



## Community Improvement Board Regular Meeting Agenda

August 26, 2025  
5:30 PM  
6738 Dixon Street  
Milton, FL 32570

- 1. Call Meeting to Order**
- 2. Review and Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
  - Item # 2025-3533
  - Approval of Minutes from July 22, 2025, meeting
- 4. Agenda Items**
  - Item # 2025-3541
  - CRA Riverwalk Masterplan follow-up
  - Item # 2025-3542
  - CRA Riverwalk Masterplan Continuation
- 5. Public Input**
- 6. Old Business**
- 7. New Business**
- 8. Adjournment**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this meeting is asked to advise the City at least 48 hours before the meeting by contacting City Hall, 6738 Dixon Street, Milton, or by calling 983-5410.

*"If any person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, agency, or commission, with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based." FS 286.0105*



Agenda Item # 2025-3533

# Approval of Minutes from July 22, 2025, meeting

## MEETING DATE

August 26, 2025

## PREPARED BY

Stephen Prestesater, Director  
of Economic Development

## BACKGROUND

## SUMMARY

## RECOMMENDATION

## ATTACHMENTS

1. CIB Meeting Minutes 7-22-2025



## City of Milton

### Community Improvement Board Meeting

July 22, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

#### MINUTES

The City of Milton Community Improvement Board meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M. on July 22, 2025. Present at the meeting were Chairman Vernon Compton, Board Members, Ms. Deb Becker, Mrs. Ella Payne, Mr. Kaden Spurlock, and Mr. Howard Steele. Mr. Stephen Prestesater, Director of Economic Development, and Mr. Tim Milstead, Planning Director for the City, were present at the meeting. These minutes are a synopsis of the actions taken at the meeting and are not intended as verbatim minutes.

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Vernon Compton at 5:30 p.m. He welcomed those in attendance. It was noted that a quorum was achieved.
- II. Mr. Compton called for any additions, deletions, or changes to the meeting agenda. Mr. Compton also noted that a couple of new items were to be added. Mr. Compton asked Mr. Prestesater to go over them for addition to the agenda. Mr. Prestesater addressed that in a previous CIB Meeting, Mrs. Smith requested a letter to be drafted that could go out to businesses that specifically asks them to help fix their locations up which in turn helps with the elimination of slum and blight. Also, the county will be holding a LMS meeting at the Milton Market, and we wanted to share the flyer for people to attend and learn about Stormwater Management. Mr. Compton noted that we would have these two items added on the agenda as new business. Mr. Compton asked to entertain a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of these two items. Mrs. Becker made the motion, seconded by Mr. Spurlock. No objection was noted and the motion passes.
- III. Mr. Compton called for any additions, deletions, or changes to the minutes of the meetings for May 27, 2025. Mr. Compton noted that he saw a couple of changes that were needed on page four. The first was when Mrs. Mitchell was talking about the support letter for the grant and describing what they were going to be doing. The sentence says that "there was a thought that a children's coral group," The correct spelling was choral. Also, the children's choral group could doo... correct spelling do. Also on page 7 at the bottom, Mr. Kilmartin asked about the property owners and that we needed to use the space that they cant use, needed to correct apostrophes for both words. Mrs. Payne noted that on page 7, four lines up from the end, you have Mr. Payne. That needed to be corrected to Mrs. Payne. Ms. Becker noted that I also had Mrs. Becker, as well, and that it was incorrect. Mr. Prestesater noted that corrections would be made. Mr. Compton asked for a motion per those corrections. Ms Becker made a motion per these corrections. Mr. Steele made a second. No objection was noted, and the motion passed.

