

# District #1 - Urban Core

## Citizens Planning Advisory Committee

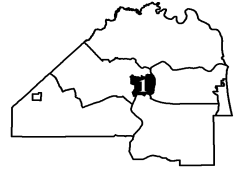
Meeting Location: Ed Ball Building – Training Room 110 – 214 N. Hogan St.

**Chair:** Christina Parrish 434-0959 [ceparrish.CPAC@yahoo.com](mailto:ceparrish.CPAC@yahoo.com)

**Vice Chair:** Gloria DeVall 449-4340 [gloria.devall2010@comcast.net](mailto:gloria.devall2010@comcast.net)

**Mayor's Representative:** Carolyn Shehee-Williams 630-1636 [cshehe@coj.net](mailto:cshehe@coj.net)

**Neighborhood Coordinator:** Rosemary Wesolowski 255-8261 [rosemary@coj.net](mailto:rosemary@coj.net)



## Meeting Summary Monday, November 4, 2013

### Members

Ruth Arnold, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Ministries  
Gloria DeVall, Vice Chair  
Dimitri Demopoulos, Churchwell Lofts  
Christina Parrish, Chair  
Greg Radlinski, Parks at the Cathedral  
Deloris Swain, Grand Boulevard Crime Watch  
Doug Vanderlaan, SPAR

### Excused –

Darcel Harris, Mother of Midway AME  
William Hamilton, St. John's Lutheran Church  
Victoria Hamilton, St. John's Lutheran Church  
Dorothy Merrick, Plaza Condominiums

### Guests

Shereline Redden, Stand Your Ground	Robert Hyde
Alice Cannon, JTA	Bill Holm, PNG/Hester Group

### Staff/Resource

Marvin Echols, Planning	Nelson Beard, Municipal Code
James Green, FDOT	Rosemary Wesolowski, HCDD
Donna Barrow, City Council Aide, At-Large	Mark Hartley, JaxParks
Carolyn Shehee-Williams, Mayor's Liaison	Michelle Barth, Mayor's Office
Jimmy Ricks, JSO	

### Call to Order

Chair Parrish called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Training Room 110, Ed Ball Building, 214 N. Hogan St., established that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone.

### Approval of the Minutes

*Member Arnold made a Motion to accept the minutes as presented from the October 2013 meeting and a second was made by Member Radlinski. The motion passed unanimously.*

### Guest Speakers:

#### Joel McEachin, City Planner Supervisor, Historic Preservation:

Spoke to the group on the history of the Brooklyn area (in Jacksonville). Mr. McEachin referred back to the original land grants in the day of Francis Richard. The area that would be developed as Brooklyn exchanged hands several times until development started in 1868. Brooklyn was platted shortly after the Civil War by Miles Price, a Confederate veteran. Price acquired the land in October of 1858 for \$1,528. In 1868, Price sold 500 acres the property to Edward Cheney for \$10,000 in gold. A newspaper publisher, Cheney was acting in trust for railroad magnate John Murray Forbes. This property was platted and named Riverside.

That same year, Price platted the remaining portion of the property as Brooklyn. Taking advantage of the area's rapid population growth after the Civil War, Brooklyn had 356 residents by 1870.

During this era, the area west of Commercial Street (Riverside Avenue) became a popular location for African-Americans looking to take advantage of employment, housing opportunities, and the protection of the Freedmen's Bureau. A large contingent of black Union soldiers came to Jacksonville in 1864 during the town's fourth occupation during the Civil war. A garrison of both black and white Federal soldiers were stationed in Brooklyn for several years after the war as part of a military occupation to restore order. Some of the black soldiers/veterans stayed and purchased land making the northwest portion of Brooklyn a black community. In the 1870 census, it is documented that 356 people called Brooklyn home; 59% of the Brooklyn residents were African American.

The addition of a streetcar in 1879 triggered more growth in Brooklyn. In 1887, with nearly 1,000 residents and approximately 250 buildings, Brooklyn was annexed into the City of Jacksonville. During this era, the community consisted of small frame residences west of Commercial Street (now Riverside Avenue) and large riverfront mansions along the St. Johns River.

Due to the expansion of the railroad into Florida in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jacksonville & the Brooklyn area experienced a lot of winter visitors. Commercial Street (near the modern day Florida Times Union buildings) was the location of the Rochester House. The Rochester House was owned by Frederick M. Robinson and was used as a guest hotel. After Mr. Robinson sold the structure it was later known as the Riverside House. The house could accommodate 30 to 40 guests and was known to host a number of famous winter guests, including Mary Todd Lincoln. In 1911, this home was moved by barge up the river to its current location, (2107 River Blvd.).

