

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

February 21, 2012
Greenville, NC

The Greenville Redevelopment Commission held a special meeting on the above date at 11:30 a.m. in the third floor conference room of the City Hall Building located at 200 West Fifth Street.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dana Coles
Evan Lewis
Chris Mansfield, Vice Chair

Don Mills
Judy Siguaw
Terri Williams, Chair

Mark Woodson

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Niki Jones, Planner II; Carl Rees, Senior Planner; and Tom Wisemiller, Planner II

DISCUSSION OF 2012 – 2013 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Mr. Rees: The Mission statement of the Redevelopment Commission is:

To assure that Greenville, North Carolina is a better place to live, raise a family, and do business, while improving the safety, security, image, and economic vitality of the urban core and the neighborhoods of West Greenville.

The 2012 – 2013 fiscal year begins July 1, 2012.

Citizen Priorities: Neighborhoods

Define the neighborhoods in West Greenville.

Provide economic stimulus and commercial services (library branch, retail node, incubator, new business).

Increase home ownership (eliminate blighted properties).

Create pride and remove the stigma.

Improve safety and security of neighborhoods (neighborhood building, code enforcement).

Improve Infrastructure (sidewalks, curb and gutter, storm drainage, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian improvements).

Provide new entrance from Tenth Street and define edges.

Citizen Priorities: Urban Core

Maximize vehicular and pedestrian access to the Center City.

Emphasize mixed use developments.

Reconnect historic center city to residential areas to the east and west.

Promote joint opportunities for quality development with Pitt County, the City of Greenville, and East Carolina University

Maintain small town character and limit large scale development to major activity nodes.

Increase the amount of open space and emphasize public access to the Town Common.

Increase night and weekend activity in the Uptown Commercial District.

Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan

The key accomplishments by the Redevelopment Commission from 2007 – 2012 are:

The Streetscape Master Plan

Cotanche and Reade Streets

Uptown Design Guidelines (Design professionals and volunteers were led by Tom Wisemiller to develop the guidelines. Developers like the guidelines because they were created by those living in the community.)

Gorham Intergenerational Center (The Center has great projects and great programs.)

West Greenville Residential Rezoning

West Greenville Acquisition and Clearance (A tremendous amount of acquisition has taken place.)

West Greenville Building Blocks Grant (This is essentially a façade grant that provides matching funds.)

Purchase of State Theatre Building in 2008

Small Business Plan Competition (Gold Post Restaurant has opened. Governor Beverly Perdue came to town to celebrate small businesses. Most businesses are doing well and providing jobs.)

Nathaniel Village (There are 3.5 million dollars of tax credits.)

Five Points Plaza (There is Freeboot Friday and the Farmers Market in the plaza, and there is more parking availability.)

West Fifth Street Gateway Project (The gateway has become a point of pride.)

Town Common Master Plan (Recreation and Parks Department will implement plan in phases.)

Go Science Acquisition
Uptown Pay Station Project
Wayfinding Project (There are kiosks, district gateway signs and vehicular signs.)
Merchant's Alley Project (This project should be completed in eighty days.)

The 2004 General Obligation Bonds

Approximately \$5 million for West Greenville

- Expended from 2005 – 2012
 - Land acquisition = \$2.1 million
 - New home construction = \$863,000
 - Intergenerational Center = \$740,000
 - Demolition and maintenance = \$264,000
 - West Fifth Gateway project = \$1.15 million
 - Small business programs = \$168,000
 - West Fifth Streetscape Phase II Design = \$120,000
- Total Expended = \$5,405,000

Approximately \$5 million for Center City

- Expended/committed from 2005 – 2012
 - Land acquisition = \$683,000
 - Streetscape master plan = \$135,000
 - Reade and Cotanche project = \$775,000
 - Five Points Plaza project = \$738,000
 - Wayfinding project = \$678,000
 - Town Common Master Plan = \$50,000
 - Small business programs = \$179,000
 - Parking Pay Station project = \$90,000
 - Merchant's Alley design = \$20,000
 - Theatre Uptown design = \$85,000
 - Evans Gateway design = \$140,000
 - Merchant's Alley construction = \$152,000
- Total Expended = \$3,725,000

Mr. Rees: Success has been measured through civic benefits and economic benefits.
Uptown value per acre is \$903,623 and Pitt County value per acre is \$19,685.

