That was the end of that. The pine trees that Mizner had in the back, along with the coconuts, because what we consider now sacrosanct, Mizner considered very ugly and very utilitarian at the time. That was this area here...was the service area for the fire station, and he wanted to cover it up. He made the fountain blank on that side. He had pine trees and coconuts planted there so that the public would not be able to see that building because he considered it a very ugly building with very ugly doors, in fact.

"We consider them absolutely fantastic now, and they are. (Inaudible) We look at the deterioration of those things with time, the elimination of the pine trees, the elimination of most of the coconut trees, so now what used to have ...and one more thing...Mizner also brought in the Cuban Royals, the Royal Palms, which were at the time very few and very exotic. It was a new type of palm. It was new and very exotic and much younger. So, between the palms, the hedges, the smaller (inaudible) palms, the composition on the picture was something that framed the hardscape element and it made it absolutely charming and very, very beautiful. Those have been eliminated.

"The majority of the things that we are proposing here is really to bring back the palms; bring back hedges. By the way, I mentioned six foot hedges and that is a mistake. After discussing it with the Garden Club, it ought to be 4 ½ feet. There ought to be hedges on it. If you are sitting on a bench that you are protected from view of the cars behind you, and at the same time if you are standing up, you are still within the area. Bringing back exotic palms, in this case the date palms and bringing the scale back down because the palms have a lesser rate of growth than the Royals. Since the fire station is being moved, taking what was the service area and opening it back up to the public—opening it up in a very simple and open way. Basically, taking the asphalt area that is there and reducing it to a minimal expression – a wide lane going east on Australian to make it more part of a park—taking that asphalt and converting it into gray cobbles so it has more of a (inaudible) effect with the cobblestones. It is a side road instead of a major artery and taking the balance which you can see is quite large. It actually comes to about here...the green space does. We would be adding all of that green space and all of that green space too. So, bringing a lot into an area that is basically asphalt right now. Again, keeping it as simple as possible so as not to invade the view of the existing building. Instead of adding trees as Mizner wanted to do to hide it, open it up by

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putting hedges around it. You need some shade for the public but at the same time you should not impede the view of the public building itself.

“Another hardscape element we would like to add here that was discussed in various forms, is a connection between the long view to the park. Right now as you know, there is no pedestrian way without getting right into the street to go from this southern area into the park. So the thought was to add stairs that would match the ones on the north side, but much reduced in width to connect the park. The reason that we are keeping it smaller is for various reasons. One, it is just falls in scale for it to be narrow. The other reason is we found many of the groups we talked to, not many, one of the groups that we talked to, that they did not want that space invaded in any way, shape, or form. What we came up with is that if you are looking at the park or the fountain virtually from any angle, this central part, the large basin, is a raised basin. By having that raised basin, you can't see behind it. What we are doing is adding the stairs behind that basin, so that if you are looking at it from all of the original angles from the northeast and the northwest, you're still looking at the fountain exactly as it is today, but if you go to walk around it, that's when you see the new stairwell.

“With a new stairwell, we looked at different forms. We looked at it flared, and we looked at it as a balcony type of fashion and that sort of thing, and this is the one through general consensus talking to the various architects that was adopted for discussion purposes. Now coming to the Mayor's favorite palms....the royals, as I mentioned earlier, have grown out of scale in the park. If you recall back when you were working with the South County Road Merchants Association for the foxtail palms, at that time we had discussed also the adding of this island and also moving the royals to the positions that we are suggesting now and bringing in the other palms. At that time, the Town was not amenable of moving the royal palms. The royals have a history to the area. We did not want to discard them, and at the same time, we felt that the building itself, and if you look at your page 18, we feel that it would grace the building by having the towering royals adjacent to it. I had a comment by someone whose ideas value highly, that royal palms had no business being next to a building. They ought to be out in the open and that sort of thing. In discussing that, it sort of stayed in my head and a few hours later I was walking on Royal Palm Way and I realized, that if you look at Royal Palm Way there are two alleys of royals. The royals to the far north, particularly the ones to the far south, are all adjacent, very close to the tall buildings there. We look at them every day, and we think they are marvelous. Well, that is the look we are looking for—something that is going to grace the building and use the historic royals.

“The lights that are presently on the royals in the Memorial Fountain area would be reused exactly as they are. They would not be modified or changed. They would be used instead of lighting the royals, they would be lighting the new palms.

