

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

December 3, 2013
Greenville, NC

The Greenville Redevelopment Commission met on the above date for a meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the City Hall Building located at 200 West Fifth Street.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeremy King
Angela Marshall

Sharif Hatoum
Mark Woodson, Interim Chair

Richard Patterson

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Tiana Keith, Secretary; and Carl Rees, Economic Development Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF September 3, 2013

Motion was made by Mr. Jeremy King and seconded by Mr. Richard Patterson to approve the November 5, 2013 minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentation of Conceptual Plan for 423 Evans Street Lot

Mr. Mansfield- Next we have the presentation for 423 Evans Street.

Mr. Rees- We are happy to bring forward some of the latest work for access to the City's parking deck site through the Redevelopment Commission owned 423 Evans Street. The hope was that this lot would be redeveloped and go back on the tax roles. Also, from the inception of the idea to purchase this lot has always been interested in providing access to additional parking. With that in mind, I would like to ask Dirk Tyson, Contract Engineer with Rivers and Associates, to come forward to update the Commission generally on planning for the parking deck site and how we should tie this lot into the parking deck site. These are early conceptual illustrations open to comments and questions.

Mr. Dirk Tyson presented background and an update on the progress at 423 Evans Street Lot.

Mr. Rees- There is no action required at this time. We just wanted to share an update and receive any comments the Commission may have.

Mr. Woodson- Are there any questions?

Mr. King- Can we go back to the last slide? Are the circles bushes?

Mr. Tyson- The circles are symbols representing landscaping. It may be a tree or bush but this may change before we see you again. This is an early conceptual plan.

Mr. King- I know this is a preliminary design but I like the path to get to the elevator. The only thing I would say is, how much time do we want these pedestrians hanging out on this lot? Do we want this to be a welcoming open space or do we want them to move on to that garage?

Mr. Tyson- Well this is going to allow these surrounding business owners to have to entries. Restaurants may consider incorporating outdoor seating into the back of their businesses. Long term we want this to be somewhere people do not mind spending time.

Mr. Rees- With regard to the hanging out, there are probably times of day where groups of people hanging out may be good and other times of day where it may not. The Police Department has been closely involved in the planning process for the entire project. We are also looking at camera locations to make sure it is a safe pathway for pedestrians.

Mr. King- We want to be good neighbors to the surrounding businesses. I want to make sure businesses do not see this as them having people loitering out there and causing problems for their business.

Mr. Tyson- We want to encourage pedestrians but discourage loitering. It is not necessarily an attractive back of house now, but we hope that this deck will spur additional redevelopment investment in other areas.

Mr. Hatoum- Will there be a gap or will the parking deck extend to the walls of the buildings that currently exist?

Mr. Rees- That is still a work in progress. The improvements we have scheduled will only be on City property. However, we have had some conversations with these owners about their interest and issues. The City Council is only paying for the public property but we hope some private owners will follow on and choose to improve some of their property.

Mr. Woodson- Thank you, Mr. Tyson. This meets our basic criteria of being inexpensive so that we do not have to put in then pull out when a developer comes along.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Discussion of Application for Our Town Public Art Grant

Mr. Rees- I am excited to bring this item forward. Some of the longer term Commission members have been able to celebrate some of the public art successes that we have had. The interest in public art goes back to the Center City/West Greenville Revitalization Plan using public art as an opportunity to create a sense of place in Greenville's urban areas, and a way to quickly, and relatively inexpensively, spruce up areas as redevelopment occurred. We have engaged the local arts council and incorporated a public arts master plan as a part of the streetscape master plan. The next opportunity for public art that had been identified by the Redevelopment Commission was the Evans Gateway area. Currently the Commission has a placeholder in their budget for \$250,000 to pay for this project including decorative crosswalks and some sort of gateway art. We had identified a placeholder within that \$250,000 of \$50,000 for this project, and ultimately would have contacted the Arts Council to find an artist. We became aware of the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant. It is a great program that can advance public art in our city. As we have had additional discussion with the Arts Council we have come to understand there is a matching requirement and we have those dollars sitting in front of us. We have the opportunity to take that \$50,000 and actually turn it into much more money as Holly Garriott, Executive Director for the Arts Council, will explain. The Redevelopment Commission still gets their art work and we get a whole lot more bang for the buck.

Ms. Garriott explained the details of the NEA Our Town Grant.

Staff Recommendation: The Redevelopment Commission support application to the NEA "Our Town" grant program with a commitment of \$50,000 of matching funds for the development of gateway artworks for Evans Street.