Brooklyn had its share of famous residents, such as, Secretary of the Treasury, Francis Elias Spinner, industrial manufacturer Frederick M. Robinson, lumberman J.K. Russell and publisher Horace Drew; all of which owned homes along "the row" on the river. The most spectacular home in Brooklyn at the time was the Greeley House. Mayor J.C. Greeley, father of architect Mellen C. Greeley, had a 6 story gingerbread house. The famed tower of the house provided excellent views of the city (Jacksonville), the river and the recently constructed rail road bridge. Unfortunately, Commercial Street did eventually live up to its name and most of the mansions were torn down, including the Greeley House. They tore the Greeley House down to make way for a car dealership in 1911.

There is one historical building on Commercial Street (Riversides Avenue) that has survived; that is Fire Station #5. This fire station was constructed in 1910 and was built to accommodate two fire wagons, five horses and 14 firemen. Station #5 served Jacksonville for nearly one hundred years. A 2003 economic incentive package to lure a "Fortune 100" company to relocate nearby included the City of Jacksonville deeding the property to this company. The City retained the right to relocate Fire Station #5, but has not. The building that housed generations of firefighters, and was a "working" fire station as recently as 2008, has an unknown future.

The homes that were not along Commercial Street were typically built as Frame Vernacular homes, Shot Gun homes, Bungalows and a mixture of Victorian homes. Although Frame Vernacular is not really a style, it is a category which could also be described as simple wooden structures that reflected the home builders talents and abilities. The uniqueness of Frame Vernacular buildings are important since they represent vanishing examples of how rural and lay builders utilized simple and time tested construction principles, as well as local building materials such as Southern Yellow Pine and cypress.

Development and change have long been a factor for Brooklyn. These issues can be traced back to problems with connectivity to Brooklyn throughout the opening of the Myrtle Avenue underpass in 1909 and the Lee Street Viaduct in 1921 led to a change in character of Brooklyn's built environment. Designed to help relieve congestion on the Riverside Viaduct, the underpass

and viaduct stimulated commercial and industrial development along Myrtle Avenue and Park Street.

The most significant changes to Brooklyn occurred after 2000. The Florida Department of Transportation implemented a major expansion of Riverside Avenue and Forest Street in order to provide a more direct connection with I-95. In order to convert Riverside Avenue and Forest Street to a six-lane boulevard, as well as to accommodate associated retention ponds, required spending twenty-eight million dollars to purchase properties, relocate businesses, and demolish structures. All of the buildings on the west side of Riverside Avenue from Leila Street to Forest Street were removed to accommodate the expansion. In conjunction with these projects, large number of parcels between Riverside Avenue and Park Street were acquired and cleared for redevelopment purposes.

Brooklyn remained primarily residential into the 20th century, portions were rezoned for commercial use, and a number of commercial skyscrapers and other building were constructed along the river. While there are still a number of single family homes in the area, most are rental property. The City of Jacksonville and the Planning department are working to help preserve a portion of this historical area. The proposed historic district includes the remaining cluster of historic residences and churches generally located west of Park Street to South Myrtle Avenue and from Forest Street on the south to Dora Street on the north. The proposed district incorporates two and half blocks defined by Spruce Street, Chelsea Street, Dora Street, Elm Street and Price Street. Within the proposed boundaries are 18 separate structures located in an area of six acres containing 52 separate parcels of various sizes. Of the 18 buildings, 15 are residential, two institutional (churches), and one warehouse. 35 parcels are vacant (3.49 acres). The proposed district includes 14 contributing properties containing a total of 16 contributing structures (1.28 acres). Two parcels have non-contributing structures.

Mr. McEachin's presentation included many photos that really helped illustrate the community growth and changes through the year. Mr. McEachin answered a couple of questions: *Could Brooklyn qualify for National Historic Preservation?* He said that they are looking into it to determine if National or Local Historic Preservation would be best for the area. The National program is handled through the Federal Government and often, the home owners do not have a lot of input or voting rights; the Feds just do what they want. An overlay would be less restrictive and allow more input from the community. Why does the proposed preservation area boundaries not included all of Brooklyn? The area needs to be limited to residential zoning and the building needs to have certain types of architectural features.

**Elected Officials Reports** – There were no reports, but Councilmember Lori Boyer attended the meeting to speak on the Consolidated Government Task Force.