IV. Chairman Compton discussed agenda item # 2025-3453, CRA Riverwalk Master Plan – Follow Up from July Meeting. Chairman Compton thanked the CIB members for their ideas and turned the discussion over to Mr. Prestesater to guide the discussion. Mr. Prestesater discussed the follow-up from the previous meeting, starting with a document that was handed out to each member, which provides a high-level overview/ recap from the prior meetings. The three items we discussed were the Milton Marina #14, Blackwater Landing, and Banquet Hall. The big take away from this time was that the CIB would like to see the space to be used for a meeting hall. A restaurant, such as a fish house. Increasing the wet slips and the dock. We also had dry slips and a high-end RV park (the loopers). Fuel, water, and power was also discussed. Paddle or recreational use boats. Also, could the vacant parcel or island be used as a recreational space with a boardwalk. Next item was #13, Broad Street. We asked to bring this back to our next meeting, which we will discuss again tonight. Green space with connectivity was discussed. Linking of our sidewalks with safe pedestrian walkways. Illuminated walk signs could be an option. Lastly, #5, Riverfront Hotel Connectivity, meeting spaces, and something to showcase the city was discussed. The extension of the boardwalk or riverwalk north from this point. Also, a bike path or bridge across the Blackwater was brought up. We discussed the activation of the Riverwalk Rd. Space was discussed for use. Another thing that was key to point out for connectivity was Broad Street and the need for a bridge over Collins Mill Creek. Mr. Compton wanted to bring up the Riverwalk Hotel and wanted to add that a larger conference room was needed. Mr. Prestesater noted this was a great thing to bring up as it pertains to a hotel. He also noted that something that he wanted to bring up at a later time was the possible need to expand the area in which this master plan covered to incorporate Stewart Street for what could be a possible space for another larger conference space. Mr. Compton said that one of the things about the bridge over the Blackwater River that had been discussed in prior meetings and documents from the CRA, would be the separation of pedestrians and vehicles. The separate bridge would help with this. It would also be an assist and a possible draw for the hotel and a possible conference meeting space. It could also be an iconic design if we partner with FDOT. They have done it in other communities to do just what we are talking about. Mr. Compton asked, how do we solve all our problems of connectivity, linking people to our parks, but also keep it safe for all users, such as families with kids. If it stays on the main road, it will not do so. Also, with the Marina and the other areas, it is important to protect the river. Mr. Steele said the thing he would like to add is that we be realistic about what we propose, especially along the river. Mr. Steele then asked staff to pull up the two properties available at what is proposed in the plan to be the site for the Hotel. Staff pulled up the site on the Property Appraiser's website for review with the CIB members. Mr. Prestesater noted that, according to what we see on the site, which he noted isn't always accurate, the available space for development on said property is .172 acres. Mr. Prestesater did a quick calculation using the measurement tool on the website and determined that the available space is over 1 acre. Further discussion was had regarding this site. Mr. Steele felt that the space was limiting. Ms. Becker asked how big of a hotel could be built on the site, and what is the number of rooms we could have? Mr. Prestesater noted that due to our limitation per code, we could not go above 3 stories, meaning the hotel would not be that large. He also stated that Mr. Milstead could give a better explanation. Mr. Milstead confirmed it would not be a large hotel. He stated that without a ladder truck for our fire department, a three-story unit is as high as we can go. Mr. Steele said this needs to be something we consider. Mr. Milstead confirmed that the city is considering it, but that the costs are very high. Mr. Spurlock jokingly stated that those trucks aren't that cheap. Mr. Prestesater stated that he spoke with the Fire Chief a few days before while attending the city's budget meeting. A ladder truck is more than \$1,000,000 to purchase. That isn't the largest expense. It is the staffing of 9 or so firefighters required

to operate the truck for 24 hour shifts at the cost of nearly \$1,000,000 each year to operate that vehicle. Also, when a ladder truck is sent out, all other vehicles still have to respond. Storage costs would also need to be considered. Ms. Becker asked if there are other areas that could be used for a hotel. Mr. Prestesater said there is an example of a usable space. A hotel requires space, parking, high visibility, and traffic counts to sustain. Mr. Prestesater said the Pic-n-Save is a perfect site. He noted that he is not suggesting that we get rid of it. He stated that it is a great establishment. But the goal of our master plan is to think big picture and to create a vision. If we expand the plan to incorporate more of the city, we could see a hotel coming out towards Stewart St. The 5.8 acres would give you more space to develop a larger hotel. Ms. Becker said that it sounds like we do not have enough usable space for hotels. Mr. Prestesater confirmed. Ms. Becker brought up that maybe there is a need to have more conversions to Airbnb space. Mrs. Payne said that last month she went to a brewery in Niceville that had a restroom that is created inside a Conex box that looked very nice. Mr. Prestesater said we are always looking for low-cost ideas on restrooms. He then brought up that we are considering the Portland Loo. The issue, though, is that the restroom installation costs nearly as much as the pre-fab restroom does. The restroom is great as it has many options. Cost of installation is the major issue. Pensacola has ordered three and opened RFP's for installation, but had to re-open the bids as costs came in too high. Mr. Steele said we can just get Joe to do it. Mr. Prestesater said we did look at that, and yes, Mr. Joe can do everything. He noted, though, that costs are the biggest issue. Mr. Spurlock asked to bring up connectivity and sidewalks. He discussed the streets that have a connection to the Blackwater State Trail and said that if we add a few short sections of sidewalk, we can help make more connectivity to the trail. Mr. Milstead brought up the GIS map to show where all the sidewalks are located in the area Mr. Spurlock was discussing. Mr. Steele asked if we could have these funded through the CDBG. Mr. Prestesater stated that they were not included and would not be eligible. He said that staff can review the sidewalk plan to see where they are in order of all others on the sidewalk list. Mr. Prestesater also noted that if CDBG funds were not approved, that we would need to look at this list again to prioritize our streets and that with the loss of the LOST funds, this could take 10 to 15 years to have these sidewalks completed. Mr. Compton asked if there was anything else before we moved to the next item. Mr. Prestesater said no, and that this was a good recap. Mr. Compton stated that we would move to the next item.

- V. Chairman Compton discussed agenda item #2025-3454, CRA Riverwalk Master Plan - Continued. Chairman Compton turned the discussion over to Mr. Prestesater. Mr. Prestesater noted that we are returning to Broad Street and that it was good that everyone had more time to review the site. It is hard to think of what to do with the area when knowing that half of the space is only available for use due to the floodway. The extension of the boardwalk and a greenway is great, and that is why they were initially in the plan. They knew that the floodway would be an issue for development. Mr. Prestesater then read what is current in the plan for Broad Street. The green belt was added to protect the area. The development that was proposed was dense and raised to stay out of the floodwaters. Mr. Prestesater then asked, now knowing more about this area, what ideas does the CIB have for this space? Mr. Compton discussed the Riverwalk and how it is in the River itself. He said it is more expensive, but that it could be done in phases, such as our southern end. He noted that yes, it will take a while, but it is worth it. He said that connectivity is what everyone wants. Mr. Steele asked at what point do we go to get facts about these parcels? When do we approach someone to ask about what is possible with this property. Mr. Prestesater said that it would be during the engineering process, but what we need to start with is the master planning portion, which is what we are doing now. Mr. Prestesater also noted that the city is currently working with a company to apply on our behalf for the CPTA grant, which is a planning grant to help us with our master plan. Mr. Prestesater said we are in review and will hopefully submit our grant application, which in turn could get us the funding for a master plan. He said, we start

with the plan, then go into engineering, such as hydrology and geotech. Mr. Compton brought up that Broad Street has a different zoning that allows more flexibility. He noted how that works it's way down towards the site for the hotel and even on Willing Street. Mr. Compton then asked Ms. Becker about Willing Street and how it flows. Ms. Becker said that right now, it doesn't get the traffic for any business. Mr. Compton then talked about the green belt on Broad and asked what kind of park spaces could be used. Mr. Prestesater handed the conversation over to Mr. Milstead. Mr. Milstead said that the original intent was to have an easement over the properties to allow public access. Whether it be in the green belt, on the properties, or in the river, this easement would allow for public space. Ms. Becker asked if we could have sidewalks. Mr. Compton said yes. He also said that the bridge over the creek could link up. No additional discussions were had pertaining to Broad Street. Mr. Prestesater said the next item is the Blackwater Quarter. This section in town focuses on Willing Street. Mr. Prestesater said that this is important because nearly all buildings on the east end are historical. And what we do know, the revitalization of our riverwalk is a must-have, but what we need to figure out is what we want to see happen with said structures. Ms. Becker noted that we need more traffic and more people to draw attention. Mr. Prestesater said that recently, at the City Council meeting, a discussion was held about the possible closure of Willing Street. Mr. Prestesater then noted that this is an important item to discuss, and that we would eventually discuss it here, but what was truly needed was an open forum for the public to have their input first. This would be such a big change that an idea like this would need as much public feedback as possible. Ms. Becker asked if she could speak to this item. She noted that this would be detrimental to her business because people would lose their ability to drive up to her storefront. She also asked if we have enough people in this town who want to walk Willing Street. It would need a big draw. Mr. Prestesater noted that this is why it would need public input. Mrs. Payne said something but the microphone did not pick it up. Mr. Spurlock jumped in to talk about traffic flow and wondered if we had enough people right now to close it entirely. He stated that being closed for events is one thing, and Ms. Becker agreed with his comment. Councilman Tom Powers approached the podium to speak. Mr. Compton addressed the Councilman to speak. Mr. Powers stated that Liberty Church allows the use of their parking lot every day other than during church service. He also noted that the city is looking to have the county open up Oak Street. Ms. Becker said that Liberty Church has been great, and she is aware of the parking availability with the church. Ms. Becker noted that a big issue she has is that many of her customers have trouble walking and that the only entrance she has is the front of her building, off of Willing Street. Also, the driving traffic helps people see the business. She noted that unless we had all the buildings filled up, it would be hard to see. Mr. Powers then said that to fill the buildings, that is why we have a CIB. Mr. Powers then sat down. Mr. Compton then jumped in to talk about improvements and how it could be done, while also addressing the issues we have with Hwy 90. He then said that a good option would be to have Willing Street be one-way. Mr. Steele said you could have a north on Willing Street from the south end, and south on Willing Street from the north end. Bump-outs could be added. Mrs. Payne said you could do angled parking. Mr. Spurlock said you could do pull-ins. Ms. Becker said we need traffic for visibility. Mr. Spurlock asked how many cars could we get down if we did angled parking with a one-way. Ms. Becker said it is important that people know which way to turn. Mr. Steele said he is in favor of the one-way, not the full closure at this point. Maybe a future point when we have more foot traffic, and businesses, yes. Maybe during events. Ms. Becker said yes to events. Mr. Steele asked about outdoor seating. Ms. Becker said an area out back would be a nice outdoor seating. A sidewalk cafe though would not. Mr. Steele asked what we need to do to attract new businesses. Mr. Compton discussed that the steps the city is taking helps draw in more businesses. Additional discussion was then had regarding angled parking as well as protecting the sidewalks. Mr. Compton then noted that people love the outdoors and wanted to know how we could meet more of those outdoor-oriented needs. Kayaking on the river and in the state forests, we need outdoor retail. The need to highlight that is big. Mr. Prestesater agreed and

