

[back to article](#)



Eagle Lake commission waives impact fees for redevelopment zone

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EAGLE LAKE - Providing an incentive for new business development, Eagle Lake City Commission voted unanimously Monday night to waive impact fees for construction and redevelopment within the city's designated core improvement area.

The vote affirmed last week's recommendation by the Eagle Lake Planning Commission that the city push ahead with downtown development.

City commissioners also unanimously approved the Planning Commission's selection of the Key West-Florida Cracker-style design standards and guidelines for new construction within the community redevelopment area (CRA).

The design standards were conceived and offered for consideration by Moduss Engineering of Bartow, represented by the company's vice president of municipal services, Robert Szrot.

In other business, City Manager Pete Gardner shared with commissioners that he and Utilities Director Brian Fletcher will tackle contract matters with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in regard to the city's water meter replacement project.

"In the past, Envisors Engineering has been paid to perform the task," Gardner said. "But USDA allowed me to download the contract information, and all due respect to the Envisors, but I think Brian (Fletcher) and I can save the city some money and submit this information ourselves. However, if the contract is rejected from USDA the way we submitted it, then we have an understanding with Envisors

that they will then help us out. But I don't foresee any problems with the USDA."

Following a question by Commissioner Angela Volz, Gardner said that if any federal economic stimulus money comes Eagle Lake's way, one of the projects he would like to pursue is tearing up the city tennis courts and cleaning up the area. Gardner said the city doesn't have the estimated \$115,000 required for the job.

Commissioner Wanda Petranick asked how the 10th Street drainage project is progressing. The city needs to build a large retention pond and has petitioned the Polk County school district for land required for the project.

"I have talked to the school district and it is my understanding they are favorably considering the project, but we will have to do something to counter the offer," Gardner said. "There is a meeting April 12 when this will be discussed. There is no deadline on this project because the construction monies have not been received. We are still in the first phase of design. The state will help with funds for the project and are already anticipating doing it."

Volz also asked the city manager about progress on bringing a General Dollar store to the city.

"The Planning Commission approved its variance on number and size of parking spaces at its recent meeting, but when we checked, there was not a quorum on that vote; there must be four votes," Gardner said. "I was told by the contractor that the project was called off, and then today the contractor came in with another diagram (for the site).

"I do think the project is on and there isn't a problem," Gardner said. "It is simply a lack of communication between General Dollar and the contractor."

In other announcements, the city plans a another Hometown Festival in June, with fireworks planned for June 27.

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