

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting April 27, 2026

The Community Redevelopment Agency met in formal session Monday, April 27, 2026, at 3:00 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Nancy Sikes-Kline, and the following were present:

- 1. Roll Call:** Nancy Sikes-Kline, Mayor/City Commissioner
Barbara Blonder, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
Cynthia Garris, City Commissioner
Jim Springfield, City Commissioner
Jon DePreter, City Commissioner

Also Present: David Birchim, City Manager
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Darlene Galambos, City Clerk
Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager
Jaime D. Perkins, Director, Community Services
Jill Collins, Administrative Coordinator, Community Services
Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager
Stephen Slaughter, Director, Public Works & Utilities
Amy Skinner, Director, Planning and Building
Melissa Wissel, Director, Communications
Jon Marston, Police Chief
Carlos Aviles, Fire Chief
Alex Barrera, Sergeant, Police Department
Elyse Wiemann, Senior Recording Secretary

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (January 27, 2026)

MOTION

Nancy Sikes-Kline **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the January 27, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. The motion was **SECONDED** by Barbara Blonder and **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT (3 minutes per individual)

- Aurthur Culbert
- Jerusha Rowe

- BJ Kalaidi

4. DISCUSSION, PRESENTATIONS, & UPDATES

a. Public Presentation by Homeless Coalition of SJC- Community Garden Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director, introduced Jason Vanderhoof and Susie Spell, with the St. Johns County Homeless Coalition.

Jason Vanderhoof and Susie Spell, St. Johns County Homeless Coalition, provided a presentation about the Awesome Blossoms Community Garden in

the West City Community Redevelopment Area (WCCRA).

Cynthia Garris thanked Ms. Spell and Mr. Vanderhoof for coming up with the idea and moving forward with it. She thought the garden would be as successful as the one in Lincolnville.

Jon DePreter agreed that this was a great idea. He asked if the money requested was to help build physical components on the lot. He asked if maintenance would be associated.

Mr. Spell replied that many things for the garden had been donated, like the rain barrel; however, they now needed to build a platform for it and gather items that were not on any other materials list. He said infrastructure was needed and the City helped with the irrigation meter but the materials for the irrigation system were needed.

Mr. DePreter commented that the labor and maintenance were voluntary, but the request was to help fund material.

Ms. Perkins stated that the CRA was unable to provide maintenance. She said the contribution would be specifically for structures and not on-going maintenance.

Ms. Blonder was very supportive of the community garden as it helped the community understand where food came from and how it tasted when grown locally. She asked that more native plants be used instead of ornamental flowering plants, and suggested contacting Southern Horticulture, as they may be open to a partnership. She requested a more specific budget and to provide how money would be spent within the garden.

Ms. Sikes-Kline questioned if there was a monetary request or were they being asked to support the concept of the community garden.

Mr. Vanderhoof replied that they wanted to move forward on a volunteer basis and in the meantime, they would see what items were needed and a budget could be created identifying costs. He said, at this time, they were asking for support for the garden.

Debi Redding, Executive Director, St. Johns County Homeless Coalition, said the purpose of the presentation was not to ask for funding but to provide an update. She said they had requested money through the Neighborhood Grant Program and would continue to do apply for grants in order to obtain the materials needed for the garden. She said two organizations donated two purple benches that would be placed in the community garden. She said this would be a nice place for the community to sit, chat, and rest. She said their next anticipated structures would be a pergola to provide shade; however, this was only an update in hopes to gain the Boards support. She said they would continue to work on the needs but for now they would utilize the Neighborhood Grant Program.

Ms. Sikes-Kline thanked Ms. Redding for the clarification and noted she had a history of success with the homeless coalition. She pointed out that Arthur Culbert had a wealth of experience with gardens as there were gardens in various parts of the City. She said she had been a member of the Lincolnville Garden and did not believe it was in the CRA.

David Birchim, City Manager, stated the Lincolnville garden was within the boundaries of the CRA but no funds were used to help with the development.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said it was strictly a community-driven garden, but it was the first. She said she learned a lot about gardening, found joy in it, and thought it was a great family activity. She said it was a great community building tool. She

thanked Ms. Spell and Mr. Vanderhoof for their work and Mr. Culbert for helping.

b. Cordova Street Improvement Concept Recommendation

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director, introduced Viviana Castro, Director of Landscape Architecture for Inspire Placemaking Collective. She said the presentation would focus on the feedback received from the Board when the concept was first presented on October 27, 2025.