“As far as the parking spaces, if it does remove any parking spaces to the east of Town Hall, that is something that needs to be analyzed, certainly. My impression is that it does not,

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because the first three on the north side would be in areas, that you can see, that would have no parking space because that is in the area of the ingress and egress of the fire trucks. The one on the far south would not be because that is where the pedestrian area is. The only two would be these two here, and those two would probably cover a maximum of four feet—two feet from each of the parking spots which would actually make great buffers for the vehicles that are parking there. So, four feet I don't think is going to make such a big difference, but that is definitely something to be analyzed.

“Going to the island that we are proposing on the north side, that is sort of the confusing part, and it's an area that no one knows really if they can make a u-turn or not. With that, I make a u-turn there very often. I'm sure one day I'll be in trouble, but so far I have been able to do it. This could prevent people from taking that area as a huge paved area. It would introduce greenery to the area, and it would help direct the traffic. As far as the landscaping and hardscaping of the area, those are my comments.”

Councilman Wyett:

“Do I (inaudible) just on the north side of Town Hall where the fire station doors are that you are proposing a green area? I always like green, and on my part we could turn half the island into green—that would be wonderful, but we can't do that. However, because we are losing parking on the east side of Town Hall, both where the fire station is going and the spaces opposite where the fire trucks are coming out. Wouldn't that be a good spot to make up some of that parking?”

Jorge Sanchez:

“Absolutely. I think that underground parking there.....”

Councilman Wyett:

“I didn't say underground parking—above ground. I mentioned underground parking, but the cost of putting underground parking under Memorial Fountain, I was informed, far exceeds putting it under the fire station. So, I don't know if that will ever happen, and we must pick up a few more spaces near Town Hall.”

Jorge Sanchez:

“I tend to agree more with your first comment. I would like to see a lot more green space, but besides that, that is really a parking study along with a traffic study is imperative. There is no question about that. We know that on Australian, on the Town property on Australian, there is an existing parking lot where the Town could add 152 spaces, I believe, oh—138 spaces. 138 spaces—we are talking about 8 spaces here and 2 spaces there. Now, here you

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have in your hands the study and the ability with a vote - you could do today in fact – to have the 132 spaces built this summer—that's a multi-level parking garage and if you wanted even more, you could do a combination of underground and above parking, but that costs quite a bit of money, but, as is, just above ground parking, you could build 132 spaces this summer....and no negotiations with any owner. That is another aspect that we have to, we, myself, the audience and everyone, has to grasp is that we are talking about private property as if we owned it. Someone owns it, but not us. So, in order to be realistic about what we are doing, let's deal with what we have, and if the Town in its wisdom acquires more and more property..."

Councilman Brooks:

"Jorge, I don't want to beat a dead horse, but Mr. Wyett's point, and of course we haven't determined yet where Planning & Zoning will go, but hypothesizing that it would move from its current position north in Town Hall toward the end of the fire house, there are contractors and permit seekers who are in and out all day. Again, they are parking now on the west side of the Town Hall as you know. That is just a thought as I say, I don't want to beat a dead horse, but as Mr. Wyett pointed out, 'How many can you accommodate?', I don't know, but I think it would alleviate part of the problem where these people are not parking there for hours, but more likely 20 or 15 minutes."

Jorge Sanchez:

"I agree with you. There are many ways of looking at it, and that's where a further study would really define this, and yes we can have both. For instance, the park area there, that lawn area, could remain as is, and this area here could have 6 or 7 parking spaces that would be temporary for 15 minutes or whatever type of parking spaces, and it could very well happen. That's an area where parking could be introduced, and that's where a study, I believe, is going to lead us. That is an area, obviously, that no one in reality is going to use, because it is a green space that is totally visual. It doesn't have seating, so that's an area to be expanded."

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

"...the 130 odd spaces...where was that? In the Town's Australian lot?"

Jorge Sanchez:

"Correct, which I believe you have studied."

