

**The Better Jacksonville Plan
Citizens Oversight Committee
Quarterly Meeting
July 15, 2002**

The meeting was called to order in the Mayor's Large Conference room at 6 p.m.

Co-chair Ron Salem opened the meeting and apologized for the cancellation of the last meeting due to the city-wide blackout. He introduced Co-chair Flossie Brunson. Ms. Brunson addressed the group and emphasized the important role they are playing in The Better Jacksonville Plan. Ron then introduced Mayor Delaney for updates on The Better Jacksonville Plan. Mayor Delaney talked about the recent selection of Cannon Design for the County Courthouse Complex. The judicial officials on the Competition Advisory nominated Cannon Design unanimously. He shared his excitement about the positive changes that are happening in downtown Jacksonville. He also shared renderings of the new Sports Complex, including the Veterans Memorial Wall park and surrounding Arena and Ballpark.

The Mayor also:

- Discussed the ballpark and arena and the progress that is taking place there. Expectations are to throw the first pitch next March. The arena construction is moving quickly, and a dedication will be held next summer.
- The Main Library is on track. The Young Men's Shop on the Main Library parking site has been demolished to make room for the parking garage. The garage will be built first so that construction workers will have a place to park while working on the new Main Library. The Rhodes building is expected to be imploded on August 17. A local joint venture group has been selected as construction manager, with negotiations underway and we are moving full steam ahead.
- The new courthouse is to be dedicated in late 2005. With the rehabilitation of the old Federal Courthouse, it will cost half as much as it would cost to build new.
- Road Resurfacing – 650 miles have been resurfaced to date. Citizen Surveys give the program an overall B+ grade.
- Sidewalks – 25 miles of sidewalks are finished to date.
- Preservation Project – Jacksonville now has the largest urban park system in the United States. If all the City's deals are approved by City Council to buy land and save it from development, the total land acquisition will exceed 33,000 acres. The next step is to develop these properties for public use like canoe launches and hiking trails.
- Work on septic tank remediation is going well. JEA reports that Perncia and Johnnie Circle should be done by this fall. Completion will be marked with an event, and the committee will all be invited.
- The City is continuing to work with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Environmental Protection on the testing and cleanup of contaminated sites.

- The \$25 million in the Northwest Jacksonville Economic Development Fund is making a difference in businesses in that area. There are many projects going on that are outlined in the quarterly report.
- The groundbreaking for the Equestrian Center will be held on September 5 at 10:30 a.m. That will also mark the 2 year anniversary of The Better Jacksonville Plan. Dedication of the facility is on target for next summer.
- The Land of the Jaguar exhibit groundbreaking was in May, and work continues on that project. Ten million dollars from The Better Jacksonville Plan is being matched with private funds, with expectations to raise anywhere from \$20-\$30 million.

Questions from the Citizens Oversight Committee and Guest, answered by Mayor Delaney

Will we have antiques or anything like that in the new Courthouse?

We have not really gotten that far, but we do have Art in Public Places, which puts $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1% of construction costs into art for our public buildings.

Will repairs be done to streets that have been damaged after resurfacing or construction?

Yes, inspectors look at road resurfaced, and if it is not right, we will come back and fix them. If we do not catch a problem, please call 630-BJAX or 630-CITY.

How is minority participation?

Minority business participation is at about 27% right now.

Are there any concerns about pursuing manufacturing and industrial development, with the Equestrian Center at Cecil Field?

We had a Reuse Commission develop a master plan for the Cecil Commerce Center. The center is 27 square miles, that is very large. It is broken down roughly into one-third aviation, one-third industrial and one-third recreational.

The Equestrian Center project will be discussed at our next meeting.

Have you thought about the Pan American games at Cecil? They have equestrian events and this might be a good venue.

We have thought about this, along with possibly having Spring Training and other events.

Is there any progress in resolving the overpass issues?

In the Better Jacksonville Plan, we put each project in concrete. The projects can not be deleted unless there is "just cause" and a two-thirds vote by City Council. The project scope will be determined by an in-depth study, design phase and community input.