noted that the city of Pensacola just added it in downtown off of Palafox. Mr. Prestesater also noted that we need to see Milton as a location for this. He said he always believed that the adventure begins here. Milton is in the middle of the county. Mr. Compton continued to discuss the Blackwater Quarter and asked what the city invests and how that activates the corridor. The more outdoor space where someone can get a pizza allows for more space to enjoy it. If you want other businesses to come, it's about figuring out how to invest and activate. Mr. Prestesater showed the image of the Blackwater Quarter that is in the Masterplan. It was agreed that the riverfront view was the best there. Next, figure out the parking, and then develop with sidewalks and walkability. Ms. Becker said if we developed like that, we would have developers who would want to be there. Mr. Compton said this design is great. Mr. Steele asked if this design eliminates the parking behind Willing Street. Mr. Prestesater and Mr. Milstead said yes. Discussion of having the brick walking path was had, and how it could carry up north towards the Hotel, or even further up. Mr. Spurlock stated that a pedestrian and bicycle path could be tied into the base of the existing Hwy 90 bridge. Mr. Compton stated that it could be done at the end of Berryhill, creating a more visually appealing/ iconic multimodal bridge that attracts to your city. Mr. Spurlock expressed having it be more open, hence the connection to the existing Hwy 90 Bridge. Mr. Compton discussed previous plans and how this could be a transportation alternative for funding. Also, stating that the goal is to allow it to be wider for access and space. He also addressed the issue of having it on Hwy 90 as it's a constrained corridor. Mr. Spurlock came back and stated that it would be an additional bridge next to Hwy 90. A pedestrian bridge that's not blocking your view, and it would not be connected. It would come across and tie into the brick road (Riverwalk Rd that is shown in the Riverfront Master Plan's existing design). It could then continue up Broad St, or Berryhill. If you did a loop, you could also go under Hwy 90, and it would give you a safe access so you do not have to cross Hwy 90 at that busy intersection. Mr. Compton stated that the challenge with it is the distance. If you look at the most recent bridges done, they don't have a staircase or a spiral or a big use of space at the landing point. If you look at the landing, there isn't as much space. If you look at Berryhill, you would have space as it doesn't have a constraint. You have a path that goes down and connects. But all of it is worth looking at how you do either one of them. Mr. Steele states that if you want to look long-term for Berry and Broad, you can have a pedestrian bridge go across the Blackwater and connect it with the brick road. Mr. Spurlock restated that if you connected our brick road to the separate bridge, it could connect to the brick road. Mr. Compton stated that these are great ideas, but it all has constraints such as space and money. A discussion about dreaming big was then stated by Mr. Spurlock and several members of the CIB. Mr. Prestesater asked if there was anything else we wanted to see in the corridor? Mr. Compton brought up the staircase across from Boomerang's and how we activate everything to work together. There was also the closure of Willing Street, to allow a walkable space. A discussion was then had about outdoor seating. Mr. Spurlock asked Ms. Becker about her restaurant and if the benches were down there. Ms. Becker said she could see a whole other restaurant going in off the Riverwalk Rd area, that is proposed to be a brick area. Mr. Steele brought up issues with some of the buildings. Ms. Becker stated that several have had water issues due to flooding. She then stated that first you need restaurants, as right now Boomerang's isn't enough. Mr. Steele said his assessment is that the economic situation nationally is getting better, and its going to get better here. And he thinks Milton is getting more attractive every day, and here soon there will be more restaurants. Ms. Becker said the more we have it doesn't hurt, it helps. Mr. Compton asked for any other ideas for the Blackwater corridor. No additional comments were made. Mr. Compton then asked for other input related to anything we discussed tonight. Councilwoman Farrow addressed the podium to speak. Mrs. Farrow wanted to thank everyone for their creativity and for brainstorming. She said there were a lot of great ideas. She sat down, and Councilman Powers addressed the podium. Mr. Powers said he had another idea regarding the parking lot behind Willing Street. He said we should look at developing that into a food court, as that will get the draw down there. He also stated that the Imogene Theatre is open