Deedy Marix, 1570 North Ocean Boulevard:

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"I like the landscaping, and I realize all these different questions and problems, but I do not maybe quite understand...I hope I don't. The way it looks on this, which I had not seen before, but that area is in front of where the present fire doors are would be paved over or landscaped and that is where you are using for parking construction vehicles who come for permits. Am I right? You might use it for parking or whatever? Never mind. We're discussing using it for parking space for out of towners or grass. Right? Now, this is where this is troubling me very, very deeply, because we've just spent hours discussing the traffic problem, and how difficult it is and the cars and all this stuff...Aren't we not going to make it a lot worse? Imagine, here you are, coming south, because you can't go that side—you want to go pay your parking ticket or whatever you are doing at the police station—so you come down here and instead of being able, which we do now, to turn, as long as the fire truck isn't there in one of those bays, we go to the police station (inaudible). Do I understand it correctly that now those cars are going to have to come down all the way past the whole Town Hall and go around in front of Mrs. Fortrin's clock and then come back down?"

Jorge Sanchez:

"No. Let me show it to you here, because it might be easier. You'd be coming this way, making a left at the cobbled road."

Deedy Marix:

"But, I thought that is where you wanted to park vehicles."

Jorge Sanchez:

"No. That green spot right there."

Deedy Marix:

"O.K. Put it this way, I think if we use that to park out of towners vehicles, it's going to simply make that turning either very difficult or somewhat useless, and you'll get that much more traffic going down and coming around. I do like the Australian Avenue parking, and definitely I think that is what we should be looking at, and once again I will repeat the fact that when I had a lot of employees who wanted me to take care of their parking for them on County Road, we did, and I suggested this to the Town before, ask our employees to car pool. They all came at the same time, and they all left more or less at the same time. Now, no one wants to do that, obviously, so you give an incentive. You will have a parking space if you bring some one. If you don't, you will not get a parking space near Town Hall. You can go where the long way is, and all-- the incentive we used to pay for their fuel, if they car pool. It's amazing. We would use our employee parking by car, and they were perfectly happy. But you have put my mind a little bit at ease about this thing here. I am concerned if it brings

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more traffic into the circuit which is what we have a problem with.”

Meridith Newton, President of the Garden Club:

“Our representatives looked at Jorge Sanchez’s plan way back last fall. Based on their report to the executive committee on January 10th, we came up with two resolutions to explain how we really feel about this. I would like to read them to you, but I also want to say that we met again with Jorge yesterday, and he has eased our minds about some of our objections, and I will elaborate on that. First:

We the members of the Garden Club of Palm Beach oppose the transplanting of the royal palms from the Memorial Fountain Garden to the area around Town Hall. We question the concept that these trees will soften the appearance of Town Hall. We would not be opposed to the removal of these trees to another location. Basically, we feel that these trees are so tall, that they would not have the effect that appears in that photograph of really softening the edges. We like the concept of the date palms to replace them around the Fountain. We think they are very attractive. They have a big canopy, and they would be attractive there.

We have several areas that will need landscaping, the bridge comes to mind; the area on Peruvian Avenue at South County that is in a sort of holding pattern right now where those very tall palms could be relocated and incorporated into those plans.

Our second resolution is a general one and will apply, as things come up, to more than just historic district:

We the members of the Garden Club of Palm Beach remain committed to the use of open green space in public areas in the Town of Palm Beach. We would be opposed to another enclosed garden area in the historic district.

What led to this, was the idea that there would be six foot hedges around this area. Jorge has assured me since then that the hedges he is planting now would be lower. He says 4 ½ feet. I’d like to see them lower yet, but we already have an enclosed garden at the Preservation Society, Earl Smith Garden, and we love it and think it is attractive, but I am not sure that we need another enclosure where the people going by in cars cannot really appreciate what is in the center of Town.”

Nancy Murray, resident and Civic Affairs Chairman, Garden Club:

“I would just like to elaborate on (Mrs. Newton’s) second point. We’ve talked today about the plan for Palm Beach that was done in 1929 by Bennett, Frost, & Parsons. Here is the little devil, right here. When they are talking about one of the reasons why they made the

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plan, they cited, first and foremost, the difficulties of the automobile. What goes around, comes around, and one of the reasons why Mizner was so interested in designing the fountain part, was that he wanted to mask the fire doors, and he also thought that it was a great mistake for Town Hall to ever be here. Evidently, building prices in the 20's were so high that they couldn't afford to buy any of the lots we are talking about now.

"One of the chief elements of gardens in the Town plan calls for adornment. They want green space. I hope that the Town is successful in mitigating the traffic problems, the parking problems; however, the Garden Club of Palm Beach does not see this fountain garden as a private area. It sees it as something to be enjoyed by pedestrians and motorists, and one of the most important elements in the design by Mizner was the canal running down the center of it. So, we should be sure that whatever we put up there doesn't mask the visibility of that canal."

