



HD King Site Community Meeting Report



THE SUNRISE CITY
FORT PIERCE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT *Florida*

Introduction

A community meeting held on Wednesday, August 24, 2016 to give the community an opportunity express their thoughts on how they would like to see the HD King site developed. The HD King site was the former home of the electricity generating facility for the Fort Pierce Utility Authority. The facility was demolished in 2008 and the site has gone through a series of soil remediation processes. Now that the site is nearing the completion of the remediation, the site is blank slate of approximately 11 acres for redevelopment. The public was invited through the City's social media channels as well as a direct mailing to nearby properties.

There were 38 members of the community in attendance, and 28 of those filled out surveys. There were also 5 emails received upon the site.

Interactive "Conversation Stations"

A series of "conversations stations" were set up around the room to give citizens a chance to write down what they thought were the most important issues the city should look at, and what they did not want to see. Each of the topics was staffed by a member of the Planning Department. The first two boards are recapped in the order that they were written in.

Conversation Station #1: What is the most important issue we should look at?

- Tax Revenue, Tourist Revenue, and Sales Tax Revenue
- Continue to Improve Infrastructure
- Code Enforcement
- Make Sure it Stays True to Ft. Pierce (Build Possible Welcome Center)
- Mass and Scale
- Sustainability of Hotel & Conference Center
- Quality Architectural Design & Landscaping
- Don't Forget Parking
- Integrating Moore's Creek into a Quality Public Access Urban Space that Connects Indian River Drive & 2nd Street.
- How will Surrounding Development Affect the Site
- Look into Ways to Protect the Peacocks (Speed Bumps and Signs)
- Clean Up the Area, Especially Vacant Buildings
- Safety in Lincoln Park
- Look into Filling or Selling Empty Buildings & Create Beauty
- Continue Emphasis on the Arts

Conversation Station #2: What is a Dealbreaker? What are things you do not want to see?

- No More Bars or Dollar Stores
- No More Lawyers or Bail Bonds
- Stop Opening Businesses that the Community Does not Want
- Do Not Destroy the Historic Character
- Stop Catering to Snowbirds
- No Churches
- No Gated Communities
- No Gas Stations, Car Part Stores, or Strip Malls
- Do Not Build Anything that Will Not Generate Tax Revenue
- Do Not Build Low Income Housing
- No Substandard Architecture
- Lack of Parking
- No Development that Ignores the Overall Character of the Area
- No Substandard Landscaping & Lighting
- No Ice Vending Machines

What is the most important issue we should look at?

- 1) TAX Revenues
 - 2) TAX Revenue
 - 3) HOTEL TO STIMULATE DOWNTOWN
 - 4) Residential unit in hotel to provide way to further support jobs, business, customers
 - 5) How SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT WILL AFFECT SITE - (e.g. FOR EXAMPLE IF MEGA YACHT CONSTRUCTION ACTUALLY COMES TO THE PORT IT WILL MAKE SITE MORE VALUABLE AS A HOTEL)
 6. Live Work Play
 7. HOTEL/CONDO/RETAIL/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
 8. Continuing to improve infrastructure.
 9. Sustainability of Hotel & Conference Center development using a mixed use concept for retail on bottom floor of Conference Center and condo units on top floor. Middle floors for Conference center use.
 10. Tax revenue, hotel, tourist revenue, retail, restaurants, art, code enforcement, etc.
 11. Small ART movie theater with COFFEE BAR - something new unique to ATTRACT people
 12. Don't Forget the PARKING!
 13. Connect development to Downtown - cohesion
 14. Continue emphasis on ARTS
 15. the use
 16. Education & culture
 17. Mass and Scale.
 18. make sure it stays Fort Pierce
 19. Quality architectural design
 20. Historically compatible
 21. Integrate Moore's Creek into quality public access urban space connecting
 22. Heavy (Quality) Landscaping
 - 23 - Growing non - Seasonal residency in the downtown in order to support local economy
 - 24 - HISTORIC CONTEXT OF AREA
- 25 residential to support downtown + create more evening liveliness; support + expand Edgartown neighbor hood.

Fig 1.1: Represents the issues that are important to the community

What is a "dealbreaker" - what things do you not want to see?

- 1) Parking Lot
- 2) Low Income Housing
- 3) Anything not generating Taxes.
- 4) Low cost housing
- 5) ALL OF THE ABOVE
6. anything bad for Fort Pierce
7. no gas stations, car part stores, strip malls
8. Substandard Architecture
9. I AGREE WITH #6 ABOVE
10. Low cost/income housing/Churches/smoke shops/bail bonds
11. Churches
12. Bars
13. gated community
14. Ice vending machines
15. gas stations
16. Lack of PARKING!
17. No gated development
18. No enormous Anything - Keep Ft Pierce cohesive
19. Development that ignores overall character of downtown
20. DITTO FOR #10!!!
21. Substandard landscaping & Lighting - Ditto for 1-20
22. Buildings that are too MASSIVE, the images on the wall would be a great goal

Fig 1.2: Represents what the community does not want to see

Conversation Station #3 - Draw Your Vision

The aerial map of the site gave the citizens a chance to draw out what they saw for the future of the site. Staff used two large size prints of the same aerial photograph – so that residents could sketch on either. Members attending sketched out a hotel with conference center, ample parking, retail and restaurants, a high-end small grocery store, condominiums or townhomes, an outdoor café, they want the bridges raised so boats can access the waterway, a possible water taxi, the area must be pedestrian friendly, there should be a buffer or screening area from the Fort Pierce Utility Authority pumps. The community was divided on amenities like creating a park there, some wanted it and others did not.



