

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

April 7, 2009
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:

Melissa Hill	Don Mills	Terri Williams
Evan Lewis	Dennis Mitchell, Chair	
Chris Mansfield	Robert Thompson, Vice-Chair	

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; David Brown, City Engineer; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary, Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Thom Moton, Assistant City Manager; and Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Max R. Joyner, Jr., City Council Liaison and Kathryn Kennedy, The Daily Reflector

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Ms. Terri Williams and seconded by Mr. Chris Mansfield to add agenda item VI. Letter of Commitment from Embarq. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2009:

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the March 23, 2009 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION BIDDING FOR READE AND COTANCHE STREETScape PROJECT

Mr. Rees introduced Mr. David Brown, City Engineer, as being the person to give an overview on the project. This is the first construction project being signed off on by the Redevelopment Commission.

Mr. Brown: The City has been working on this project for almost two years now. The project involves the Hodges Lot as well as improvements along Reade Circle.

Following discussions with the Community Development Department and the completion of our Master Streetscape Plan identifying potential projects, the segment of Cotanche Street was added to that project. Sidewalk enhancements will be built on both sides of Cotanche Street replacing the sidewalks with more decorative sidewalks. The parking which is angled parking will become parallel parking. Street trees will be added and lighting as well in that area. A similar process of improvements will be located along a segment of Reade Circle as well. In addition to that, we will be making improvements to that intersection. Relocating mast arm poles will occur. In addition various forms of landscaping will take place. A reconfiguration of the Hodges parking lot will be done as well as lighting with this particular project. Intersection improvements will occur at the intersection of Cotanche and Fifth Streets. The City will be receiving bids for this project. These bids will be based upon these specifications associated with this project. Staff will be reviewing these bids once received to make sure that they meet the requirements and make sure they are within budget for the project. Once the process is completed Staff will be coming back before the Redevelopment Commission with a recommendation of award of contract to the lowest responsible bidder. Once the recommendation is made the Redevelopment Commission will then consider that recommendation and vote upon it. If awarded, Staff will prepare the contract documents, get the contract signed and then proceed with the project itself. We anticipate advertising for that project at the end of this month for consideration of award by the Redevelopment Commission in June. Are there any questions?

Mr. Mitchell thanked Mr. Brown for the overview.

LETTER OF COMMITMENT FROM EMBARQ

Mr. Rees: Staff has been working on how to consolidate utilities on the north side of West Fifth Street. Staff has received a preliminary estimate from Embarq in the summer. Embarq's estimate is \$172,750.51. This will go from West 14th Street (Tyson Street area) to Memorial Drive, so several extra blocks will be done for the next segment of streetscape for that area. Embarq has requested a letter accepting responsibility for payment and authorizing Embarq to begin work. Mr. Merrill Flood has drafted a commitment letter to Embarq about the West Fifth Street Gateway Project. It is not a contract, but the letter does give Embarq the go ahead to get into detailed planning with Rivers and Associates. Staff is asking for the Commission to authorize the Embarq letter and present it to Embarq, so Embarq can move forward with planning on their end with the project. Are there any questions?

Mr. Thompson: Does the City have funding left to do this?

Mr. Rees: We do. I believe there is \$1.15 million designated for the West Fifth Street Gateway Project.

Mr. Mansfield: Does this provide an opportunity for Greenville Utilities to bury utilities or realign them at all.

Mr. Rees: That could have been an option but the underground option was over the budget, so consolidation was chosen.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to move forward with the commitment letter. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF SMALL BUSINESS PLAN GRANTS

Mr. Rees: Monetary awards of \$15,000.00 - \$30,000.00 for creating or expanding small business enterprises within Greenville's Redevelopment areas. The Redevelopment Commission may make two awards each in the Center City and West Greenville Redevelopment Areas. A total of six applications were received for the 2008 – 2009 winter grant cycle. Lydia Paving dropped out of the process and did not interview with the Selection Subcommittee (Mr. Don Edwards, Mr. Dennis Mitchell and Ms. Terri Williams). Earlybirds Transportation decided to wait until the next grant round to improve their application. Staff has determined that three remaining grants meet basic funding eligibility criteria.

CyntRich Vending's applicant is Richard Boswell. The application is for the West Greenville Redevelopment area. The \$15,000.00 grant will expand the vending machine business. Plans are to locate on West Fifth Street. The business will be run by the applicant and spouse and may add employees as business expands. Market area includes all of Pitt County; will concentrate in West Greenville.

Dulcinea Wholesale's applicants are Katherine and Ashley Wetherington. The application is for the Center City Revitalization area. Applicants seek \$15,000.00 for startup of wholesale jewelry business. Primary focus is marketing of unique hand-craft jewelry to retailers via catalogs and internet. Market area includes continental United States. Business will initially be operated by applicants and may add employees based on business growth.

Gold Post Restaurant's applicant is Arthur Wallace. The application is for the West Greenville Redevelopment area. Applicant seeks \$15,000.00 for start up of seafood restaurant. Plans are to locate business in a building owned by the applicant on West Fifth Street. Business will be run by applicant and will employ a chef and up to 10 additional employees. Market area includes all of Greenville and Pitt County with a focus on West Greenville and Uptown Commercial District.

Mr. Rees: The Selection Subcommittee recommended funding for CyntRich, Dulcinea Wholesale and the Gold Post Restaurant.

Mr. Mitchell: There were some concerns about the type of businesses applying for this program like would the business bring a lot of employment to the area. If there are more applicants, there will be more selection as to what may be preferred by the

Commission. For the businesses in West Greenville, the Commission needs to keep in mind the types of locations for the businesses when grants are only for \$15,000.00 applicants have to utilize the office space that is already available. The types of businesses that have applied are good enough for the funding as it stands right now.

Ms. Williams: I thought it was much more beneficial by having the subcommittee. Applicants gave explanations as to what they really wanted to do. The applicant being able to sustain the business after the \$15,000.00 grant was important too. When these businesses are successful, they draw other businesses to want to open. I felt like the three that the subcommittee recommended did meet the plan as closely as they could. Dulcinea Wholesale had a great business plan. CyntRich is already a business, so they already have their foot in the door and they know what direction they want to go. I am hoping that CyntRich will eventually be able to hire more employees in the younger age group. For the Gold Post Restaurant, I was excited about that. The applicant, Arthur Wallace, has the experience. Mr. Wallace owns the building for the restaurant. The other thing I looked at is if these applicants had enough of their own funds to what they plan to do.

Mr. Mitchell: The restaurant is great for West Greenville. Dulcinea Wholesale has the jewelry. CyntRich has the vending machines.

Ms. Hill: There was some information missing from the CyntRich application. Has the information been collected?

Mr. Rees: Yes, there is a lease commitment for the location in West Greenville.

Ms. Hill: Has the credit report been obtained?

Mr. Rees: The credit has either been obtained or will be obtained before funding takes place.

Ms. Hill: Please remove any personal information from the application before sending to the Redevelopment Commission. The Commission previously stated that no social security numbers and personal information should be submitted, because of its personal nature.

Mr. Thompson: As a public document, I do not want somebody else's personal information.

Ms. Williams: That information could be blacked out before copying for the Commission.

Mr. Rees: My apologies, we will do that next time.

Mr. Thompson: Is the location of the restaurant consistent with what the Commission

adopted as the plan and the zoning for West Greenville?

Mr. Rees: From 14th to the Tyson area on, the future zoning calls for an office and residential zoning. It is a mixed use type zoning. The area west has already been rezoned to single family. This area has not gone through the rezoning; however, a restaurant would be a permitted use.

Mr. Mitchell: Are there any other questions?

Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Mr. Robert Thompson to approve the Subcommittee's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT FOR C. M. EPPES CIVIC ART CONTRACT

Mr. Rees: I think it is amazing how Brad Spencer works as is shown in the pictures. The bricks are fired in Reidsville, transported to the West Greenville area and assembled by a regular brick mason under the supervision of Brad Spencer. An art concept was approved in November 2008. A contract has been drawn up with Brad Spencer to create and install a gateway arch and wall. The contract is for \$60,000.00 payable in four installments. Staff will approve final shop drawings prior to the completion of art. Upon completion, title to work of art passes to the Redevelopment Commission. Staff recommends that the Commission approve the contract with Brad Spencer DBA Spencer's Studio and Gallery for the completion of the C. M. Eppes Civic Art Project.

Ms. Williams: Brad Spencer is an independent contractor and I do not see anything in here about a bond or workers compensation liability.

Mr. Rees: That did not come up. There is an independent contractor clause on page 9.

Ms. Williams: Does he need those insurances?

Mr. Rees: Bond and insurance did not come up. I will check with the City Attorney. The City Attorney did review the contract.

Mr. Mansfield: I do not see anything in the contract about dimensions.

Mr. Rees: Because of utilities, the exact dimensions were not determined. Brad Spencer will bring those dimensions to the City and the City will make sure that the dimensions are acceptable.

Mr. Mansfield: Dimensions will have a lot to do with material costs.

Mr. Rees: Yes.

Mr. Mansfield: What is the completion date?

Mr. Rees: The City of Greenville has to give Brad Spencer a notice to proceed. Issue of such notice to proceed will then allow a date to be given to have the work on site.

Mr. Rees: I will check with the City Attorney.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to approve the contract with Brad Spencer DBA Spencer's Studio and Gallery. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE MAGNOLIA ARTS CENTER

Mr. Rees: User groups were polled and there is a lot of need and interest for the State Theatre. One of the user groups was the Magnolia Arts Center. The Center does not have a home, and they are a 501c3. The Center has been in place for a number of years and is a viable organization. The Center approached the Mayor and said they would like to have a more active role. The Center was referred back to me and what they are offering in the Memorandum of Understanding allows for joint planning and fundraising activities for the restoration and renovation of the State Theatre. As a 501c3 non-profit organization, the Magnolia Arts Center may access funds not available to the Redevelopment Commission. The Magnolia Arts Center agrees to:

Assist with fundraising and turn over those funds to the Redevelopment Commission;

Assist with public relations activities;

Assist with planning activities related to restoration/renovation;

Provide written annual reporting to the Redevelopment Commission on their activities related to the State Theatre project; and

Manage the State Theatre following the construction phase.

The Redevelopment Commission agrees to:

Make available to the Magnolia Arts Center plans and other information related to restoration/renovation of the State Theatre;

Seek input from Magnolia on key planning, design and fundraising issues;

Keep funds raised by Magnolia in a dedicated budgetary account for the purpose of restoring/renovating the State Theatre;

Negotiate in good faith a management agreement with Magnolia following the construction phase of the project; and

Offer the Magnolia Arts Center the first right to purchase the State Theatre at fair market value.

Mr. Rees: Staff recommends that the Commission approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Magnolia Arts Center.

Mr. Mitchell: I am concerned over the agreeing to offer the Magnolia Arts Center the first right to purchase the State Theatre at fair market value.

Mr. Rees: The City is not committed to sell, but just has to offer to sell to the Center.

Mr. Mitchell: Are there any questions?

Mr. Lewis: What we are talking about is funding that is received from third parties not necessarily the Commission itself. Please make that clear on page 2 under 3 (c) of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. Thompson: I think it covers third parties.

Ms. Williams: Grant money is received and the fundraisers begin and money is collected then the work starts and we decide to sell it we decide do the funds go with the sold property.

Mr. Rees: If they are grant funds, they would have to go back to the grantor. I do not have an answer for you on the private fundraising. I think it would depend on who gave the funds.

Mr. Mansfield: I think it would have to be specified in the "What if."

Mr. Lewis: Is the opportunity to purchase extending beyond the period of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

Mr. Rees: The MOU is for a one year term and can be renewed, so it is during the period that the MOU is enforced. The agreement is gone into with the understanding that the agreement will be re-upped every year. Either party can back out of the MOU with a thirty day notice. Magnolia Arts Center will organize a committee that will report back to the Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Magnolia Arts Center. Motion carried unanimously.