President McDonald:

"What action does the Council have to take today, Mr. Elwell?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"You don't have to take any action today. Today's primary purpose was to hear the presentation of those who authored the study, and have the kind of initial discussion that you have had, hearing from the public, and sharing some initial thoughts among yourselves. I would ask you to consider whether you are ready to either act or give us some indication towards potential action at the February meeting regarding the fire station. If you recall, the study was requested—it was recommended by the Landmarks Commission—it was requested by the Council and authorized by the Council—in large part to ensure that the design of the fire-rescue station would be sensitive to the historic character of this area and the mixed uses of this area, make sure that it fit in. We talked at the time about having really one opportunity to build something of this significance and wanting to get it right.

"We do, on the practical side of that question, have needs that need to be addressed that have been studied for some time here in the Town regarding the uses of space here in this building and the proposed new fire facility. If you have reached a point, or if you are comfortable enough with what you have seen today, that you would like us to come with a definitive schedule and more definitive information about the financing alternatives and a program to recommend to you at the February 12th meeting about moving forward with final design and towards construction of the fire-rescue station, understanding that there are many other issues raised today that will be addressed in coming months with further study as you deem appropriate to further develop some of the ideas that have been discussed today—if you're comfortable enough that you think we are on the verge of moving forward with fire-rescue, then I would like to know that today. We will come well prepared to recommend to you, very

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specifically, what authorization we would ask for and on what schedule we would move forward with that project, and it is my opinion that you could do that, responsibly, and develop these other complementary concepts to greater or lesser degrees over the coming months and even years, and sort of build the Town square from there.

“If you are not that comfortable, if you are not prepared to proceed with that, then staff needs to know that so that we can provide some alternative recommendations on how to address the space needs, because if we are not going to move forward promptly with a fire-rescue station, we must address the over-crowding in this building, and we can properly accommodate the staff and provide the services to the community. The Fire-Rescue Department can continue to function out of the existing station for some period of time. We have recently purchased new equipment which does fit into the building, but just barely. That is always an issue for us in terms of custom design of very expensive pieces of equipment to make sure that we can continue to function out of this historic but confining building. We can continue to do that, but we can’t continue to do that and house everyone else here and function effectively, and I think we have all had enough discussion for you to understand that. So, without belaboring that, I need enough indication from you as to where you want to go regarding the fire station, so that if we are not going to proceed with the fire station, we can recommend other things that we have already taken some preliminary look at and flesh that out and come with more details for you to consider in that regard.”

Councilman Goldblum:

“I would like to recommend that we look at housing Building and Zoning in another building off this property and hold off on the fire house plans until we can still re-investigate as to how we can get more parking in this area. That is our problem, and even if we move them off, we might not need more parking. But I think that is what we want to study at our next meeting.”

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

“I think there were enough questions and reservations expressed at this meeting this morning that we need to look further at some of the items, and I would go along with Mr. Goldblum that we have a hiatus on the decision.”

Councilman Wyett:

“I recognize we have a strong need to make decisions, but this report did bring to our attention the various different concerns, whether they be parking, open space, future development, preservation of the gas station, and I don’t think we can arrive at the conclusions that we need to make as quickly as we would like. Therefore, I think we should undergo a parking survey as to not only the current needs, but any future development needs

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that we feel are desirable over the next 25 to 50 years which some of them could occur by private development.

"The fire station has one short fall—we looked at it and then discarded it because of cost, but it may have to come back—the idea of putting parking under the building. I know the engineers did look at that. It was discarded because of the high cost—I believe it was somewhere north of \$25,000/space, more like \$35,000 or \$40,000 if I recall, and I think that sent us into shock last year when we heard that, but maybe we are not so shocked anymore. So, I think we have to re-open that situation as soon as we can determine what our real parking needs are for the Town.

"Secondly, if we don't do something in this area, we are going to see a deterioration in the quality of the businesses and buildings in this area. Already, we are seeing vacant spaces going through the entire season. Already, people are avoiding this area, because you can't park, and we are going to have to make a decision—is that a Town concern?—and if it is a Town concern, how are we going to meet it?"