Are there any roads that have a priority for repairing?

Roads that have the most damage on them, 90% of them have a leaky pipe or drainage problem. Before we repair those roads we have to fix the lines. We coordinate closely with the utilities so that we can do it all at once. Some are being delayed because of this. 80%-90% of the resurfacing projects will be done in about 1½ years.

What is the availability of the contracts that are being awarded? How can we see that the minority contractors are getting their fair share?

There are three things that the selection committee was told to abide by. We want local contractors, we want them to be spread the work out to many companies and we want as many minority contractors as we can. For professional services contracts, the most qualified bidder wins, not the lowest bidder. . We do an evaluator bid and a matrix is scored. If you are local, the points are higher, also it depends on the amount of work that you have already received and your presentation. These meetings are all noticed and recorded, so that anyone can take part in them.

What is the average percentage of local/minority participation for each project?

We are averaging 27%. We will add that to our quarterly report projects.

Charles Kelly presented some information regarding the KY horse park and the 50/50 grant they received.

The Mayor introduced Chris Boruch, Project Manager for the County Courthouse Complex.

Chris presented a Power Point overview and status report on the County Courthouse Complex.

The following points were reviewed:

- Purpose/Need for new Courthouse
- Court history
- Current facility
- Design Competition

- Project Details for new Courthouse
 - Location
 - Size – approx. 900,000 square feet
 - Budget - \$211 million
 - Dedication in late 2005
 - Features

What happened to the old courthouses? The first burned down in the Confederate War, the second in the Great Fire of 1901 and the 3rd was replaced by the existing courthouse. What happens when we move, what happens to the old courthouse?

We will put out an RFP (Request for Proposal) to developers as to what they would bring there and what would be the best use for the property. There are guidelines and we would go from there.

How much parking will we have?

A portion will be employees and a portion will be visitors. We hope to keep the jurors at Alltel, with Trolley connection. There are approximately 3,000 spaces.

Will there be pedestrian bridges connecting the parking garage?

No, we want people walking on the road and taking part in area retail and adding life to Downtown. There will be a pedestrian bridge connecting the judicial offices in the Old Federal Courthouse to the new main building for security reasons.

Will we be utilizing the old Southern Bell Building?

I want that area to be like a plaza – with or without the Southern Bell building. I do not think that we need it to be another garage, but this is not resolved yet. I would like to get your thoughts on it at our next meeting.

Will the benches inside the courtroom be padded?

We have not gotten to that part in the planning yet.

How about the acoustics?

We are looking at many different systems.

Mayor Delaney also pointed out that we would be saving money in terms of our air conditioning because of a chilled water plant that JEA is building. This will cut capital costs. Also, a private company is building the garage and will be putting up the capital for that project.

What do you anticipate the final budget to be?

All of our projects are on or under budget. Every year the state sends a new judge to Jacksonville, so we have to plan for that and look at buying more land in the area for inevitable expansion.

Didn't you say that you did not have a choice but to build a new courthouse? Weren't you mandated by the state to do so?

Yes and with The Better Jacksonville Plan we were able to do it well. We weren't forced to build on the parking lot by the old courthouse and have separate areas across the city for Public Defenders, Judges and State Attorneys.

Will there be a place for witnesses to be out of view and not in the hallway?

Chris Boruch – Yes because of the different rooms that are being built.

The Mayor thanked the Citizens Oversight Committee for their ongoing commitment and told them that he would stick around for any further questions.

Mr. Salem asked the committee what project they wanted to discuss at the next meeting. The committee voted to have the Equestrian presentation.

Tony Bates from the Concerned Taxpayers of Jacksonville raised concerns from his president about the role of the Citizens Oversight Committee. He read a statement from his president. Several Citizens Oversight Committee members, including Ron Salem, pointed out the important advisory role that the Citizens Oversight Committee plays in the implementation of The Better Jacksonville Plan.