Mr. King- So you are asking the Redevelopment Commission for \$50,000 that was already earmarked for Evans Street Gateway public art that will go along with \$25,000 of your own money, and if successful this grant we will get \$75,000 more?

Ms. Garriott- Exactly.

Mr. King- When people come up in front of us and are willing to put their own money in front of it with us it makes me much more supportive.

Ms. Garriott- This project will happen whether we get this grant or not.

Mr. Woodson- Are there any stipulations or restrictions that we need to be aware of?

Ms. Garriott- There are things that they prefer to fund and do not prefer to fund. The one thing they do want to do is get artists paid. The public arts piece is very fundable.

Mr. King- If we could find more organizations that wanted to fund operations, I would be

all for that.

Mr. Woodson- Since this is already a line item in our budget do we need a motion?

Mr. Rees- We would. There are also some forms that the City needs to sign off on so we will be presenting this at City Council also.

Motion was made by Mr. Jeremy King and seconded by Mr. Richard Patterson to support the application to the NEA "Our Town" grant program with a commitment of \$50,000 of matching funds for the development of gateway artworks for Evans Street. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Town Common Master Plan Implementation

Mr. Rees- At last month's meeting we revisited the Master Plan for Town Common. Following that presentation staff recommended we have some discussion with partners in Uptown Greenville in the Bank of America board room that overlooks the Town Common. If there proves to be interest this group could become a working committee for six months or so that would come up with recommendations for City Council to enact. We are recommending including Chair and Vice Chair from the boards and commissions involved and see what that yields.

Mr. King- Since I opened this can of worms I would volunteer to be on that.

Mr. Rees- We need two, so if there is consensus among the Commission that would work.

Mr. Woodson- And also, if any other member feels strongly they need to attend that is fine. It might turn into the Redevelopment Commission hosting this.

Discussion of RFI for Uptown Theatre

Mr. Rees- Our partner in this project who is also contracted to do some of this work on our behalf is the Uptown Greenville organization, so I would like to ask their Executive Director, Bianca Shoneman, to come forward. She has a great presentation for you.

Ms. Shoneman presented an overview of the Uptown Theatre and a survey of community perspective.

Mr. Rees- We have had some very well intentioned people who have tried to generate interest from donors in Greenville to refurbish this place as an entirely public theatre. This is a different approach that would yield something different than a completely public theatre. We are talking about some public-private venture. The final decision will

always be made by the Redevelopment Commission and City Council. We just want to know what some great thoughts are that will help us make this empty building dilapidated building into something really cool.

Mr. King- The more ideas you can find the better. The tablet should be blank. If this calls for a motion I would recommend it. It does not mean we will like what they come back with. I like ideas.

Ms. Marshall- When you get the RFI will we have an opportunity to see those?

Ms. Shoneman- Certainly.

Mr. Rees- You will have a chance to see them all but we would highlight the ones that may be a bit more sophisticated.

Staff Recommendation: Redevelopment Commission authorize issuance of an RFI by Uptown Greenville to identify private sector partners that may be interested in redeveloping and/or operating the Uptown Theatre.

Motion was made by Mr. Jeremy King and seconded by Mr. Sharif Hatoum to authorize issuance of an RFI to identify private sector partners for the Uptown Theatre. Motion carried unanimously.

Recommendation of Acceptance for East 5th Street Alley Easement

Mr. Rees- We should be able to breeze through this quickly because it was already discussed by Mr. Tyson.

Mr. Rees presented background on 5th Street Alley.

Staff Recommendation: Redevelopment Commission endorse acceptance of a pedestrian easement by the Greenville City Council from GCPLUSC, LLC of approximately 728 square feet as depicted in the attached proposed map of record.

Motion was made by Mr. Richard Patterson and seconded by Mr. Jeremy King to endorse acceptance of a pedestrian easement. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of 2014 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Rees shared the following proposed meeting schedule for 2014.

January 7, 2014
February 4, 2014

March 4, 2014
March 18, 2014 (workshop)
April 1, 2014
May 6, 2014 (workshop)
June 3, 2014
August 5, 2014
September 2, 2014
October 7, 2014
November 4, 2014
December 2, 2014

Motion was made by Mr. Richard Patterson and seconded by Ms. Angela Marshall to accept the meeting schedule for 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT FROM SECRETARY

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Flood: The expenditure reports for West Greenville and the Center City have been submitted for review by the Commission.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. King- There was great representation and community involvement at the Imperial Tobacco Kickoff.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Sharif Hatoum and seconded by Mr. Jeremy King to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Carl J. Rees, Economic Development Manager
The City of Greenville Community Development Department