Councilman Brooks:

"I agree with my colleagues that we have to examine this. Candidly, I have a bit of a frustration. You know we still have to be concerned about the people downstairs who truly are existing as rabbits there in a warren. I do think, Peter, could you give us, I guess at the February meeting, the cost associated with the Australian Avenue garage—what did we say—132 spaces? I'm not trying to obviate Mr. Wyett's request for parking, but I think it is a no-brainer that if we can come up with at least 132 spaces at least we are a long time there, but I really wish that—it appears we are all agreeing here that we don't take definitive action on the fire-rescue house by February, but maybe if we could set up some time lines for that. I think that sometimes in the press of bureaucracy, we kind of get side-tracked. I am not trying to make a rush to judgement, but it is almost like a conclave. We could throw them all into a room and when black smoke comes out every night, we start to cut back the food until we see the white smoke, but I just don't think we can keep going with another study. We need studies. I am not trying to denigrate the importance of study, but if we could come up with a time limit, I would be grateful for that. Having said that, I just add my assent to my colleagues and the Mayor."

Mayor Smith:

"I think I have a dilemma here. I hear the remarks from the Council. I also remember that six months ago, we looked at the design for the new fire station, which was found to be unacceptable. The Council said we want to make it compatible with the Town Hall Square District. We need space for the Building Department. Mr. Moore came in with three different offers and bids for rental space in the vicinity. The Council said we are not

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interested in rental space. We are moving ahead with the fire station, and we are moving the Building Department into the fire station. I think we have just taken a giant step backwards. We knew all of these questions were going to be raised when we asked Digby Marsh to do the survey on the historic district. We asked Mrs. Earl for her comments on it. She felt that we needed the study. Now, it appears we are looking more at the traffic and parking problems that were existing before we got into this conversation than we are at the architectural integrity of the Town Hall District. The decision on the fire station was one that we felt that we needed one—we wanted it architecturally perfect—we wanted in compatible—and we asked the architects to look into how we would make it compatible. Now we are saying maybe we don't need the fire station, let's look into moving Building & Zoning to West Palm which I think would be unacceptable. They had space across the street. I think the Council has got to decide absolutely with what Mr. Brooks is talking about in the next month or two of either going ahead with the new fire station—how are you financing it?—in conjunction with the new parking garage—how are you financing it?—how are you financing all these programs we are looking at in the Town of Palm Beach?—and get on with it. Mr. Moore had space available, right across the street. That was six months ago. Council turned it down. We looked at the Gray's thing. Gray's property was withdrawn to us. Mr. Evans had a contract. The contract was lost. We haven't gone anywhere in six months, except for the wonderful study, and nobody today has even raised the question how we pay for this wonderful plan to re-landscape Memorial Fountain, to re-do all the wonderful pieces I think would be good. I think you have to decide fire station, yes or no, and if it is no, say 'No, we're not going to build it' and take other alternatives for the relocation of the Building Department, but you can't do this for another six months. It doesn't make any sense."

President McDonald:

"Okay, Mr. Elwell, do you have your direction?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"I do, sufficient for today, and I just wanted to try to summarize it and make sure that I get six nods out of it. Because of the variety of opinions that have just been expressed, we won't come to you providing the supplemental information regarding any of the particular courses of action, but rather the best thing to do at this point is bring you the reminder information about things you have already looked at, like the Australian lot—what it would have cost to put parking under the fire-rescue station—some of the things you need, just to have that data at hand and freshen your mind when you look at the bigger question. Then we will bring you some things you haven't seen yet that we have been looking at as staff as far as if the alternative, if you decide not to proceed with the fire-rescue station of what else we might do to accommodate, most immediately PZ&B, but more broadly the Administrative Department needs of those who are housed here in Town Hall. Finally, we will bring you some updated information about the schedule and the cost for proceeding with final design

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and construction of the fire-rescue station as it is shown in the model so that it is all before you, and we can have some full discussion of that in February and receive some direction about which of the alternative courses you want us to pursue.”

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

“I would just like to clarify one point on the traffic and the proposed plan for narrowing South County Road in the vicinity of Town Hall. I expressed my opposition to it. I still am opposed to it, and I didn’t hear anybody else either yea or nay it, so I would just like to be sure that there is a consensus one way or the other on that matter, because it is key apparently to what they are doing.”

President McDonald:

“The consensus now is there is no action necessary on that, because we haven’t gone far enough. Is that correct?”

