URBAN CORE CITIZENS PLANNING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, November 12, 1996 AT 5:00 P.M.
SPRINGFIELD PRESERVATION & RESTORATION, INC.
1321 NORTH MAIN STREET

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Bryant
Janetta Norman
Phil Neary
Flossie Brunson
Ann Shiver
Judith Truett
Lisa Neary
Carlon Robinson
Noah Henderson
Christine Tyler
Celia Miller
Ju'Coby Pittman

CITY STAFF-MEDIA & CITIZENS

Helen Ridley
Lt. Scott Hughes
Pat Greason
D. S. Brown
Flo Johnson
Isiah Williams
A. Michael Trenton
Joann Smith
Jeanne Ward
Michael Trautmann

The chairman, Michael Bryant, called the meeting to order at 4:15 P.M. at the offices of Springfield Preservation and Restoration, Inc. (SPAR), 1321 North Main Street.

The chairman introduced Mr. Lex Hester, Chief Administrative Officer for the City who spoke on the current status of the LaVilla Redevelopment Project. Mr. Hester displayed several maps depicting the proposed redevelopment plan which has been extended to the east to Clay Street in order to include Old Stanton High School. Adams and Monroe Streets have been improved to create a landscaped parkway. West Adams Street is set to reopen by April of 1997. Along the Forsyth Street and Bay Street corridor several projects are planned including Rivertown, the Chappell Day School, Salley Industries, and new facilities for Lee & Cates Glass Company. New buildings in the area must meet architectural standards. New funds have been allocated to purchase additional blighted properties in LaVilla. Although the City will try to save recognized historic buildings, there are no plans to rehabilitate any of the existing houses. The City has proposed that the School Board consider constructing a new middle school performing arts magnet in LaVilla. Originally, the City proposed using property closer to the interstate near the JEA substation, however, the School Board would prefer a location closer to Downtown.

Mr. Hester went on to state that a historical/cultural district is planned around the Ritz Theatre area. This district will include the new Urban League building, as well as possibly an African-American museum along with the performing arts center at the Ritz Theatre. These uses would complement the proposed performing arts magnet school. Parking for the Ritz Theatre and the museum will be shared with Second Missionary Baptist Church. The people living in LaVilla

were relocated following federal guidelines. Before the project started, approximately 1,000 people lived in LaVilla. If the new school proposal does not happen, the City may consider new housing in LaVilla. Ms. Padrica Mendez questioned the need for tearing down good housing stock to provide for a new school. She recommended that the new school be placed in an existing empty school. Audience member, Michael Trautmann stated that we are trying to interest people to relocate to Springfield, the City will need to improve the infrastructure and appearance of North Main Street. The Mayor is interested in the Main Street project, but no real funding is available except for ISTEA grants. Dr. Norman recommended that the City considered saving three original sides of the Ritz Theatre and construct a larger theater complex behind it.

Mr. Scott Hughes, who was representing Mr. Bobby Drummond, introduced Mr. Danny Brown, also of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. Mr. Brown explained the DART program presently being implemented in Jacksonville. The purpose of the DART program (Drug Abatement Response Team) is to combat crack houses utilizing a variety of governmental agencies. Presently, people are arrested and released, going back to the same property. The DART program makes owners responsible for the actions occurring on their property. The DART program involves representatives from the Property Safety Division, JEA, Community Services Department, and Building and Zoning Inspection Division. All the agencies focus on the various violations that exist at a property with the goal of trying to get the owner to address the specific problems. Although the program focuses on individual properties, the team will evaluate the whole block. At least five houses have been demolished as a result of the program.

Dr. Norman asked about the continued crime problems along West 21st Street off Moncrief Road. To use the DART Program, the Sheriff's Office must have a address. Therefore, it may be difficult to address street prostitution using this approach. Mr. Brown reported that the DART Program is not funded separately, and depends upon units presently working the streets. Efforts are being made to acquire two officers and two inspectors to be assigned full time to the program.

Mr.Hughes provided information regarding accomplishments that have been made under Sheriff Nat Glover. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Completed a reorganization of the Sheriff's Office which includes appointed captains in order to provide more accountability.
- Between May 1, 1995 and July of 1996, 109 more officers were put on the streets.
- Opened 49 to 50 police stop stations in each subsection of the City, many in donated spaces.
- Established 12 of the 17 planned Sheriff's Advisory Committees. The purpose of the committees are to bring citizens together to provide input to the Sheriff's Office regarding community problems, as well as receive information back from the Sheriff's Office.
- Re-established the use of chain gangs to do community work.
- Made the local jail less desirable.
- Personalized the patrol cars.

- More federal dollars have been used in the "Cops Ahead" Program. A 2.3 million grant has been received to hire additional officers, purchase a community policing bus, more bicycles, etc.
- A school resource officer is located in each secondary school.
- Lap top computers are used in police cars to avoid additional paper work, and spend more time on the street.
- Established a Victim Information Notification Program, to notify crime victims when suspects are released.
- Established six zones with subsections.
- The Sheriff has continued to walk the beats.
- Have opened substations in Zone II & III.
- Use of a Hot Spot Program where officers target subsections to talk with residents about problems, need for enforcement actions, etc.

The chairman appointed a nominating committee composed of Dr. Norman, Flossie Brunson, and Phil Neary to recommend a slate of officers for 1997 (Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary)

The chairman also requested additional names to submit to the Mayor for consideration of serving on the Urban Core Municipal Code Board. After a brief discussion, Mr. Neary moved that the Urban Core CPAC organize a tour of the district as part of the December meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brunson and approved. The chairman requested that members of the Urban Core CPAC communicate with the Planning and Development Department regarding locations and routes to include on the tour. The chairman concluded the meeting by giving a brief update on the Growth Management Task Force which has been divided up into three different subcommittees.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 P.M.