SELECTION OF CONSULTANT FOR FIVE POINTS PLAZA DESIGN

Mr. Rees: In January 2009, Uptown Greenville came before the Commission and presented their findings. The Commission instructed City staff to move forward with the process of finding a consultant. City staff advertised in The Daily Reflector, The Greater Diversity News and Request for Proposals (RFP) were mailed out to Design Firms. In March, proposals were received from a total of seven (7) firms interested in contracting with the Redevelopment Commission for the design of improvements related to the Five Points Plaza project. After reviewing the proposals provided by the respondents, a committee selected four firms that were invited to interview for the project. The subcommittee was made up of Wes Anderson – Public Works Director, David Brown – City Engineer, Merrill Flood – Community Development Director, Carl Rees – Urban Development Planner, and Denise Walsh – Uptown Greenville Executive Director. Four (4) firms participated in interviews held on the afternoons of March 17th and March 19th, 2009. The criteria we used in those interviews to rate the applicant and to rank them is the ability to complete the project such as their workload and staff they dedicated to the project and if they completed other projects in a timely manner and their previous performance on other projects and their ability to facilitate the design process. The qualifications of key personnel were important to know like if they managed other projects previously and the technical approach to the project.

Following those interviews, the four firms were ranked. Let me start with all of the firms. I'll start at the bottom. Reynolds and Jewell Landscape Architects is a firm out of Raleigh, NC and are currently the designers for the Reade and Cotanche Street project. The East Group is a local engineering firm and has done a number of projects for the City and work with Reynolds and Jewell on the Reade and Cotanche Street project. OBS Landscape Architects is a consultant based out of Raleigh and has worked as sub consultants with Rivers and Associates on the West Fifth Street Gateway Project. Land Design, Inc. is based out of Charlotte, NC and is a sub consultant to Concurrent Technologies who is doing the Brownfield work in the West Greenville Development area. Kimley Horne – URG, Inc. of Raleigh, NC completed the streetscape master plan for West Greenville and Center City. The Commission is familiar with Rivers and Associates. Rivers has done numerous projects for the City. Finally, a newcomer for me, Susan Hatchel, Landscape Architect, is out of Raleigh, NC. Susan's firm along with a firm from Durham responded to this RFP. Based on the selection process, staff recommends that a scoping and contract development process begin with the top ranked firm. The top firm is Susan Hatchel Landscape Architecture PLLC from Raleigh, NC. Susan Hatchel has done four projects just like this one. Susan is currently designing one at Duke University, designed one in Lumberton, NC that was not built and designed one in Reidsville, NC that is being built. This is a public market and public space. The subcommittee felt that Susan stood out. We liked her ideas. Should that process fail to yield a contract, a similar process should be started with the second ranked firm. The second firm is Rivers and Associates, Inc. from Greenville, NC. Two firms tied for third: Kimley Horne – URG, Inc. from Raleigh, NC and Land Design, Inc. from Charlotte, NC. The current schedule for this project calls for a contract to be presented for consideration by the Redevelopment Commission at the May 5, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Mitchell: Rivers and Associates is local. I would take that into consideration in the selection process.

Ms. Hill: With the East Group, were they just not interviewed in general?

Mr. Rees: They all turned in written responses and theirs was one of the slimmer packets with not as much detail as the others as to how they would go about completing the project. If the Commission would like to review the information of the firms, I brought that information with me.

Mr. Mansfield: I would be concerned about sending money to Raleigh. Was there a clear choice of Hatchel over Rivers and Associates in terms of the enthusiasm and the creativity?

Mr. Rees: Experience is what set her apart. Susan is doing the project now and has done it before. The Subcommittee felt that she could lead stakeholders and offer staff solutions to issues more quickly and with less trial and error than some of the other firms. What that translates to we believe is lower design fees, less change orders in the design and less time.

Ms. Williams: I do have a tendency if they are qualified to choose Rivers and Associates, since they are local and know Greenville. They know our missions. I am not questioning the knowledge of Susan Hatchel.

Mr. Mansfield: There may be some advantages to someone who does not know Greenville who can show us some new ways of doing things.

Mr. Rees: As far as we can rate any of these firms, their knowledge and experience certainly go into it, but in reality we do not score on where they locate their business.

Ms. Hill: In the future, maybe members of the Redevelopment Commission can be part of the Subcommittee or have some type of influence in picking the firm.

Mr. Rees: That was how we did it for a while and there were some issues that arose, so we have gone to this, but we can certainly go back to something like that if that is the will of the Commission.

Mr. Mitchell: Local contract will probably have local people working on it. The Commission can have an impact on the local economy through hiring Rivers and Associates.

Mr. Lewis: I agree with Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Williams about dealing with someone local, but I want to make it clear why Susan Hatchel was the number one choice.

Mr. Rees: The experience was one and her demeanor and understanding of our project

and her approach to the project. The design consultants she brought in both the architecture firm and engineering firm seemed to have a clearer picture of how we need to proceed with this project.

Mr. Lewis: As I understand it, there is not a finished project.

Mr. Rees: There is no finished project.

Mr. Mansfield: How much are we talking about here?

Mr. Rees: There is no contract, but I would say around \$30,000.00 to \$40,000.00.

Mr. Mansfield: Tell me about other projects Rivers and Associates has done in other towns other than Greenville.

Mr. Rees: I would not be the best person to answer that. In the interview, they talked about the work being done on the West Fifth Street Gateway Project and on the Convention Center.

Mr. Mitchell: What was the point difference in the firms?

Mr. Rees: There was a two point difference.

Mr. Mansfield: Since there was only a two point difference, I think the two firms should come before the Commission at the May meeting to hear their presentations and see what they have in mind.

Mr. Thompson: I think the Commission should go with the firm that can give the best product.

Ms. Hill: I would like for the firm to be local, but the Commission should look at the detailing of the work.

Mr. Thompson: If the firms are equal, I would prefer local, but I am not sure all things are equal here. Just because a firm is local, does not guarantee it is going to get the contracts. I want the best ideas to come before the Commission.

The Commission decided that both firms should make presentation at the May Commission meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to table action until the two firms (Susan Hatchel Landscape Architecture PLLC and Rivers and Associates, Inc.) can come and give a presentation to the Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rees: Is there anything specific that the Commission would like to have presented?

Mr. Mansfield: I would say some images from elsewhere and how they think those design concepts and images might apply here and the principles they would employ in the design process.

Ms. Williams asked that materials submitted by the two firms be submitted to Commission members prior to the May meeting.

REPORT FROM SECRETARY

Expenditure Report

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

2009-2010 Work Plan of the Redevelopment Commission

Mr. Rees: The Commission is approaching a time to develop a new work plan for the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year. Staff and the Commission tries to get that in place by the June meeting, so it will coincide with City Council putting together their budget. Based on our review to date, I do not see a lot of change. Most of the projects are in midstream and based on Staff availability it would be hard to take on new projects. I encourage Commission members over the next month to think about the existing work plan to see if the Commission thinks it is still appropriate. At the May meeting, discussion can take place about any changes or additions Commission members may have. Staff will then draft up the work plan and bring it to the Commission in June for adoption.

Disclosure of Property Ownership by Don Mills

Mr. Rees: Mr. Don Mills has signed a disclosure of not owning any property in the Center City or the West Greenville Redevelopment areas that would conflict with the work of the Redevelopment Commission.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Mills: I am still learning.

Ms. Williams: What was the difference in the scores of the two firms for 5 Points Plaza? I went to the Eppes playground dedication.

Mr. Rees: Two points was the difference.

Mr. Lewis: I am looking forward to working with the Magnolia Arts Council.

Mr. Mansfield: Progress is being made in Greenville as indicated by the Small Business Plan application process.

Mr. Thompson: Since the point spread is so slim, the Commission will have a chance to listen to the firms and make a decision.

Ms. Hill: I think members of the Commission should be a part of the firm selection process and any selection processes in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to adjourn the April 7, 2009 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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