2011 – 2012 Work Plan Items

West Fifth Streetscape Phase II Design
Adaptive Reuse of Historic Structures
Evans Street Gateway Design
Business Assistance Programs
Comprehensive Wayfinding Project (This project is almost completed.)
West Greenville Commercial Center
Parking Pay Station Phase II

Mixed Use Project Development
West Greenville Business Incubator
Civic Art Initiative
Revitalization Area Marketing
Go Science Project
Theatre Uptown Project
Promotion of Ecotourism
West Greenville Basketball Complex
Merchant's Alley project
First Street/Town Common Corridor Improvements
West Fifth Streetscape Phase II Construction
Uptown Parking Deck Construction (This is an emerging issue.)
West Greenville Commercial Center (Use the Tenth Street Connector Project to help acquire land.)
Residential and Mixed Use Projects (Conversations have taken place with developers.)
West Greenville Business Incubator (There is a wonderful steering committee.)
Convention Visitors Bureau Office Project (This project should be worked on in next Work Plan.)
West Greenville Land Acquisition
Uptown Hotel Project
First Street Parking

Budget Considerations

West Greenville

Funding available in FY 12' – 13' for:

W. 5th streetscape design (\$120,000)
Continuation of business programs (\$60,000)
West Greenville Basketball complex design (\$65,000)
Preliminary Business Incubator Design (\$10,000)

Need FY 13' – 15' funding for:

West Greenville Basketball complex (\$650,000)
Business Incubator Construction (\$1.5 million)
W. 5th streetscape construction (\$900,000)
Land acquisition (\$1.5 million)
Full Small Business Incubator Design (\$215,000)

Center City

Funding available in FY 12' – 13' for:

Evans Street Gateway (\$1.25 million)
Continuation of Business Programs (\$60,000)
Parking Pay Stations (\$40,000)
First Street Corridor Parking (\$150,000)

Need FY 13' – 15' funding for:

Town Common Phase I (\$1.5 million)

Theatre (\$500,000)
Dickinson Avenue Streetscape Design (\$150,000)

Future Funding

Small increments may come from CDBG, EDA, Golden Leaf or other foundations for incubator, theatre or basketball complex.

Parking related projects may be funded from parking revenues in parking reserve account.

Some infrastructure improvements associated with mixed use projects may be leveraged through tax increment dollars from private development.

The bulk of funding for projects such as Town Common, incubator and streetscape will need to come from new bond issue.

Mr. Rees: The Commission should prioritize projects with cost estimates provided to City Council.

Mr. Mills: There may be changes in direction of the Redevelopment Commission with the change of leadership in City Council and the Mayor.

Mr. Rees: Economic Development Initiative is intended to supplement ongoing initiatives in the Urban Core.

Ms. Williams: How many homes does the City have for sale in the West Greenville area?

Mr. Flood: There are three homes remaining. Helping people become homeowners takes more time to get them sold.

Mr. Mills: Are there funds besides what is presently available?

Mr. Rees: Yes there are funds available through the North Carolina Rural Center. There could be private donors and grants. Cities will pay for streetscapes. There are revenue streams.

Mr. Mansfield: How can taxpayer investments be reclaimed? Will City Council go that way?

Mr. Flood: There needs to be the right project and will be on a case by case basis.

Mr. Mansfield: The Commission needs to think of things that have most impact on redevelopment. What options do we have? Can we separate Center City and West Greenville?

Mr. Woodson: Is there money in West Greenville Bonds?

Mr. Rees: Where homes are sold there will be some monies coming back.

Mr. Woodson: I understand can't go between West Greenville and Center City.

Mr. Flood: Looking at other resources like CDBG to move projects forward.

