

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

August 4, 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	Robert Thompson, Vice-Chair
Chris Mansfield	Dennis Mitchell, Chair	Terri Williams

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Evan Lewis

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; William Anderson, Chief of Police; Wayne Bowers, City Manager; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; and Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Kandie Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 7, 2009:

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Don Mills to approve the July 7, 2009 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

PRESENTATION ON CENTER CITY SAFETY EFFORTS

Mr. Rees: At the July 7, 2009, the Commission asked that the Police Chief or City Manager give a presentation on what safety efforts were being set forth in the Center City. Police Chief William Anderson will be speaking to the Commission tonight.

Chief Anderson: Tonight is National Night Out Against Crime. After the meeting, please come out to the Town Common to show your support. On June 30, 2009, two citizens were fatally wounded in the Uptown area. The act has divided the community and there is a demand for answers. Greenville Police Downtown Deployment has 20 – 25 officers from Thursday through Saturday. There will be additional officers Sunday through Tuesday. Other agencies: East Carolina University, North Carolina State

Highway Patrol, Alcohol Law Enforcement, Alcohol Beverage Control, Pitt County Sherriff and Greenville Fire/Rescue have offered assistance. There is a contract pending with East Carolina University for additional officers. Cameras, increased lighting, high visibility of law enforcement, meetings with bars/clubs/business owners, uptown lighting committee and a Downtown Traffic Diversion Plan have been put into place and/or occurred. The purpose of the Downtown Traffic Diversion Plan is to redirect the flow of traffic downtown during nightlife activities; remove the threat of weapons in vehicles from the core area; and increase enforcement efforts. Taxi cabs have two pick up points designated.

Ms. Williams: Are the signs in the parking lots there to protect citizens?

Chief Anderson: This crime prevention tool encourages visitors to secure vehicles.

Mr. Mansfield: I appreciate the aggressive action. Is the diversion of traffic working?

Chief Anderson: The diversion of traffic is a short term solution. City Council will be discussing this with some recommendations coming out of that.

Mr. Mills: I appreciate active action. Does the incident relate to gang activity?

Chief Anderson: There is no indication of gang activity in this incident. The peak period for crime in the Center City is at closing time of the bars/clubs.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you for your presentation. Is there anything the Redevelopment Commission can do to assist?

Chief Anderson: The Police Department appreciates the support of the Commission, and the Department will let the Commission know if assistance is needed.

Ms. Hill: The nightlife downtown attracts thieves. How does Greenville rank as far as nightlife crime?

Chief Anderson: The nightlife crime in Greenville is no higher than in any other University town its size. Are there any other questions?

The Commission thanked Chief Anderson for his presentation.

DISCUSSION ON TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) POLICY

Mr. Rees: The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Policy is under review by senior staff and city attorney. The TIF is a development tool designed to help finance certain eligible improvements to property in designated redevelopment areas (TIF districts) by utilizing the new or incremental, tax revenues generated by the project after completion. TIF was adopted by North Carolina's general assembly in 2004 under the name "Project

Development Financing.” Local governments typically use TIF to stimulate economic development in blighted, depressed, or underdeveloped areas by financing public improvements such as road infrastructure, parking, and recreational amenities. TIF applies to Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Area. The approval process complies with the North Carolina General Statutes. Proposed TIF projects are required to comply with the Redevelopment Plan, Horizons Comprehensive Plan and Streetscape Master Plan. The TIF establishes high priority for affordable housing projects; mixed use projects; historic-adaptive renovation projects; projects that provide high wage jobs; commercial projects; and green – environmentally friendly projects. The TIF establishes low priority for student oriented housing; projects that fail to add to tax base; projects that are inconsistent with the Redevelopment Plan, Comprehensive Plan. The TIF establishes review procedures with a ninety day review and recommendation to City Council.

Mr. Mansfield: Is there a return on investment?

Mr. Bowers: The TIF will bring the district up. Tax values would increase in area around it. The interest rate on the TIF district would be higher than a normal financing. The TIF revenues could be used to retire debt.

Mr. Rees: The TIF policy should be brought to the Commission for final review at the September meeting. Please call me with any additional comments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF KANDIE SMITH

Mr. Mitchell recognized Kandie Smith in the audience. Ms. Smith is running for the City Council seat in District 1.

UPDATE ON WAYFINDING PROJECT

Mr. Rees: Wayfinding prototype signs are in place. The working project budget for these signs is approximately \$450,000.00 - \$500,000.00 from Center City bond funds and approximately \$217,000.00 - \$240,000.00 from the Capital Improvements program (CIP) funds for a total design budget of \$700,000.00. The next steps are to continue field review of the prototypes; continue refining programming and message schedule with consultant; prepare bid package for primary gateway and Convention Center District gateways; and prepare overall project bid package. Staff’s recommendation to the Commission is to authorize the Redevelopment Commission Secretary to contract for the installation of three gateway signs.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Chris Mansfield to approve the Redevelopment Commission Secretary to contract for the installation of three gateway signs. Motion carried unanimously.

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.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Mills: Chief Anderson gave a good presentation.

Ms. Williams thanked Chief Anderson for coming to the meeting.

Mr. Mitchell thanked Chief Anderson for attending. Bars should be responsible for patrons.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Rees: The purpose of the closed session is to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes, said law rendering the information as privileged or confidential being the Open Meetings Law; and

to establish or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease for purpose of redevelopment.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to go into closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to adjourn the August 4, 2009 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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