Councilman Wyett:

“That isn’t correct. I think the study brings forward a very deep need for public safety in this area. The only other area besides Worth Avenue that has a lot of traffic is right around Town Hall, and it is not safe. As I mentioned, it is Kamikaze Alley, and calming that traffic down to the level that it is north and south of us has a lot of merit. The exact design may need a little tweaking, but the concept is correct.”

President McDonald:

“I guess you are disagreeing with Mr. McLendon.”

Mayor Smith:

“It had been my impression in the past few meetings that the Council was going along with the new fire station, and perhaps I was wrong about that, but I had understood that we were pretty close to having approved it, and you were working on the designs and this. Now, today you are saying, ‘Maybe we are not going to have a new fire station.’ Well, the Council is saying we’re not sure it’s going to be there. It was brought up on the Gray’s property. The public, I believe, believes the new fire station has been approved. They don’t think it is up in the air. We have Mrs. Farris giving tonight a donation to the new fire station of \$50,000 in a painting; we have Steven Stolman donating funds to the new fire station, because they thought it was approved. If it isn’t approved or if you are going to put it on hold for a time,

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I think that these donors should be made aware of that.”

Councilman Brooks:

“Madam Mayor, it was not my intention when I made my remarks that I was opposed to the fire station. I just followed my colleagues in saying let’s look at it in February. I realize that today sort of laid entry into the 5th race at Hialeah. We have Gray’s Mobil back into the picture. I certainly do not want to be misinterpreted. I am all for the new fire station, and correctly, Mr. Elwell, the existing budget reflects that matter.”

Town Manager Elwell:

“It does. Moreover, there are some substantial cost considerations to choosing an alternative to proceed with that, but because, clearly, the most efficient way for us to move forward and address the space needs....and there are other community value issues that have been discussed today that are part of the policy decision you make which is why I am trying to respect what you are trying to wrestle with and go away and think about from this meeting today, and I am trying not to push you to quick action, but I quite agree with the Mayor that we were on course, and if you choose to come off that course, you’re doing that, in fact. You are choosing to come off a course as opposed to being in a position where you are initially weighing options. We had come to the point where you were about to authorize final design of the station. We had modified the design of the station a couple of times to reflect concerns that have been expressed, and it was my impression as we approached that October Council meeting, it was about to be authorization received for final design; we were going to move into discussing the financing alternatives, and the bricks and mortar parts of the job, and in fact at that time, through the consideration of the Landmarks Commission and the appropriate concerns that were raised there, we moved, instead, toward this study with the explicit understanding that it was going to be pausing, as opposed to saying we don’t want to proceed along this road, we wanted to pause to make sure that, as we proceed with the project, it would be built in a way that everyone would be proud of rather than embarrassed by. That’s not to say though, depending upon your impressions of this study, and what you have heard today in the fullness of considering what’s before you—that’s not to say we must proceed with the fire station. It’s to say that we should do that promptly unless you now think we have identified a problem with that course of action, or we have now identified something much better for the Town. There will need to be some more modern facility for Fire-Rescue in the foreseeable future, and so if we go an alternative course now, we’re postponing that project and undertaking a different project, and in the large scheme of things, we have taken on more in order to address the Town’s needs over the next several years.”

President McDonald:

“What I heard, Mr. Elwell, was that the decision wasn’t going to be made at the February

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meeting. That's all I heard.— on the fire station, it wasn't going to be made in February.”

Town Manager Elwell:

“I didn't express myself well then. We can proceed on any schedule you would like to proceed, but what I have been trying to say is I don't think it is fair to put you in the position of making a decision today. You've heard a lot today. It gives you a lot to think about, but unless you believe we would be making a mistake to proceed with the fire station, I think you should authorize us in February to proceed to final design and move forward with that project. If you think that is a mistake or there is a better course of action for the Town to pursue, then please give us that direction or defer the matter so you can think about it some more. What we are going to attempt to do is give you enough information in preparation of the February meeting for you to decide whether an alternative for proceeding with this project would be preferable.”

President McDonald:

“So, what direction do you need?”

Town Manager Elwell:

“Today, I don't need any.”

