

LONGWOOD CITY COMMISSION
Longwood City Commission Chambers
175 West Warren Avenue
Longwood, Florida

WORK SESSION
MINUTES
April 6, 2022
5:00 P.M.

Present: Mayor Brian D. Sackett
Deputy Mayor Tony Boni
Commissioner Abby Shoemaker
Commissioner Matt McMillan
Commissioner Matt Morgan
Clint Gioielli, Acting City Manager
Michelle Longo, City Clerk
David Dowda, Police Chief
Chris Kintner, Community Development Director

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Mayor Sackett called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioner Morgan moved to suspend the rules. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous voice vote.

2. **GIBBS STUDY PRESENTATION**

Mr. Gioielli introduced the Gibbs Planning Group and Mr. Bob Gibbs began his presentation.

Mr. Bob Gibbs stated they have been working with the City for some time on the retail market analysis and he is also joined today by Cindy Ciura, with CC Consulting who has been doing the retail research for specific retailers and brands. He noted their analysis was to determine what types of retail are supportable in Longwood for now and for the next five (5) years. They estimate that in the trade area there are about a million people based on a 30- minute drive time. The incomes in this drive time are on average \$85,000 per year. They also defined a primary trade area about a mile or two from where they feel fifty percent (50%) of the visitors to Longwood restaurants and retailers will come from. They also have a high average income. He noted the City is surrounded by many retail stores and they have visited most of those as part of their analysis.

They came up with a scorecard to rate their quality of goods and services to see if there are any potential voids for Longwood. He went over what they reviewed and explained how Longwood is overlapped by surrounding trade areas. He noted it is unusual to have such overlaps and this is why they brought Cindy Ciura on board to see if there are any opportunities. He said they did find a demand for 20,000 square feet or more retail, that would be about five (5) to eight (8) new stores. He said the spending of the people in the trade area last year was \$670 million and of that about half has been spent in the Longwood area and that gives leakage of about forty-five percent (45%) percent spending which is outside of the Longwood area. He believes the City could support 105,000 square feet of additional retail, about forty (40) stores, and about 60,000 square feet of additional restaurants, food, and beverage. He went over what supportable retail includes. These included hardware, pharmacy, specialty food, bars, breweries and pubs, full-service restaurants, limited-service eating places, bakeries, coffee, and ice cream. He went over a chart that they were asked to provide and it breaks down by industry how many square feet are supportable and what the sales would be if they opened.

Mr. Gibbs said five (5) years ago Longwood could support 200,000 square feet and now due to COVID and online shopping, it would be reduced to 165,000 square feet. This would be fifty (50) to sixty (60) new stores and restaurants. He noted there is a trend for empty nesters and young people to shop in walkable urban areas rather than big malls. Longwood's Historic District and small-town character offer this type of place. He went over some of the categories that could be supported. These included sixteen (16) to twenty (20) new restaurants, thirty (30) to forty (40) new retailers, and 165,000 square feet of new restaurants. He then turned the presentation over to Cindy Ciura who has taken their market analysis to target types of retailers and restaurants that would want to go into Longwood.

Ms. Cindy Ciura reviewed Longwoods market and noted it has 105,000 residents, and if the right retailers are put in place we could capture some of the dollars that are being spent elsewhere. She noted that during her research the market areas surrounding Longwood cover about eighty-seven percent (87%) of the retailers that are currently expanding in today's market. She noted the Longwood SunRail is a huge selling feature, and Longwood is a bedroom community to many of the districts and she feels it is music to the ears of the retailers. They love to have easily accessible transportation. She also talked about the number of employers in the area and she feels 50,000 is a good number within a 10-minute drive. She noted it is important to have anchor retail for an area and went over some she felt would work well and who are actively

looking for locations. These included Bass Pro-Cabela's Outpost, another fitness center, furniture store (Arhaus Furniture), book store (Books A Million), The Container Store, Earth Fare Grocery, luxury designer clothing store (Saks Off Fifth), sporting goods (Sportsman's Warehouse), Puttshack, Brands Mart, Market Earth, Palmetto Moon, Buff City Soap, Flip Flop Shops, Yoga, Ford's Garage, Mission BBQ, Coopers Hawk, Hawkers, Slap Fish, The Keys Grill & Piano, Canopy Road Café, Coyo Taco, Raising Canes, Ember & Iron, Cao Bakery, Naked Taco, Vivo Pizza, Pura Vida Café. She has spoken with a group that has shown interest in Longwood and she is encouraged by their commitment to come and visit the area.

Discussion ensued on their presentation, and potential restaurants wanting to build from the ground up or go into existing spaces due to the expense. Also discussed were available spaces in the City to attract prospects that are not already in the area, along with the types of prospects reviewed.

Mr. Gioielli went over the summary of the next steps. He noted Ms. Ciura does retail attraction and if the Commission is interested, they could continue the relationship with her, the Gibbs Group, and Mr. Krueger. This would help to streamline the process to attract new restaurants and retailers.

Discussion ensued on what can be done in certain areas of the City. Ms. Ciura did note you have to be cautious to not let your competition know what you are up to and how the one thing in this business is to be completely confidential.

Mr. Gioielli said the staff would like to continue the relationship with Ms. Ciura and there will be a cost associated with it. He has noted staff is working actively on all sites available in the City and he gets regular updates.

It was the consensus of the Commission to continue the relationship with Ms. Ciura.

3. ADJOURN. Mayor Sackett adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Minutes approved by City Commission: 05-02-2022

Brian D. Sackett, Mayor

ATTEST:

**Michelle Longo, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk**