

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

May 4, 2010
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:

Evan Lewis Robert Thompson, Chair
Chris Mansfield Terri Williams, Vice-Chair

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Melissa Hill Don Mills Dennis Mitchell

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Lt. Richard Allsbrook, Police; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Niki Jones, Planner; Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner; Thom Moton, Assistant City Manager; and Rebecca Szalaj, Code Enforcement Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Aaron Beaulieu, Pitt County Schools; Richard Boswell, Business Plan Grant Recipient; Roger Conner, Go-Science; Max R. Joyner, Jr. City Council Liaison; Mac Taha, Mac's Warehouse; Denise Walsh, Uptown Greenville; Arthur Wallace, Business Plan Grant Recipient; and Brad Williams, Hite and Associates

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 6, 2010

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to approve the April 6, 2010 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

WEST GREENVILLE SECURITY UPDATE

Lt. Allsbrook: I am the Commander of Area A which includes downtown all the way north and west, Ironwood and Greenfield Terrace. I have seen a positive development with the housing in the area through the West Greenville Revitalization Plan. The West Greenville Police Substation was dedicated in 2008 and law enforcement in the area is seen in a more positive light, since the substation was built. There are community based events/partnerships and unity celebration block parties. The crime reduction in 2009 for Area A is through increasing communication, sharing information, utilizing existing resources, and repairing/demolishing dilapidated structures. Proactive enforcement action exists by enhancing prosecution of violent offenders, identifying nuisance locations and ridding the community of the problem locations such as convenient stores.

Mr. Lewis: Are there additional initiatives for the coming years?

Lt. Allsbrook: The initiatives mirror 2009 and maintain current initiatives.

Mr. Mansfield: The information was well presented and crime has been chased out Area A into other areas.

Mr. Mansfield: The presence of the substation engages the community. Are there more officers on the street than in other areas?

Lt. Allsbrook: Four (4) officers spread out in the area.

Ms. Williams: The other areas should implement some of your ideas.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you for producing a better community.

SADIE SAULTER SCHOOL UPDATE

Mr. Beaulieu: Since the 2005 Redistricting Plan, Sadie Sauter has been under capacity. There are 220 students in the K-5 grades for this school year at Sadie Sauter. In July/August, bids will be submitted for the work to be done to the school. The school will house pre-kindergarten and there will be an exceptional children office structure. There will be an increase of 22 classrooms. The renovated office space will be in the old portion of the school. The Alpha Program will be housed there. Chicod School and Sadie Sauter are the oldest schools built in 1929. The completed construction date will be 2012 for Sadie Sauter. The new school will be built on Allen Road off of Briarcliff. Are there any questions?

Mr. Mansfield: I watch children board the bus from Nathaniel Village when they could be walking to Sadie Sauter. A community includes schools.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you for refreshing the Commission's understanding.

CODE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Ms. Szalaj gave a report on the active cases for abandoned structures, minimum housing cases, active weeded lots, active trash/debris cases, zoning issues, signs, and abandoned vehicles. A lot of the properties with code violations are Heir property which makes everything more complicated and time consuming. One property owner has twelve violations for various properties. Civil citations are imposed to try to bring structures into compliance.

Mr. Lewis: What is the success rate for collecting civil fees?

Ms. Szalaj: Finance is responsible for collecting the fees, so I do not know the success rates.

Ms. Williams: Is the collection of these fees being kept up with?

Mr. Flood: There is a billing procedure and then it is turned over to a collections agency, so it is an active process.

Ms. Williams: By what means are minimum housing complaints entered?

Ms. Szalaj: Tenants, visitors, citizens.....

Mr. Thompson thanked Ms. Szalaj for her report.

UPDATES FROM BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION GRANTEES

Mr. Richard Boswell: Cynt Rich Vending

Mr. Boswell: In July 2008, Cynt Rich Vending began to serve the low served areas like West Greenville. Vending machines were needed in the West Greenville area. In May 2009, money was awarded from the business plan grant. Cynt Rich went from one to eleven vending machines in seven different locations.

Mr. Thompson: How did grant help your business?

Mr. Boswell: More vending machines were purchased and office space was acquired.

Mr. Mansfield: What kind of products do you offer?

Mr. Boswell: Gatorades are at Eppes, Gatorades at South Greenville and snacks and sodas at some locations.

Mr. Arthur Wallace: Gold Post Cafe

Mr. Wallace: The Gold Post Café is located at 804 West Fifth Street and is 60% complete. We are moving forward and should receive final approval in mid-May. The menu is set. A chef has been hired from Maryland. There will be 12 staff members and one Assistant Manager. Plans for kitchen are with the Health Department and tools are in place to market. This Café will be good for West Greenville.

Mr. Mansfield: I am glad to see that this project is moving in the right direction. How many patrons can you accommodate and what time will you open?