In August, the Jacksonville City Council passed Resolution 2013-551-A, creating the Task Force on Consolidated Government to undertake an in depth review of the history, formation and operation of the consolidated government of Jacksonville. The Task Force is chaired by Council Member Lori Boyer and they are seeking input from the public with the hope of hearing directly from residents on the effects of consolidation.

The Task Force has held five public meetings around Jacksonville have heard comments from the public. Tonight, November 4<sup>th</sup> is the last public meeting (held in the Urban Core area), thus conflicting with the Urban Core CPAC. To ensure the Urban Core CPAC could learn about the task force she joined and shared the following.

To date the task force has discovered that there are four primary areas of concern.

1. Loss of continuity and institutional knowledge hampers our success. With the advent of term limits, and significant numbers of appointed employees who change with administrations, we lose forward momentum on a regular basis.

2. Neighborhoods feel distant and underserved by our consolidated government that is large, hard to navigate, and offers one-size fits all approaches to very diverse and distinct communities. This is the only clear downside that has been articulated consistently across the City and we are missing out if we don't take this opportunity to improve and engage our residents.
3. Centralization of certain services such as IT, Human Resources, Procurement and similar areas was promoted as a cost saving opportunity of consolidation. It is inconsistently implemented and appears to not have achieved the promised cost savings while often being the source of conflict among departments and independent authorities. There is work to be done here.
4. The absence of an integrated strategic plan that crosses jurisdictional boundaries between the Independent Authorities of the City, the City government itself, and affiliated agencies and entities holds us back from achieving our full potential. Each may perform its own mission well, but they are not integrated to achieve a broader set of goals for the City. At worst, we see conflicting efforts at cross-purposes. There should be a mechanism and structure to establish the common goals, buy-in from all sides, and directed effort to assist each other in getting there.

Additionally, the Task Force announced the publication of a Public Input Survey designed to capture public input related to the charge of the Task Force. Members of the public are asked to provide feedback through the survey on the effects of consolidation of the City of Jacksonville and Duval county, as well as, how well city services have been provided, among other things. The survey may be found on Survey Monkey.com and may be completed anonymously.

For more information on the Task Force, or for a complete list of Task Force members, please contact: Damian Cook, Executive Administrator to the Task Force on Consolidated Government, at 904-630-1775 or [DamianC@coj.net](mailto:DamianC@coj.net).

#### **Staff Reports:**

**JSO Zone 1 – Lt. Jimmy Ricks**

Stated that in Zone 1 JSO has been busy due to the Florida/Georgia Football game. The Florida/Georgia game went well as far as police matters are concerned. JSO dealt mostly with minor incidents; most of those incidents were alcohol related. In the past 14 days there has been a rash of auto burglaries in Zone 1. Seven of the vehicles were left unlocked. One of the victims was a local news van. The news team left the van unlocked and open; a laptop, cellphone and GPS was stolen. Over the past 14 days violent crime has dropped 2.6% and year to date violent crime is down 14.9%. The next ShAdCo meeting will be the big Annual Meeting. This year the Annual Meeting will be held at First Baptist Church downtown on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Doors open at 5:30 pm; dinner will be served at 6:00 pm and the meeting will begin at 7:00 pm. The CPAC did bring up that there continues to be a problem with fishing along the Riverwalk. Mark Hartley from JaxParks confirms that signs have been posted and JSO confirmed that they need to see the signs up and posted so they can enforce the ordinance. It was suggested that maybe JaxParks could post additional signs and keep a database of the locations where they have posted signs. For assistance and information call the JSO Zone 1 Sub Station at 924-5361 or [JSOzone1@jaxsheriff.org](mailto:JSOzone1@jaxsheriff.org)

**Mayor's Representative** – Ms. Shehee Williams – no report

**Duval County Public Schools** – not present

**Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)** – Jim Green reported on the following:

- The Mathews Bridge project is running behind schedule, but is expected to be completed this fall.

**Mr. Green can be reached at 360-5684 or [James.green@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:James.green@dot.state.fl.us)**

**Planning and Development** – Planner Marvin Echols, informed the group that there is not much activity in Zone 1 right now. The application for 3160 Division Street has been put on hold. This application is a store owner that would like to downgrade the zoning from CM to RLD60.

**Mr. Echols can be reached at 255-7823 or [mechols@coj.net](mailto:mechols@coj.net)**

**Project New Ground** – Bill Holman

Out of the 45 properties that have been contracted to be cleaned, 20 have been completed and 6 are in the midst of being cleaned. Phase 3 in the College Street area there are 83 properties identified; we are waiting for the contracts to be signed. In the 5th & Cleveland area, they are starting to work in that area too.

