

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

1:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Community Development Board

Roll Call

Present 7 – Chair Michael Boutzoukas, Board Member Andrew Park, Board Member Aubrey Haudricourt, Board Member Kurt Hinrichs (Alt Member), Board Member Andrew Hupp, Board Member Michael Mastruserio, and Board Member Michelle Chenault

Absent 1 - Board Member Diane Achinelli

Also Present: Planning Division Manager Ted Kozak, Assistant City Attorney Matthew Mytych, Attorney Jay Daigneault, and City Clerk Rosemarie Call

To provide continuity for research, items are listed in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

Unapproved

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approve the minutes of the August 19, 2025 CDB meeting.

Board Member Haudricourt moved to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2025 CDB meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda – None.

4. Consent Agenda: The following cases are not contested by the applicant or city staff. If no objections are raised by a member of the public, and member(s) of the Board do not request to remove an item from the Consent Agenda, items will be approved by a single vote at the beginning of the meeting.

4.1 FLD2025-06014: Flexible Development approval for the conversion to a restaurant in the Tourist (T) District and the Destination Resort Character District of Beach by Design as a Comprehensive Infill Redevelopment Project for the property at 524 Mandalay Avenue. The building does not exceed 15 feet in height and includes five off-street parking spaces. Requested is flexibility for reduced off-street parking for the site based on a parking demand study. (Community Development Code Section 2-803.D and Section

3-1401.C) (Level Two Application)

Case: FLD2025-06014 - 524 Mandalay Avenue

Owner(s): Tema Investments

Applicant: Krikor Kassarian; Gulf Coast Consulting, Inc., 13825 ICOT Blvd., Suite 605, Clearwater, FL 33760; phone: (727) 524-1818; email: krikor@gulfcoastconsultinginc.com

Location: Northwest corner of Mandalay Avenue and Ambler Street (0.19 acres)

Request: Flexible Development approval for the conversion to a restaurant in the Tourist (T) District and the Destination Resort Character District of Beach by Design as a Comprehensive Infill Redevelopment Project for the property at 524 Mandalay Avenue. The building does not exceed 15 feet in height and includes five off-street parking spaces. Requested is flexibility for reduced off-street parking for the site based on a parking demand study. (Community Development Code Section 2-803.D and Section 3-1401.C)

Associations: Board of County Commissioners, Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition, Pinellas County School Board, Clearwater Beach Association

Assigned Planner: Melissa Hauck-Baker, AICP, Planner III; email: melissa.hauckbaker@myclearwater.com; phone: (727) 444-8769

Board Members Hupp and Chenault disclosed they individually spoke with the restaurant operator in the past regarding the expansion.

In response to a question, Board Members Hupp and Chenault said their communications did not prohibit them from rendering a fair and impartial decision on the application.

Board Member Haudricourt moved to approve Case FLD2025-06014 (524 Mandalay Avenue) based on the evidence and testimony presented in the application, the Staff Report and at today's hearing, and hereby adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law stated in the Staff Report with conditions of approval as listed. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

5. Director's Report

5.1 Discuss Addition of Prayer to Meeting

Board Member Mastruserio moved to open each meeting with a prayer to Jesus Christ. The motion was duly seconded.

Attorney Daigneault said the motion as stated suggests a singularly

Christian prayer, which is not constitutionally permissible. He cited the memorandum he provided board members and suggested that the prayer be broader and more generalized.

Discussion ensued with comments made that a board member should not have to pray to a god they do not believe exists, that consideration should be given to implement language that respects constitutional law and prevents the City from being sued, that this is not the forum to interject religion or politics because the Board is here to do the people's business, and that the courts have recognized the tradition in this country of opening government and non-government meetings with prayer in a manner that does not establish a religion. It was stated that when the Board used to offer a prayer, it was difficult for the Chair to find an individual willing to participate and board members often used a generic written prayer. It was suggested that offering the prayer should be rotated monthly among board members and each board member should have the option to offer the prayer, invite someone from the community, or not offer a prayer.

Attorney Daigneault suggested the Board should first determine if it wishes to add an invocation at the beginning of the meeting. If the answer is yes, then determine how it is done.

Board Member Mastruserio withdrew his motion.

In response to a question, the City Clerk said the city council meeting agenda lists the prayer as an invocation.

Board Member Mastruserio moved to open each meeting with an invocation. The motion was duly seconded and carried with the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - Board Member Boutzoukas, Board Member Park, Board Member Hinrichs, Board Member Mastruserio and Board Member Chenault

Nays: 2 - Board Member Haudricourt and Board Member Hupp

In response to questions, Attorney Daigneault offered three procedural options: 1) rotate or assign amongst board members to offer the invocation, 2) individual board members invite an individual to offer the invocation, or 3) city staff schedule members of the local clergy community to offer the invocation. He said the Board may impose a time limit.

Discussion ensued with support expressed to have the responsibility to offer a brief invocation be rotated amongst board members or observe a moment of silence.

Board Member Park moved to adopt a rotation of members of the board, or their guest, to lead an invocation, a moment of silence or opt out of the opening invocation on a monthly basis for a maximum of 60 seconds. The motion was duly seconded and carried with the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - Board Member Boutzoukas, Board Member Park, Board Member Hinrichs, Board Member Mastruserio and Board Member Chenault

Nays: 2 - Board Member Haudricourt and Board Member Hupp

Staff was directed to share requests to offer the invocation with the Chair and the board member scheduled to offer the prayer.

6. Board Members to be Heard – None.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

Chair, Community Development Board

Attest:

City Clerk