Fig 2.1: Represents one of the maps that citizens had the chance to draw their ideas on at the “Draw Your Vision Station”

Conversation Station #4: Site Use Preference Survey

1. Hotel: **33 Stickers**
2. Hotel Condominium with Commercial: **16 Stickers**
3. Stores/Retail: **12 Stickers**
4. Luxury Condominiums or Restaurants: **10 Stickers**
5. Artwork/Community, Job Creation, Market Rate Housing, or Parks: **4 Stickers**
6. Historic Preservation and Residential like "*Renaissance on the River*": **3 Stickers**
7. Bed & Breakfast and Streetscaping: **2 Stickers**
8. Parking and Neighborhood Design : **1 Sticker**
9. The following uses were not selected: Bar, Low Income Housing, Marina, Offices, Playground, Transit

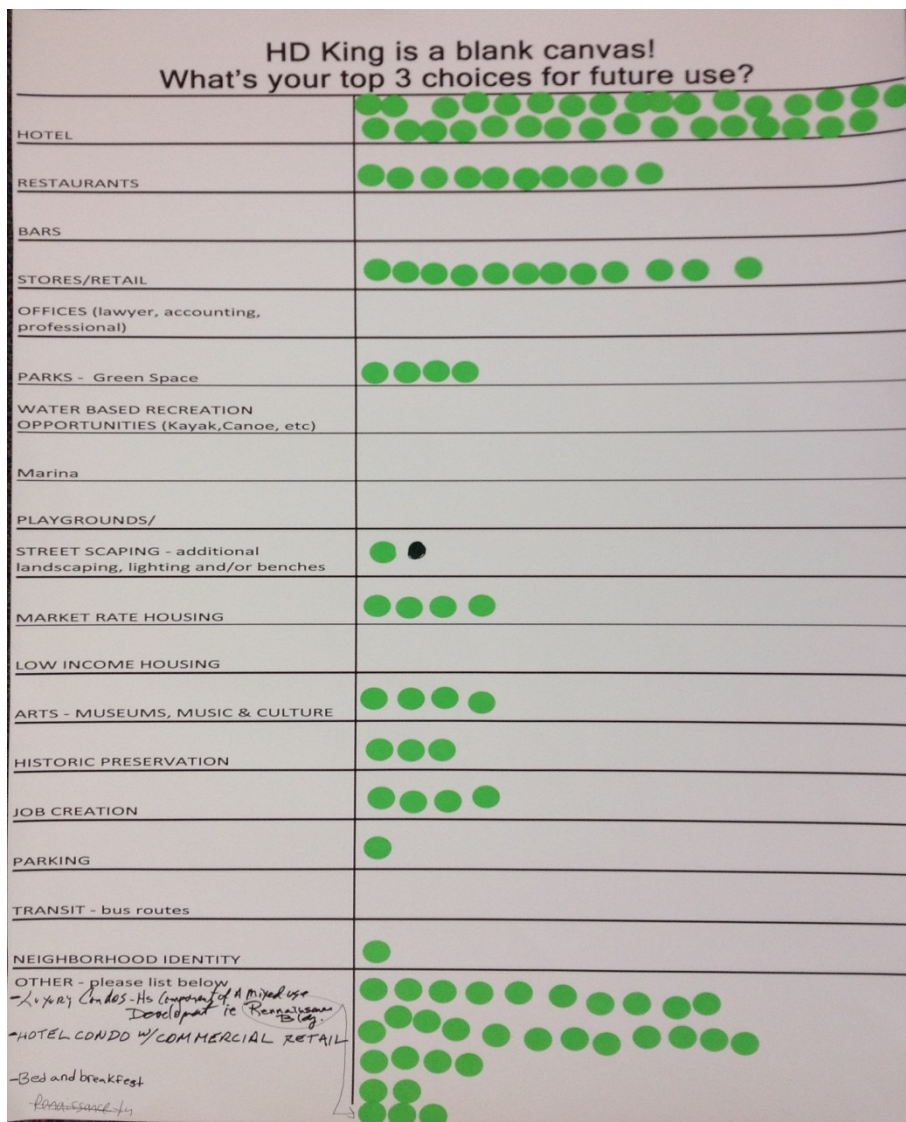


Fig. 3.1: Represents the uses the community wants to see developed on the site

Survey Respondents

Aside from the community meeting, residents had the opportunity to fill out surveys. The Planning Department received 28 surveys and 5 emails. The surveys and emailed summaries showed that the community mostly agreed on the uses they wanted to see. A good majority of the respondents noted that they wanted to see either a hotel with a convention/conference center, restaurants, retail, or residential units developed on the site. While the community would like residential units to be developed on the site, there is some disagreement on what type of residential is appropriate and what the price range of those units should be. The question is should the residential development be focused on older folks, younger folks, or a mix of the two.