for tours every Sunday morning. He then sat down, and Councilman McKee addressed the podium. Mr. McKee stated he appreciated everything being brought up and that he really liked the idea of the bridge next to the Hwy 90 Bridge. He said he thinks it less of an impact and it isn't moving any of the buildings down there. He said it is actually giving a better of right of way. He also addressed that he likes the brick layout from the existing Riverfront Plan. He also stated that we could have parking on the east side of the river, and people could walk over to the west side to bring them downtown. Mr. McKee also said that he liked Ms. Becker's idea and that she would most likely put another restaurant downtown. Then, he said it was about how we would incentivize businesses to come to downtown. Whether it's tax breaks, impact fee reductions. This all needs to be brought into consideration when we have these ideas. Nothing is free and its all going to cost. He stated, though, that he loves the ideas, he loves that people could come across the river and then make your way north. He does not like, he said it would be detrimental to bring the bridge into Berryhill. Bringing it straight over and into the downtown is exactly what you are trying to accomplish. He then stated that this was just his opinion. Mr. Compton thanked him for his feedback and said that he thought the incentives were a big item. He said that we have some of the buildings downtown that we want to see repurposed and incentives, not just ones that come from the City of Milton. But tax credits that come from having a historic building. He said it depends on where it stands with the state and or the federal government. At one time, it was %20, maybe at one point there was consideration for it to go up to %30. As far as taxes, if you have a higher cost to address issues in an older building. Whether it be fixing something, that you are at least getting that %20 or %30. Mr. McKee said he wouldn't take credit, that it was Mr. Paul Kilmartin who mentioned it to Mr. McKee. Mr. Compton asked for anything else. Mr. Prestesater addressed the letter to businesses and stated that we will get out amongst the community in hopes of getting property owners to work with us. Ms. Becker suggested we add the picture of the Riverwalk Rd. Design with the letter as we send it out. The CIB members agreed it was a great visual for business owners to see. Mr. Milstead addressed the new Food Truck permits and noted that the area in question was set up for food vendors in years past. Mr. Prestesater talked about how the CIB asked for some sort of business to help activate the use of the river, and that we recently received a proposal from a new company to come and set up shop in Milton for a temporary time to see if this is where the want to locate permanently. He stated that that for the Fall 2025 Bands on the Blackwater season, Aura Adventures would be here in Milton with light up kayaks and canoes. Mr. Prestesater said that this CIB is on the forefront of change and growth and that in the short time he has been facilitating the CIB, we have had major growth. From the submission of the CDBG grant for sidewalks and lighting, to the redevelopment of the Riverwalk Master Plan and the CPTA grant, to our Council and CRA moving projects forward. This CIB is making big changes, and Mr. Prestesater thanked everyone for their comittment and service. Mr. Compton asked if there was anything else that pertained to the new business items? He talked about the County LMS flyer on August 14<sup>th</sup>. He then asked for any new business. Mr. Prestesater said no.

VI. Public Input: No public input.

VII. No Old Business

VIII. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Stephen Prestesater, Director of Economic Development



Agenda Item # 2025-3541

## CRA Riverwalk Masterplan follow-up

### MEETING DATE

August 26, 2025

### PREPARED BY

Stephen Prestesater, Director  
of Economic Development

### BACKGROUND

Discuss Riverwalk Masterplan - #13: Broad Street Redevelopment Area, and #2: Blackwater Quarter

### SUMMARY

### RECOMMENDATION

### ATTACHMENTS

None



Agenda Item # 2025-3542

## CRA Riverwalk Masterplan Continuation

### MEETING DATE

August 26, 2025

### PREPARED BY

Stephen Prestesater, Director  
of Economic Development

### BACKGROUND

Discuss Riverwalk Masterplan - #16: The Mews, and #17: West Florida Railroad Museum

### SUMMARY

### RECOMMENDATION

### ATTACHMENTS

None