Ms. Castro, reviewed the updated Cordova Street Improvement Concept focusing on the following items:

- Stormwater Management
- Tree Canopy
- Crosswalk Definition
- Business Owners
- Signage
- Materials

Mr. Springfield stated he was in support of the design as presented.

Mr. DePreter asked if all on-street parking had been eliminated on Cordova Street.

Ms. Castro replied that there was currently no on street parking and moving forward, there would not be any on street parking.

Mr. DePreter asked what the width of the granite bike lanes would be.

Ms. Castro replied the lanes proposed were eighteen inches.

Mr. DePreter said he thought this was a very exciting project.

Ms. Garris asked about the canopy and questioned if the root chamber was above ground.

Ms. Castro replied that it would be in the ground and the picture showed what it would look like underneath.

Ms. Blonder said she could not wait for this to come to fruition as she walked this street daily. She thought the bike lanes needed to be identified with a marker for clarity. She mentioned that there was a blind spot for vehicles at the intersection of Cordova Street and Hypolita Street. She asked if the sight line could be worked on or even move the stop line back to decrease the danger it posed. She said she was in support of the project and liked how she addressed the prior feedback.

Ms. Sikes-Kline asked if chicanes would be used the entire length of Cordova Street.

Ms. Castro replied that the chicanes would be used at key segments, before and after at the following locations:

- Hypolita Street
- St. Andrews Court
- Cuna Street
- Orange Street

Ms. Castro said on the site plans they had been addressed, as it was a way for them to stop prior to reaching the intersection.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said she was not in favor of the granite curbs as they were historic and commonly used during the Flagler era, although the coloring was white. She felt the width of the bike lanes were a concern and noted they should be clearly identified. She believed it required more refinement and should reflect history.

Ms. Castro said there were two options, either to have granite or a ribbon curb with concrete. She said the goal was to clearly delineate between the Flagler Model Land and Old Town. She did not want to have a clear separation of the two but wanted to show the separation of the Rosario Line at the pedestrian line along the Town Center. She pointed out that the addition of historic

markers would be a great component and noted the materials could be changed.

Ms. Sikes-Kline felt the use of coquina with the Flagler era materials was an invention and not historic.

Ms. Castro replied that the coquina would be used as the aggregate, then brick and granite would be the other materials.

Ms. Sikes-Kline understood but pointed out the brick and granite were a nod to the Flagler era. She said the trees were placed in small areas and the challenge would be the root system. She said this was mentioned with the Planned Unit Development (PUD) that was approved at 24 Cathedral Place. She stated that Vice-Mayor Blonder requested more shade trees instead of Palm Trees; however, the landscape architect advised shade trees could not be incorporated due to the roots. She suggested reviewing the PUD more, as Ms. Castro had a proposed solution to add urban trees to small areas.

Ms. Blonder understood this could be used to help manage stormwater, as the shade trees would take on a lot of water.

Mr. Birchim asked what species of shade trees would be used on Cordova Street.

Ms. Castro replied that one option could be the Sand Live Oak tree. She said it was a strong species, but it needed room for root growth and that was why this solution had been incorporated in the design. She said Palm Trees were not the best solution for shade but understood why they were being used. She said from their research this underground root system was successful and that was the reason they were trying to implement them here.

Mr. Birchim stated that 24 Cathedral Place was more constrained, but they could review it to see if there were areas where the Sand Live Oak could be used.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said they did agree to look at other solutions and asked if they could consider this as an option.

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, commented that the landscaping for 24 Cathedral Place was reviewed by the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB). She said that if they were asked to change the landscape, they may have to return to HARB for an additional review.

Ms. Sikes-Kline commented that new information had been provided.

Ms. Lopez said she did not believe this was new information. She said 24 Cathedral Place had overhanging balconies, so there were many obstructions, plus the streets were narrow. She said Cordova Street was different compared to the 24 Cathedral Place project.

