

North Port St. Joe Moves Toward Adoption of Master Plan...and Other Important Meetings!

Over the last five months, the PSJRA and WIM Associates have held six workshops, attended by right around 200 people, to discuss and prepare the outline of a master plan for North Port St. Joe. This plan will help NPSJ identify the projects that are important to their community, where to build or create the projects and how to prioritize the budgeting for the projects. Walter Miller and his team have also spent an untold number of days in NPSJ talking to the residents and all over the county talking to agency and civic leaders.

We are ready to present the draft of the master plan document to the community for discussion, review and any required revisions. The North Port St. Joe Master Plan represents the expression of the vision and dreams of the community and will focus on the following:

- Developing alternatives for underutilized or vacant property by encouraging a mixture of medium- to high-density development, including residential, shopping and recreation choices.
- Encouraging focused infill and redevelopment, with the design theme built through community consensus.
- Developing “Smart Growth” streetscape and pedestrian/bicycle access to provide linkages and access to a range of travel modes, including automobiles, walking and biking, that enable residents and visitors access to all areas both within the community and the entire redevelopment area.
- Creating civic space and focal points that improve and brand the community’s identity.
- Increasing employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Creating a land-use framework that encourages private capital investment and creates opportunity for public/private partnering in the community.

The plan will analyze future land uses, circulation (traffic) and potential development opportunities for NPSJ, including “area-specific” projects (i.e. senior community housing and care) and prioritization of “catalyst projects” (or projects that also promote additional growth/prosperity). A very important component of the plan is a workable strategy for achieving development without displacing any residents.

WIM Associates will educate us all on the “Community Benefits Agreement” that will achieve the following:

- Affordable and Workforce Housing
- Living Wages
- First-Source Hiring
- Targeted Job Opportunities for Low-Income Residents
- Minority Business Development and Utilization

I know we all have lots and lots of questions such as “What does this mean,” and “How will we accomplish that?” Well, Walter and his team will be here with the answers on Monday, August 20. We will meet at 7 PM at the Senior Citizen’s Center, and we will also provide your dinner!

The next Monday, August 27, is the final Land Design Innovations workshop to finalize the design standards we are adopting for the redevelopment area. That workshop starts at 5 PM, and I guess we better feed you at that one too.

On Thursday, August 30, we will host a wonderful community forum featuring the “big wigs” of Florida Redevelopment who are graciously coming from all points of the state to

talk to us about redevelopment agencies and what we can and cannot do. There have been many questions floating around here since I came on board (just over one year ago), and we can collectively get our answers. One great questions has been, “Can we have more than one CRA in Gulf County.” Well, I know the answer now...you will have to attend the workshop to find out. That forum will be held at the City Commission Chambers at 5 PM.

As always, please call me with any questions: Gail Alsobrook at 229-6899 or email me at gail@CelebratePortSaintJoe.com. Thanks!