



**ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS
PLANNING DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PROCESS ANALYSIS WORKSHOP
WITH TRAINNOVATIONS**

**Founders Park Community Center
87000 Overseas Hwy
Islamorada, FL 33036**

**Tuesday, July 21, 2015
3:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mayor Mike Forster called the meeting to order at 3:05 P.M. The following Council members were present on roll call: Mayor Mike Forster, Vice Mayor Deb Gillis, Councilman Jim Mooney, Councilman Chris Sante and Councilman Dennis Ward. Also in attendance were Village Manager Maria Aguilar, Village Attorney Roget Bryan, Director of Planning Cheryl Cioffari and Village Clerk Kelly Toth.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Roger Young led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. WORKSHOP PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

A. Trainnovations Planning Department Business Process Analysis

TAB 1

Village Manager Maria Aguilar introduced Trainnovations consultants Trina Pulliam and Melinda Miller.

Ms. Pulliam provided a brief history of Trainnovations and stated the purpose of their work was to identify and validate the issues facing the Planning Department, provide a list of suggested improvements and a plan for implementing the improvements. She stated a comprehensive report would be provided at a later date.

Ms. Melinda Miller identified the following formal problem statements:

1. Village Land Development Regulations are complex and not easily understood.
2. The absence of a Village Strategic Plan results in the lack of: a clear statement of community values; defined outcomes the Village wishes to achieve; articulation of broad strategies for accomplishing the outcomes; and identifiable metrics for success.
3. The Application Review process is inefficient and time consuming for applicants, staff, and management.
4. There is a perceived lack of cooperation, collaboration and information sharing between the Planning and Building Departments.
5. Customers are dissatisfied with the development process, staff's lack of customer focus, and feel disenfranchised by the process.

6. These issues result in citizen frustration and dissatisfaction with Village management and staff. Citizens perceive a lack of caring by Village government for citizens and businesses. Current staff feels overwhelmed and unable to accommodate Council, management, and citizen demands. Combined these result in citizens having low confidence in its government.

Ms. Miller explained how the issues were validated which included interviewing 17 people, two of which were Council Members and reviewing many Village documents. Councilman Dennis Ward inquired as to which members of Council were interviewed. Ms. Miller stated Mayor Mike Forster and Councilman Chris Sante were interviewed. Ms. Miller explained the following had been validated with data:

1. The lack of a strategic plan results in confusion and disorientation when asked about the direction of the Village and the future vision and character of the Village (short term and long term).
2. There is a disconnect between public perception and what can be done according to the Code.
3. There is a negative reputation that has been inherited and difficult to overcome by the new staff.
4. The process is mysterious and the communication to the applicant is confusing, complicated and disorienting.
5. Some work that is done in the Building Department is also replicated in the Planning Department.
6. Incomplete applications are accepted.
7. When applicants do not want to do a Pre-Application Conference, a "Free-App" is provided in an effort to be customer centric.
8. There is uncertainty of process leaving applicants unsure of where they are in the process or when an approval will be provided.

Ms. Miller and Ms. Pulliam explained the following analyses were conducted: a SWOT Analysis of the Planning Department, the process flow beginning with the pre-submittal process, and analysis of thirty-one project types. Ms. Pulliam stated that when reviewing the various project types they considered the complexity, amount of staff time required and the staff and agencies required to review. Ms. Miller recommended requiring a pre-application conference for some of the more complex applications, where a pre-application conference is currently not required. She explained that this would result in a financial savings to the Village and reduced frustration for the applicant.

Melinda Miller provided the following policy analysis summary:

1. The code is complex, may be outdated and does not reflect the current needs of the Village.
2. There are conflicts between the Florida Building Code and the Village's Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Miller recommended a review of these documents.
3. Knowledge of the role of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and Area of Critical State Concern requirements by the Council, Local Planning Agency, the public and staff is varying and inconsistent.