Mr. Springfield commented that Cordova Street had wide sidewalks; whereas Charlotte Street had buildings.

Mr. Birchim commented that Sand Live Oaks were planned street trees on Cathedral Place and King Street.

MOTION

Ms. Blonder MOVED to APPROVE the conceptual design with the suggestions that had been addressed. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. DePreter.

Mr. DePreter said he liked the granite not only for delineation, but it was smoother for bicycles.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Blonder, DePreter, Garriss, Springfield, Sikes-Kline

NAYES: NONE

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

**c. Community Redevelopment Agency
FY 2025 Annual Report Presentation**

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director

Jaime D. Perkins, Community Services Director, reviewed the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) fiscal year (FY) 2025 Annual Report. She reviewed the following items:

- CRA History and Vision
- Message from Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline
- CRA Maps
- Message from the Community Services Director, Jaime D. Perkins
- Projects and Programs
- Financial Performance
- Project and Program Accounting
- Historic Downtown Parking Facility
- Redevelopment 25!
- Redevelopment 25! Sponsors

Ms. Sikes-Kline pointed out that without the CRA's, approximately three million dollars collected from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds, would have gone to the County.

Ms. Garris thanked Ms. Perkins for the presentation and said a lot had been done throughout the community. She thanked her for the leadership and said she was looking forward to what would be done in the future in West City.

Mr. DePreter said that he was unaware that County TIF money stayed in the City because of the CRA's.

Mr. Springfield questioned the status of Dr. Robert B. Hayling statue.

Ms. Perkins replied the solicitation was complete, a contractor had been selected, and they were awaiting final landscape documents from the landscape architect. She said they hoped to mobilize in May.

Mr. Birchim asked if the statue was finished.

Ms. Perkins replied that was the entire project; however, the statue was complete

and in a secure location and would be unveiled once everything was complete.

Mr. Springfield commented that the parking garage fees paid, the debt services and tax funds were not used for that.

Ms. Blonder said the report was impressive and it highlighted what had been done over the past twenty-five years since the CRA's were established. She said the whole City benefited from the CRA but especially the neighborhoods. She said she was very proud of the Fix It Up and Revive and Restore programs and keeping people who were part of history in the same areas. She thanked Ms. Perkins for the presentation.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said there had been a lot of great projects over the past twenty-five years. She felt the state would be satisfied with how the money had been used as it was spent wisely. She said the Historic Area Community Redevelopment Area (HACRA) was a bit odd, but it was set up to address the parking and traffic blight, and it had done an amazing job addressing those issues. She said with the CRA in Lincolnville, followed by the CRA established in West Augustine, programs like the Fix It Up allowed people to age in place and helped to preserve our historic culture. She said the most important thing was fighting gentrification and helping those that had been in the area stay in their homes was the main priority. She asked for clarification about Dr. Hayling park and what could be expected to take place in May.

Ms. Perkins replied that it was a full construction project and the timeline to be finished was November, which was close to Dr. Hayling's 96th birthday.

Ms. Sikes-Kline said she was looking forward to that. She mentioned that during public comment Ms. Kalaidi brought up tires.

Mr. Birchim said that was the King's Auto which would no longer be there after the Broudy parking garage was complete.

There was consensus to accept the FY 2025 Annual Report Presentation.

5. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

(None)

6. ITEMS BY CITY STAFF

Ms. Perkins said there had been rumors regarding Twine Park and she wanted to assure everyone that there was no intent to change the name of the park; however, they were working with a landscape architect to improve the space.

7. ITEMS BY BOARD CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS

8. ADJOURNMENT

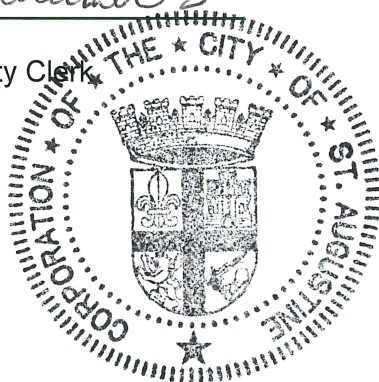
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:17 P.M.¹



Nancy Sikes-Kline, Chairwoman



Darlene Galambos, City Clerk



¹ Transcribed by Elyse Wiemann