Mr. Wallace: The Café will hold 42 patrons. Breakfast and lunch will be offered four days a week. On Friday all day, there will be Cajun food New Orleans style. There will

be brunch served once a month. The Café will be closed on Monday. The Café will open at the end of the summer due to parking issues.

Mr. Lewis: How did the City money help you?

Mr. Wallace: Every dime counts when opening a business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF GO-SCIENCE SITE

Mr. Conner: Go-Science has taken the request from the Redevelopment Commission to City Council to obtain approval for funding. City Council has made a ruling and approved the utilization of bond funds for this project. Uptown Greenville is supportive of this ruling and the benefit that the Science Center will provide for the City Center commercial district.

Ms. Walsh: Uptown Greenville supports the pending council decision regarding the acquisition of the former Pugh's tire location as the site for the development of the Go-Science Regional Science Center. The site would offer a historic setting for Go-Science and position the center as one of the main cultural anchors for Greenville's Center City. The development of a Science Center in Greenville will help our city not only educationally but economically. A recent study by the North Carolina Grassroots Science Museum Collaborative indicated that for every \$1 of public funds invested in Science Museums in North Carolina another \$14.80 is generated in economic flow-on return. This is not an expense of public funds but rather an investment of public funds both economically and educationally. A study of Science Center developments in North Carolina revealed that 83.7% of successful science center developments were founded by facility collaboration between the host city and the museum. This study revealed that this type of arrangement is the best practice for developing a Science Center and we should adhere to this established best practice. Some of the most well-loved science centers are located within active downtown business districts. Uptown Greenville is rapidly becoming a beautiful and vibrant arts district. We hope that you will support Go-Science as we believe the center will lead to continued success for both the Uptown district and our community. Go-Science has the experience, leadership, and strategic plan to develop a regional science center that will help to transform Greenville and provide unprecedented inclusiveness and access for the great diversity that exists in our community. Please vote in support of the property acquisition for the Go-Science Center.

Mr. Conner: Go-Science has completed a site rendering of the façade redevelopment to share with the commission. We have also launched a new website with an online project progress dashboard for the commission and citizens. Science Centers are

transformative for city centers. They help to revitalize private investment and growth. Science Centers increase foot traffic through visitation and the connection with the city center business district. Increased foot traffic leads to better safety and a walkable community. Science Centers spur private business investment. Retail and restaurants are required to meet the needs of an increased visitor base. The proposed redevelopment of the location helps to create a livable and welcoming community space. The Go-Science Center will help upgrade the use of the current property and transform it through adaptive reuse of the facility.

Mr. Rees: Eric Herbert of Sidley, Austin, LLP has written a letter relating to the use of unspent Center City Revitalization Bond funds. Mr. Herbert mentioned that the proposed use of Center City unspent proceeds to finance the Science Center would comply with the intent of the approved bond order and voter approved bond referendum question. Furthermore, he mentions that Center City Revitalization Bond proceeds can be spent in other revitalization areas within the City and do not have to be spent solely in the land area designated by the City as Center City and financing the Science Center will promote the Center City revitalization efforts.

Mr. Rees: Staff recommends that the Redevelopment Commission authorize the use of Center City bond funds from the 2004 General Obligation Bond Issuance for purchase of the Pugh's Tire property located at 729 Dickinson Avenue at a price not to exceed \$378,000.00. Following acceptable results from the due diligence process, authorize staff to purchase the \$10,000.00 option from the ENC Regional Science Center (Go-Science). Authorize staff to negotiate a lease/sale agreement with Go-Science for 729 Dickinson Avenue subject to Redevelopment Commission approval.

Mr. Mansfield: How far over the line in feet is the block from the district?

Mr. Rees: Dickinson Avenue is located less than 200 feet from the Center City to West Greenville.

Ms. Williams: Staff recommends negotiations of a lease/sale agreement with Go-Science.

Mr. Rees: Go-Science would lease the property for a nominal sum in order to get the project operational. Once the operation is stable it would be appropriate for Go-Science to purchase the property for fair market value.

Mr. Lewis: Is there no definite timeline?

Mr. Rees: There is a due diligence process and environmental issues which will take several months up to six months.

Mr. Lewis: When does the option run out?

Mr. Rees: June 30 but extension of option order can take place.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to approve staff's recommendations. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF DICKINSON AVENUE CORRIDOR GRANTS

Mr. Jones: One business owner, Mr. Mac Taha, has submitted an application for the spring 2010 cycle. Mr. Taha owns Mac's Warehouse located at 1809 Dickinson Avenue. The applicant has met all the requirements including the attached two cost estimates for the intended scope of work. Mr. Taha is re-facing the façade of the warehouse with stucco. He also expects to have some landscaping work done as well. Mr. Taha believes that with this grant, he will continue to help improve the image of Dickinson Avenue and by doing so will also create more retail traffic and new job opportunities. Mr. Taha is eligible for the maximum \$10,000.00 grant. There is a \$2,500.00 direct grant, and the city would match dollar for dollar up to \$7,500.00. The lowest estimate of the improvements was documented at \$17,713.72. The City's match would be the maximum amount of \$7,500.00.