Residential Property Owner or Renter: 17 Respondents

The citizens who identified themselves as residential property owners liked the fact that the site is in a central location that has the potential to connect Edgartown to the downtown. It is accessible to parks, the water, shops, the marina, the manatee center, and downtown. The citizens see this site as a prized site that has the potential to continue to Moore's Creek Linear Park and to the waterfront. The residential property owners would like to see the zoning changed for the two large parcels on Indian River Drive. There should also be a density restriction and height restriction of six stories or less because anything taller would be too much for the neighborhood. There is a smell that comes from the lift station that needs to be addressed. The properties should not be too difficult to upkeep and there should be a uniform building theme that is similar to what exists now in the area (like downtown). Any development must bring revenue to the city and it should be mixed use. There should be a hotel and or residential and commercial mixed-use on the property. The area should be pedestrian friendly. Small retail, affordable eateries, café's or something that will draw people to the city center is a must. One resident has the thought that Ft. Pierce is such a commodity that the city should sit back and not seek out developers. They think the city should in fact make the developers come to the city. Lastly, the resident goes on to say that the site area is too beautiful to have substandard development. If residential and commercial mixed-use is to be developed there it is a suggestion that the development be modeled after "*Renaissance on the River*" where residential use is on the top and commercial use is on the bottom. Lastly, office space is something that is important to some of the property owners. They also absolutely do not want to see another church built.

Own and or Operates a Business: 5 Respondents

The citizens who identified themselves as owning or operating a business liked that the site is close to the harbor, water, marina, lagoon, and downtown. The site also possesses a downtown feel and a prospective project would be seen as a fresh start for the area. They want more retail, a hotel with mixed use (possible multi-family), living space, restaurants, and or a museum. They see the potential for the site to be used as an anchor site for the city. If the land was given to a developer, tax revenue for the site can be generated for things like a bed tax if a hotel was added and also sales tax for retail and restaurant space. The respondents suggested that the site be developed the right way with proper pedestrian access. If new business is brought in, more jobs can also be created in the area. Aside from the uses mentioned above more parking is also something that these business owners want to see. No churches is something one of the business owners wants, another one said the planning department is doing a great job, and one other one suggests we put the site up for sale and take the highest price.

Other (interested in finding out more): 6 Respondents

The citizens who identified themselves as interested in wanting to find out more information liked the fact that the site has access to the river and marina. They also noted that it was within close proximity to downtown and businesses as well as the abundance of open space. The trees around the area and the historic neighborhood it is in are a big plus. They also caution that if the site is developed it be developed wisely. These citizens want to see change happen that will directly benefit the area in a positive way. They want things like high end shopping centers, improved infrastructure, a hotel or conference center, luxury condominiums, restaurants, and a bar. If condominiums were to be built they want them to be owner occupied or shared owner. They do not want people to buy the condominiums and rent them out to other people. Again they emphasize that the site needs to be developed well if it is going to be developed. There is an agreement among all surveyed in this section that there should at least be a hotel and conference center on the site. One person also mentioned that they would like to see a bed and breakfast place.

Summary of Comments

The one use that has come up in the majority of the comments is for there to be a hotel with a conference/convention center built on site. Retail and restaurants are also something that most citizens agree that they want. When it comes to residential uses there are mixed opinions on

how to implement that use. There are a few comments that are on opposite ends of the spectrum, but for the most part there are more things that people agree on than disagree on.

Conclusion

Based on comments by the community here are the common themes:

1. The hotel has broad support from all aspects of the community. This is because it would help attract people downtown that otherwise would be staying in hotels off Interstate 95 or hotels in other cities like Vero Beach and Port St. Lucie. The city would receive various sources of tax revenue from the hotel. The added advantage of having a convention/conference center means that the city would have the ability to attract conferences that bring large numbers of people that will spend money downtown and in our city. A hotel and convention/conference center would also help the local businesses and events downtown.
2. The community has suggested they want condominiums, townhomes, and/or luxury apartments in the downtown. A market study may help determine which types of residential units will be the most viable to the area.

Ancillary uses: If residential development is built then it would be a good idea to also incorporate a small grocery store that is within walking distance. This would give residents that live downtown an opportunity to walk and buy their groceries instead of driving to one of the farther grocery stores. Other uses like Retail and Restaurants should be placed on the site to give residents and visitors a place to shop and eat. Adding these uses would also help to get people to the downtown area, which in effect would bring customers to other downtown businesses.

3. Aesthetics - Architecture styles and heavy landscaping are important. Many people thought it should be patterned on what is in the downtown currently and also should not detract from Edgartown. Lush, full landscaping and additional screening for utilities, especially the FPUA Lift Station that is on the corner of the property.