Melinda Miller provided the following operational efficiency analysis summary:

1. The lack of a strategic plan forces the staff to be reactive. The application review process is inefficient, time consuming, difficult to navigate and lacks certainty of process.
2. Applications are frequently incomplete when they are submitted.
3. Planners are routinely interrupted and spend time on non-application review tasks such as a sign posting and field inspections.

Ms. Miller recommended the Village formulate a strategic plan. Mayor Mike Forster expressed concern about the strategic plan changing every time there was a change in Councilmembers. Ms. Miller recommended a strategic plan yearly because the needs of the Village change, it establishes a long range road map and it allows for citizen input which engages the public. Discussion ensued among Council and the consultants regarding strategic planning.

Ms. Trina Pulliam provided the following collaboration and training analysis summary:

1. The Village Planning and Building Departments work largely independent of each other and do not share the same goals.
2. Communication is segmented by job description and hierarchy. The staff understands this and does not overstep these boundaries.
3. There is a lack of knowledge due to lack of knowledge sharing between departments.

Ms. Pulliam provided the following customer service and communication analysis summary:

1. The department's customer service practices are currently reactive.
2. The process is not transparent and there is uncertainty of process for applicants, elected officials and staff.
3. The zoning map is largely unusable.
4. Multiple planners are involved in a project.
5. Applicants must visit multiple spaces for information and forms.
6. Staff is untrained in "soft skills".
7. The Village does not capture satisfaction data.

Ms. Pulliam stated the department's reactive customer service practices ultimately result in labor resources being wasted when you consider Village Planners are interrupted from their primary projects approximately six times a day to attend to other tasks. She explained that based on her experience with other municipalities, it takes a planner approximately twenty minutes to fully refocus on a planning project when he or she has been interrupted or pulled away.

Councilman Jim Mooney expressed concern regarding the type of "development" that was considered in the analysis. Ms. Miller explained multiple types of developments were analyzed and provided examples.

Mayor Mike Forster inquired as to whether the consultants thought there was sufficient staffing to process the number of development applications that are received. Trina Pulliam stated that once the recommendations were implemented the Village would be in a position to perform a time & task analysis to determine if additional staffing was needed. Director of Planning Cheryl Cioffari introduced the new Sr. Planner, Marissa Moore and stated she would begin work at the Village on August 17, 2015. Councilman Jim Mooney inquired as to whether the final report will include recommendations for streamlining the Village Code. Ms. Miller stated recommendations for proactive code review and revisions would be provided, but clarified that the Code was a living document that would continually change over time.

Ms. Miller stated that recommendations pertaining to the Local Planning Agency functioning as a Planning Commission would be included, as well as recommendations pertaining to the Development Review Committee. She explained the difference between a Planning Commission and a Local Planning Agency.

Councilman Chris Sante inquired as to whether the technology recommendations would include the ability to submit development applications electronically and spoke in support of the efficiency it would provide. Ms. Miller stated there was a recommendation to implement the CityView planning module which includes electronic application submittals and plan review and proceeded to explain the benefits of electronic plan review. She stated mobile inspections for field staff was also recommended.

Discussion ensued between Consultant Trina Pulliam, Village Manager Maria Aguilar and Councilman Dennis Ward regarding an updated strategic plan being a primary external recommendation by the consultants.

Ms. Miller provided a summary of the action plan and stated greater detail would be provided in the final report.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

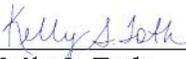
Mayor Mike Forster opened public comment.

Pete Bacheler stated he thought the process the consultants presented was extremely well done. He suggested that some modifications to the Code should occur. Mr. Bacheler spoke in support of a future vision for Islamorada, the importance of following the Code and in support of expanding the duties and responsibilities of the Local Planning Agency.

Mayor Mike Forster closed public comment.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Chris Sane made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Mike Forster seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 5:13 PM.



Kelly S. Toth
Village Clerk

Approved by the Village Council this 20th day of August, 2015.