

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
2008-2009 ZONING HEARING  
RECORD AND REPORT  
TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2009, 9:30 a.m.**

Royal Poinciana Workshop  
Ponce De Leon Ballroom 4 at the Breakers Hotel

Please be advised that in keeping with a recent directive from the Town Council, the minutes of all Town Boards and Commissions will be “abbreviated” in style. Persons interested in listening to the meeting, after the fact, may access the audio of that item via the Town’s website at [www.townofpalmbeach.com](http://www.townofpalmbeach.com) or may obtain an audio recording of the meeting by contacting Debby Morakis, Secretary to the Planning & Zoning Commission at (561-227-6411. As a point of reference, you will find the recording times listed on these minutes at the beginning of each item.

Chairman Golboro, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and asked the Commission Members to identify themselves to the audience. Mr. Golboro explained that the focus of this workshop is to seek community-wide feedback on population density, building lot coverage, height and parking on the Royal Poinciana Business District and clarified that the area is bounded by the following streets: Royal Poinciana Way, Bradley Place, Sunrise Avenue and North County Road.

PRESENT:     Alan S. Golboro, Chairman  
                 Leslie A. Shaw, Secretary  
                 John H. Schuler, Member  
                 Walter Anthony Dowell, Member  
                 Floyd Wideman, Jr., Member  
                 E. James Ryan, Alternate Member  
                 C. Tanner Rose, Jr., Alternate Member  
                 John S. Page, Director of Planning, Zoning & Building Department  
                 Veronica Close, Assistant Director of Planning, Zoning & Building Dept.  
                 Paul Castro, Zoning Administrator  
                 John Lindgren, Planning Administrator  
                 John C. Randolph, Town Attorney

ABSENT:     Eugene Lawrence, Member (excused)

RECORDING SECRETARY: Deborah A. Morakis

Mr. John Page, Director of the Planning, Zoning & Building Department welcomed everyone and asked that everyone please sign in and noted that there are comment sheets available that

could be completed and turned over to staff. Mr. Page thanked the Breakers for making their beautiful facility available for this meeting.

**(0:07:03:0)** Mr. Page stated that he wanted to stress the fact that this meeting is not about the Royal Poinciana Plaza but is about the Royal Poinciana Business District. Mr. Page then turned the meeting over to the technical staff for presentation of a thirty-minute video presentation which included some of the comments presented at the charrette done for the Royal Poinciana Area Planning Study.

**(0:36:30:0)** At the conclusion of the video, Mr. Page then introduced Paul Castro, Zoning Administrator, who gave a power point presentation on the target area - the Royal Poinciana Business District.

**(1:03:43:4)** At the conclusion of Mr. Castro's power point presentation, Mr. Page invited questions and comments from the audience regarding the slide presentation.

Several comments and questions were heard from a few members of the audience including: Douglas Rill, Les Evans, Bill Feldkamp, John Ripley, Antionella Christie.

- Land values and maintenance costs are high. How much additional retail and commercial activity can the Island support?
- The "district" should include property to the east side of No. County Road.
- Douglas Rill supported a parking garage, and offered to donate his privately owned parking lot for such purpose.
- Big assessment increases and high maintenance costs create challenges for commercial users facing competition from off-Island.
- Densities have decreased on the Island and there isn't enough traffic to support commercial uses.
- A traffic turn-around lane in the Royal Poinciana Way median should be eliminated and devoted thereafter to additional parking.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) should be explored as a financial tool for building a new parking garage.
- Commercial properties aren't selling. Little foot traffic, high overhead and high land values deter sales.
- The district has to be made more appealing to pedestrians. The challenge is to make the commercial area more compact. Idea: move the food market (Publix) to the Plaza, then move offices from the Plaza to the former Publix site. The result is better pedestrian movement and less traffic congestion.
- Be mindful of creating too much residential density. Lot coverage, density and height are all intertwined.
- Don't lose existing shopping opportunities on the Island.
- Promote good architecture, including towers and articulation.
- Look for tools / bonus incentives to entice the provision of additional parking.
- Not all TCRPC ideas should be implemented.
- Don't change the character of the Town. Once history is destroyed, it never returns. Keep the Town peaceful.

The following comments were heard from members of the Planning & Zoning Commission:

Tanner Rose stated that it is his strong feeling that doing nothing is not an option. Mr. Rose supports the concepts of shared / screened / underground parking and is okay with the idea of increased density, but unsure of the final numbers. Mr. Rose added that he disfavors any residential usage on the first floor and is generally open to the idea of additional height and lot coverage.

Jimmy Ryan stated that he is reluctant to rezone one block at a time, but understands recent history in this regard. The area is functionally obsolete, and change should occur. Heights should be two and three story with good architecture. Mr. Ryan supports a planned approach to parking and added that commercial doesn't have to be all retail; offices and personal services should be allowed.

Floyd Wideman read a statement from the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to decreasing density when possible and inhibiting further commercialization. Mr. Wideman stated that he does not accept the belief that the neighborhood is failing and he objects to spot zoning and any zoning change that increases density.

Tony Dowell stated that a mix of uses is needed so that the neighborhood is self-sustaining. The condition of buildings has become worn and tattered. Mr. Dowell stated that he is uncertain of density and height changes, but he is okay with meaningful redevelopment.

John Schuler stated that he likes vias in commercial areas. Too much Mediterranean architecture should be avoided and that architectural design is particularly important. Mr. Schuler stated that the proposed Testa density of 39 units is quite dense and should be carefully reviewed. Mr. Schuler cautioned that the Town should be careful about creating too much congestion with zoning changes. He supports shared and/or underground parking and supports under-grounding of utilities.

Leslie Shaw stated that the Town's land-use evolution has not always been good in the past 10-15 years. Mr. Shaw added that he felt commercial uses should include more than retail including personal services. He is in favor of underground parking. When establishing density, height and lot coverage, be mindful of the precedent that may be established elsewhere in Town, but, is confident the Town will come to a conclusion/decision about redevelopment.

Chairman Alan Golboro used an analogy to describe zoning and stated that zoning is like a sandbox, it holds the sand and allows the sand to be built into castles. Architects will design the castles. Mr. Golboro favors assembly of smaller parcels into a single tract capable of supporting an architecturally significant building and stated that the Town must be mindful to curb neighborhood deterioration. There should be no curb breaks permitted on Royal Poinciana Way or the south side of Sunset Avenue. Incentives could be used to encourage underground parking. Mr. Golboro favors the possibility of three or four stories if the upper stories are stepped back with gardens and added that incentives could be offered for increased density if public artwork and other pedestrian amenities are offered.

Mr. Golboro stated that he favors development bonuses for land owners offering quality trade-

backs to the Town.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:32 a.m. without benefit of a motion.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Alan S. Golboro, Chairman  
Town of Palm Beach  
Planning & Zoning Commission

---

Leslie A. Shaw, Secretary  
Town of Palm Beach  
Planning & Zoning Commission

dam