

# Advisory Group's Meeting Is Tense

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TEMPLE - TERRACE -- Members of an advisory task force are vowing to present a united front, despite expecting to wrangle with sensitive redevelopment issues in the coming months.

The resident-driven Redevelopment Task Force met Thursday at city hall to discuss its role in Temple Terrace's redevelopment efforts along 56th Street and Bullard Parkway. About half of the 21 task force members attended, along with Temple Terrace City Council members Glenda Venable and Ken Halloway, Community Services Director Ralph Bosek and Mayor Joe Affronti.

There were tense moments throughout the meeting as the discussion turned to a letter from member Grant Rimbey to Affronti. Rimbey criticized city leaders for not being forthcoming about redevelopment efforts, called Bosek "evasive" and complained that the city essentially stopped listening to redevelopment proponents after a failed bond referendum Aug. 2.

Affronti and Bosek went on the defensive from the start.

"It's absolutely wrong, and I think it's malicious," Affronti told the task force. "We don't do everything right, but we try. Dissension is a waste of time."

Rimbey defended sending the letter: "I'm not afraid sometimes to say what others are thinking and talking about privately."

Patrick Finelli, who chairs the task force and formed it Nov. 10, tried to steer the discussion toward a more positive note. Eventually, those present agreed to keep their bickering private and to funnel concerns through Finelli, who will present them to Affronti or Bosek so the group speaks with one voice.

Finelli formed the task force as a private group, rather than an appointed governmental body, so the members would not have to adhere to the state's Sunshine Law. The law dictates when members of governmental bodies can discuss official business and requires governmental organizations to give 24 hours' notice of meeting times, among other things.

To avoid future tensions, Finelli stressed the need for city leaders to keep the task force informed.

"What [the letter] does is identify a perception," he said. "There are citizens who aren't privileged to know what you know as it is developing. I have been involved in redevelopment since the beginning and I don't even know what's happening sometimes."

The task force has been broken into focus groups, and members of varying professional expertise were assigned to examine issues, such as planning and design, diplomacy with residents opposed to the city's vision and political action to keep preredevelopment candidates in office.

Bosek told the task force that a revised plan from Unicorp National Developments of Orlando should be ready by Wednesday for review by a city-hired consultant, Torti Gallas. After the review, the plan is scheduled to be handed out to city council and the task force for additional comments. However, the task force voiced concerns about having too little time to fully examine the proposal.

Affronti suggested giving the task force and city council access at the same time the proposal goes to the consultant. It's a position City Manager Kim Leinbach has opposed, Bosek said at the meeting. At Affronti's urging, Bosek said he would try to reach a compromise.

The Unicorp proposal is to be unveiled to the public in a Dec. 15 meeting at city hall. For information, call the city manager at (813) 989-7105.