



**FREEPORT PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**

July 6th, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
6:00 pm Freeport Council Chambers

I. Meeting Called to Order at 6:02 by Chairman John Konopacki.

Board members present were Chairman John Konopacki, Kevin Louthain,, Steve Thomas, and Michael Gilley. Member Racyne Digges was not in attendance.

Attending the meeting were Staff to include Planning Director Latilda Hughes-Neel, Planning Intern Summer Ammirata-Mall, Planning Technician Marge Gay, and City Attorney Clay Adkinson,

Planning Director Neel led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Meeting Minutes to be approved

a. 6/1/2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Gilley made a motion to approve the minutes and Kevin Louthain seconded. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

III. Scenic Walton Presentation

Leigh Moore, Executive Director of Scenic Walton, addressed the Board (*Note: a copy of the presentation slides is available from the Planning and Zoning office upon request and available on the city website*). Ms. Moore began with her presentation by reviewing the mission of Scenic Walton. She explained their beautification initiative and how beautification does not only create an aesthetically pleasing environment, but will enhance the safety of the area.

The presentation next covered areas of focus. These areas included landscaping medians, placing utilities underground, responsible cellular facilities, reducing litter, promoting safe and interconnected pedestrian and cyclist facilities, and advocating excellent design standards for development.

Leigh then briefly introduced the team members and emphasized the work produced by team member Brad Davis, a landscape architect. She then did an overview of the history of Scenic Walton and how they established the Scenic Corridor Association in 1994 and formed the scenic corridor foundation in 2008. In 2019 the name of the association was changed to Scenic Walton in which expanded the geographic reach to all of Walton County

The presentation then reviewed Scenic Waltons partners, which includes both government and non profit entities. There outreach to new potential partners included the City of Freeport, Defuniak Springs, Paxton and other cities that are yet to be partners within the county.



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Scenic Walton projects focus on transformational, high-impact, sustainable, collaborative work. Their past successes include the scenic corridor guidelines, median landscaping, and Walton County School Litter Education Program. Ms. Moore then reviewed their recent successes which included increased median maintenance, gateway median landscaping project located on US 331 South, and median landscaping, multiuse path, safety improvement along US 98/ CR 30A east, along with other recent success projects.

Ms. Moore then explained the means of transforming Scenic Walton. Some of these initiatives included a shift to advocating that the government prioritize projects to bringing resources to the table to assist with projects getting funded and built, this will lead to becoming stronger partners with local government and the community.

It was explained that their high impact projects emphasized helping to diversify our economy, increase property values and fostering a more robust business environment. Ms. Moore concluded the presentation on ways that can help Scenic Walton, such as following them on social media and becoming an annual investor.

After the presentation concluded, Planning Director Latilda Hughes- Neel gave an example of how Scenic Walton would be utilized in the City of Freeport. The example referred to the gateways and corridors within the city. Mrs. Neel then explained how landscaping projects in the south end of the city would be a focus for a potential project along with the Public Arts Project that will be brought to the Board at a later date.

Michael Gilley, Board Member, then suggested that materials such as Crepe Myrtles from landscaping projects that are being torn out be recycled by Scenic Walton. Leigh Moore addressed this comment by expressing that she would like to do this, but due to budgetary concerns, would most likely not be able to due to cost of the equipment needed.

Board Member John Konopacki, expressed his concern about the litter that is already present and how that should be a main focus. Leigh expressed how this can occur on county roads and how FDOT has a minimal budget for maintenance of these roads, but FDOT is more than willing to coordinate with the county to create a larger budget for these issues. Mr. Konopacki then asked why their projects focus mainly on the south side of the bay. Ms. Moore answered saying that this board meeting is the first step in bringing projects to the North end of the bay. Ms. Moore expressed her goal in unifying the County and to enhance the cities individualism and character through these projects.

There being no further discussion, Steve Thomas made a motion to adjourn and Michael Gilley second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.



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Minutes prepared by Summer Ammirata- Mall and adopted by the Freeport Planning & Development Review Board on _____.

Chairman Konapacki

Attest:

Kathie Gatewood, City Clerk