Mr. Taha addressed the Commission that he is making his property successful and safe.

Mr. Mansfield: How many square feet is contained within the façade and how is the roof of the building.

Mr. Taha: The total square footage of the façade is 70,000 square feet. Money has been spent on the roof. I hope to have tenants.

Mr. Lewis: Will the design be continued from the front to the side.

Mr. Jones: Yes, continue with stucco. Continue with other side and finish Skinner Street side.

Mr. Taha: This work has improved the neighborhood. Please notice the improvements done at Sam's Lock and Key and Greenville Glass, since improvements on my building has taken place.

Mr. Jones: Staff recommends approval of a grant to Mr. Mac Taha, d.b.a. Mac's Warehouse in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the exterior improvements to his property located at 1809 Dickinson Avenue.

Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the \$10,000.00 grant submitted by Mr. Mac Taha for Mac's Warehouse located at 1809 Dickinson Avenue. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF 2010 – 2011 ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Mr. Rees: The mission statement of the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan 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.

Mr. Rees: The 2010 – 2011 Work Plan items are as follows:

West Fifth Streetscape Phase II Design will be from Cadillac Street to West 14th Avenue and Tyson Street area.

Adaptive Reuse of Historic Structures could have the potential use of Center City bond funds and tax increment funds for activities including land acquisition, clearance and infrastructure.

Evans Street Gateway Design is from Fifth Street to Tenth Street and is to coincide with the 10th Street Connector project design.

Small Business Plan Competition will use West Greenville and Center City bond funds for capitalization of grant program.

West Fifth Street Gateway Construction Project should begin construction in June 2010.

Comprehensive Wayfinding Project Construction should be finished in October 2010.

Five Points Plaza Construction is slated for construction in November 2010.

West Greenville Commercial Center needs a site properly located, a market assessment, land acquisition and the search for a private sector development partner.

Center City Micro Improvement Projects to be conducted on alleys, parking lots and parking meters.

Residential and Mixed Use Project Development will consider public/private partnerships through Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

West Greenville Business Incubator needs a site location, management and start-up funding.

Civic Art Initiative to incorporate civic art into the public realm. The Commission has contracted with the Pitt County Arts Council to assist with the development of a Public

Art Master Plan and the Arts Council in turn is seeking grant funding from the State Arts Council that will be used to advance the process.

Revitalization Area Marketing Program aims to provide trade shows, and print and electronic media.

Town Common Area Improvement Study is in the master planning phase.

Establishment of a Center City Science Center is requesting assistance with site acquisition.

State Theatre Restoration Project is working on the design, weatherization and stabilization of the theatre.

Promotion of Ecotourism Activities is planning and coordinating with local and regional partners.

The Center City Budget

Acquisition	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 447,222.13
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 447,222.13
Demolition	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 80,150.00
	2010 - 2011 Budget =	\$ 80,150.00
Infrastructure	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 528,306.48
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$1,495,000.00
Development	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 39,000.00
Financing	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 120,000.00
Construction	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 72,433.23
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 296,000.00

The West Greenville Budget

Acquisition	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 0.00
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 0.00
Business	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 0.00
Relocation	2010 - 2011 Budget =	\$ 0.00
Demolition	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 0.00
	2010 - 2011 Budget =	\$ 0.00

Infrastructure	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$1,112,250.95
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$1,207,250.95
Construction	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 0.00
	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 30,000.00
Development	Carryover from 2009 – 2010 =	\$ 156,583.91
Financing	2010 – 2011 Budget =	\$ 156,583.91

Mr. Rees: Staff recommends adoption of the 2010 – 2011 Annual Work Plan and Budget.

Motion was made by Ms. Terri Williams and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to approve the 2010 – 2011 Annual Work Plan and Budget. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT FROM SECRETARY

Financial Report

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

Special Meeting in May

Mr. Rees: The Redevelopment Commission will have a special meeting on Tuesday, May 25, 2010 at noon to discuss bids submitted for the West Fifth Street Gateway work.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Mansfield: Good progress is being made on the restaurant at 804 West Fifth Street.

Mr. Thompson: Sculpture is attractive at Reade and Cotanche Streets.

Ms. Williams: I noticed during our trip to Raleigh, NC that the Business Improvement District along Hillsborough Street had before and after pictures. I think the City of Greenville should have pictures as well.

Commission members decided to have an afternoon planning retreat and free flowing meeting for the July 13, 2010 Redevelopment Commission meeting. This meeting will be held in Room 337 of City Hall from noon until 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield 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