Mr. Mansfield: The West Greenville Basketball Complex could have a higher use for commercial development. Multiple uses for parking lots for instance basketball.

Mr. Mills: Is there any discussion with East Carolina University of a joint venture?

Mr. Rees: We have discussed partnering on a project in the heart of the City.

Mr. Mills: Will the hotel be built in 3 -5 years?

Mr. Rees: Yes, we are planning for that.

Mr. Mansfield: In the East Carolina University Master Plan, is there any conversation about hotels on Reade Street?

Ms. Siguaw: First Street with Performing Arts, new Education and Economic Building – ideally the hotel should go in the center of campus.

Mr. Mansfield: Is there any movement for an ECU Alumni center?

Ms. Siguaw: There is no movement.

Mr. Woodson: What about Evans Street Gateway?

Mr. Rees: Find a consulting firm to do a new review of the Intermodal Transportation Center after public input and then move forward.

Mr. Flood: Reassessing locations and City Council will decide.

Mr. Rees: Extensive public involvement and end product will reflect stakeholders.

Ms. Williams: What is the update on the Tenth Street Connector?

Mr. Flood: Kimley Horn and Associates are 65-75% complete on project design. Right-of-way acquisition should begin in July.

Mr. Woodson: How should the Commission prioritize the projects of West Greenville and Center City?

Mr. Rees: Project specific will be the way to go and have list of greatest importance.

Mr. Mansfield: What are the plans for the Convention Visitors Bureau (CVB)?

Mr. Rees: The CVB approved the project and will be brought to City Council in the next three months. There will be a portion of the construction funds that CVB will pay.

Ms. Williams: Prioritizing is super important when requesting funding.

Mr. Mansfield: What would be the criteria for prioritization? Is it the impact on other projects, synergy? What is the possibility of high/low?

Mr. Lewis: Initiate further development in the City or nearby.

Mr. Woodson: Some of our projects overlap with Recreation and Parks. Recreation and Parks have already established their priority list.

Mr. Rees: We will send out their list.

Ms. Siguaw: Do we have a grant writer?

Mr. Rees: You are looking at them. Money for the theatre will come from grant funds as well as the incubator. I feel like Go Science uses grant funds. I will check with them.

Mr. Mansfield: Where is the Town Common on the Recreation and Parks priority list?

Mr. Rees: Town Common is on the top seven list. Can't move forward until bonds are passed.

Mr. Mills: What is Uptown Greenville thinking?

Mr. David Carpenter with Uptown Greenville: Uptown Greenville is thinking hotel, CVB, meeting space and parking deck. Crime and parking are two issues of the population of Uptown with an increased interest in Economic Development. Have a mixed use type of development in Uptown.

Mr. Mills: What do you think of the Intermodal Transportation Center with a couple of blocks of the Center City?

Mr. Carpenter: East Carolina University's involvement of buses at the Intermodal Transportation Center needs to be addressed. Where is the potential growth moving and will the Intermodal Transportation Center inhibit investors.

Mr. Mansfield: Keep in mind when prioritizing what is the nightlife after 10:00 p.m. with the 10:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. bar culture. Is it eliminating people from wanting to live Uptown?

Mr. Carpenter: I would like to smaller transportation instead of the Intermodal Transportation Center in the district.

Mr. Rees: Public Works is in the process of hiring a Transit Manager. It is hard to mesh the City of Greenville and East Carolina University.

Mr. Woodson: Cannot give perception that everything is for the Center City and East Carolina University. West Greenville needs to be included.

Mr. Mansfield: I have a better feeling about the priorities for West Greenville.

Ms. Williams: Difficult to see progress in West Greenville, because so much needs to be done.

Mr. Mansfield: The Commission needs more input from West Greenville.

Mr. Rees: Feedback is needed.

Mr. Woodson: Set up meeting there and invite public.

Mr. Rees: Want to have our first priority list in April.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

There were no comments from Commission members.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Mr. Don Mills and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner
The City of Greenville Community Development Department