**Project New Ground can be contacted at 630-CITY (2489) or the Outreach Center at 357-8077.**

**Parks & Recreation** – Mark Hartley confirmed that he has confirmed that there are 9 signs posted along the Riverwalk from The Berkman to the Landing; they are posted on the light poles. This month on November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Boat Light Parade will be held at 7:00 pm. There is one be project starting in the Urban Core focusing on Urban Blight. JaxParks and Public Works will be doing a sweep to look for illegal dumping and graffiti. In the past 5 days the Parks Department in the Urban Core has removed 18 tons of stuff dumped in the parks. Along the S-Line there has been 31 TV's, 9 computers and the glass that was there was from the computer monitors. They have cleaned the S-Line down to Norwood. On Wednesday, they are rolling out Pickle ball in a number of the community centers. The game a form of tennis, but played on an indoor court a 1/3 of the size of a tennis court. The paddle is similar to a ping pong paddle and the ball is similar to a whiffle ball. Pickle ball moves slower than tennis, thus making it easier for everyone to play.

**Mr. Hartley can be reached at 472-2865 or [mhartley@coj.net](mailto:mhartley@coj.net)**

**Jacksonville Public Library** – not present

**Public Works** – not present

**Neighborhoods – Code Compliance** – Supervisor Nelson Beard reported that there are 1865 active cases in the Urban Core. Completed 2 neighborhood systematic inspections last week, on the Talleyrand/Long Branch neighborhood and that opened 119 new cases.

**Supervisor Beard can be reached at 255-7041. Code can be reached at 255-7000.**

**Neighborhoods – Housing and Community Development Division** – Neighborhood Coordinator Rosemary Wesolowski stated that she would be providing the group with the upcoming schedule for trash collection for the holidays. There was also a brief reminder of some of the upcoming Urban Core events: Art Walk 11/6/13, Toddler Art (Main Library) 11/6/13, Way Cool Wednesday (Main Library) 11/6/13, Light the Night Walk 11/7/13 (The Landing) and the Veteran's Day Parade 11/11/13.

There was a request for Rosemary to have someone from Public Works attend the January meeting to give an update on the Water Intrusion Repair project at the Main Library.

**Ms. Wesolowski can be reached at 255-8261 or [rosemary@coj.net](mailto:rosemary@coj.net)**

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### **Chair's Report**

- Chair Parrish recognized Councilmember Boyer for joining the group. Chair Parrish also reported that the City has worked with a number of non-profits and citizens to try and get a National Park Service Grant to create a Ground Trust. The boundary for the Ground Trust Fund in Jacksonville runs from Springfield to the river; this includes Hogan's Creek, the Shipyards, Metropolitan Park and the East side. The Ground Fund was awarded \$200,000. This will open the doors for future funding. The focus of this trust will be the urban water ways that are polluted and/or parks that are abandoned. In

Jacksonville, they will focus on Hogan's Creek, Deer Creek, Confederate Park and Klutho Park. In the other cities that have the Ground Trust, the communities have been very successful at raising additional funds to aid in their projects. This is very exciting for the Urban Core.

#### **Subcommittee Reports**

- **Preservation** – Chair DeVall ~ no report
- **Transportation** – not present
- **Parks** – Greg Radlinski - no report
- **TRUE Commission** – Greg Radlinski –In December they will have their last meeting of the year coming up and they will have their report in regard to police & Fire Pension short fall.
- **Nomination** – Doug Vanderlaan presented the slate of officers: Gloria DeVall for Chair and Greg Radlinski as Vice Chair. Doug Vanderlaan, asked if there any nomination from the floor. A motion was made accept the slate of stated that the group met prior to the CPAC meeting. They made a motion to accept the slate of officers. Congratulations Gloria & Greg.

#### **Unfinished Business –**

The members of the CPAC wanted to thank Christina Parrish for chairing the Urban Core CPAC for the past 2 years. The group presented Chair Parrish with a CPAC reminder gift as a token of their appreciation.

#### **New Business**

There was a request to have a presentation by Public Works and project at the library, funding for the libraries and from the Health Department and Obamacare

#### **Public Comments/Announcements**

#### **Adjournment**

*Member Vanderlaan made a Motion to adjourn and was Member Arnold seconded.  
The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.*

The next Urban Core CPAC meeting is on  
**Monday, January 6, 2014** at 5:30 p.m.,  
at the Ed Ball Building, 214 N. Hogan Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor Training Room