Councilman Wyett:

“First, I would like to go on record that I favor a fire station; however, I don't think I am prepared in roughly 20-25 days to make the decision. Only for one reason. The question is we know we have a parking problem; we know we may want to tie the parking solution to the fire station if we have the study so it can be heard in February as to whether to put underground parking under the fire station. If that is feasible, then I would proceed immediately to approve the underground (parking) with the fire station. If the underground is not feasible, I think we have to look at a garage to go up. I think the two are married. I think we have to recognize that we must make a mutual decision. All the other decisions brought to us today, whether we redesign or not redesign, whether we put one type of palm tree or another, whether we put a traffic calming situation in or building up the back of Memorial Fountain—that can be studied at greater depth. We can't make the fire station decision independently of a parking situation, because we are reducing parking. You can't reduce parking and put our head in the sand.”

Mayor Smith:

“As I remember, the figure we got for underground parking at the fire station was something

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like \$3 million. Was it? Do you all remember?"

Town Manager Elwell:

"We are going to confirm those numbers, and that also happened while I was away. I don't know the exact number, but I was told today that it was of that magnitude. Yes."

Mayor Smith:

"But, it was some astronomical figure, and in my mind, I thought if we have the space to build a parking garage, I'd rather build a parking garage with three times the number of spaces than put a limited number of spaces that wouldn't fill our need under the fire station. However, I also feel that we should not now send Mr. Moore out to think about alternate spaces for Planning & Zoning. We shouldn't do studies on redesigning the space to fit Planning & Zoning in this building or not in this building. We cannot afford to spend this kind of money, and that's why I am pushing for the Council to make a decision within the next month or two so that we are not just sitting on our hands sort of taking a lot of action doing nothing. That's my thought."

Town Manager Elwell:

"And to help in that process, we will in fact be providing the parking information as well as the fire station information. Given the variety of opinions that you all have expressed today, you need information about the several different alternatives before you that relate to the parking; that relate to some alternative means of accommodating Administrative Staff and that relate to moving forward with the fire station. If you have all of that in front of you, then you can give further consideration and perhaps take action at the February meeting."

Councilman Brooks:

"I would respectfully suggest, that I am a great fan of alienating property, but this may be the time to tie in the Turnpike acreage that we own as possibly a funding mechanism for some of the things that we have all discussed. Granted it is going to be somewhat of an amorphous figure, but we all know what is coming there, and we can't hold on to it forever."

Town Manager Elwell:

"We can do that. We'll provide some updated information in the same package regarding that. The one thing that I think I should just say flat out because I am not confident we can do any significant analysis of this in time for it to be relevant to the consideration. We are going to bring a lot of information before February 12th. The concept discussed today about possibly resurrecting the potential of moving the fire-rescue station proposal back to the

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other corner where Gray's Mobil is, and trying to accommodate Gray's Mobil with a new facility on the Beaumont lot is something that we just won't be prepared to talk about on February 12th."

Mayor Smith:

"The last thing I wanted to say was I appreciated the input from the various people today with their different points of view. I think it is very important. I think it is the first step in our preservation of the historic district, and I hope that we will get written comments after review from the Garden Club after they look at their plan with their suggestions for the overall landscaping; from Preservation—Mrs. Earl you started the whole thing; from the Mayor; Mrs. Volk with your impressions about what should happen within the area separate and apart from the fire station. I think, Mr. Evans, as I said to you, this is the first step, and no point in criticizing the process when we haven't really started. It's the restoration and preservation of the district and whether the zoning should be changed and we would like everybody's opinion on it before we move ahead. That is separate and apart from the fire station."

President Pro-Tem McLendon:

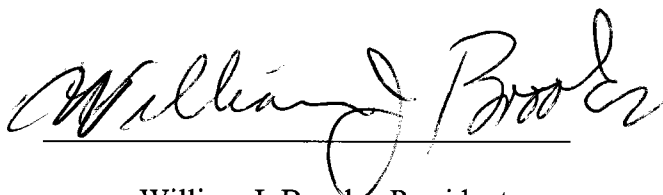
"I would just like to clarify something. I am in favor of going ahead with the fire house at the site proposed. My comments earlier were a little mis-directed. I thought we were having to react to approval of the historic district. If we can put that aside, which I guess we have, I have no problem making a decision February on the fire house."

V. ANY OTHER MATTERS

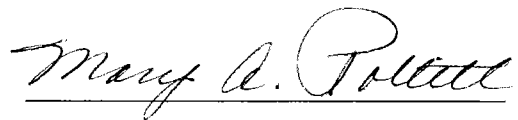
There were no other matters.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.



William J. Brooks, President



Mary A. Pollitt, Town Clerk