

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

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

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Don Mills	Dennis Mitchell, Chair
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STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Harry V. Hamilton, Jr., Chief Planner; and Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathryn Kennedy, The Daily Reflector

DELETION TO THE AGENDA:

Staff asked that XII. Closed Session be deleted from the agenda. Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the deletion to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2009:

Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the June 2, 2009 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO DOWNTOWN PARKING REGULATIONS

Mr. Rees: In order to have development in the downtown area, there will need to be amendments to the parking regulations. Chief Planner, Harry Hamilton, will explain to the Commission the amendment to the downtown parking regulations.

Mr. Hamilton: There is very limited parking in the downtown area. The new student housing complex off of Pitt and First Street is providing on site leased parking adjacent to their property. Multi-family parking requirement (CD district – current standards) are as follows:

Standard multi-family – ½ space per bedroom

Dormitory (LUI special use) – ½ space per bedroom

Parking must be located on-site or within 800 feet of units (owned or long term recorded leased).

Public parking lots and on-street parking do not qualify as minimum parking.

Mr. Hamilton: Proposed changes for Section 9-4-86:

- (5) Minimum parking requirement: ½ space per bedroom – no change
- (6) Parking location requirements: Each required parking space shall be located (i) on the lot containing the associated residential use, or (ii) within a remote parking facility located within eight hundred (800) feet of the use it is intended to serve, or (iii) within a remote parking facility located in a Downtown Commercial (CD) district. Except as otherwise provided, such remote parking facility shall be in accordance with the applicable provisions of Article O, Parking - deletes the 800 foot spacing requirement; and
- (7) All off-street parking areas designed for three (3) or more spaces shall be in accordance with Article O – no change.

Mr. Hamilton: Proposed changes for Section 9-4-153:

- (f) Parking location requirements: Each required parking space shall be located (i) on the lot containing the associated residential use, or (ii) within a remote parking facility located within eight hundred (800) feet of the use it is intended to serve, or (iii) within a remote parking facility located in a Downtown Commercial (CD) district. Except as otherwise provided, such remote parking facility shall be in accordance with the

applicable provisions of Article O, Parking - deletes the 800 foot spacing requirement.

Mr. Hamilton: Proposed changes for Section 9-4-250:

- (d) Remote parking facilities shall conform to the following standards:
 - (1) Except as further provided, no portion of the remote parking facility shall be located more than four hundred (400) feet from the associated principal use site. Dormitory development in the CD district and multi-family development in the CD district shall be exempt from the maximum dwelling to parking separation requirement specified herein, provided the minimum required remote parking facility is located in the CD district.

Mr. Hamilton: There will be a larger CD area in the future. Staff would recommend to delete the 800 feet separation requirement for parking in CD for multi-family and to allow parking for multi-family in CD to be provided at any location within the CD district. This will still provide parking within a reasonable area and it would not limit it to some arbitrary space requirement. We would prefer to include any area within CD as opposed to 1,000 feet or 1,500 square feet as sure as we do that they would be trying to locate parking would be just beyond that boundary. The 800 foot rule would still be in the code, so they will be able to take advantage of that for areas outside of the CD district, but any area within CD if they use that to satisfy the requirement no spacing standard. In order to accomplish this, the Commission could make a motion to initiate the amendment to the parking regulations to exempt residential development in the CD district from the dwelling unit to parking lot spacing standard, provided the minimum required remote parking facility is located in the CD district. If the Commission agrees to initiate this recommendation tonight, the Planning and Zoning Commission would review in July and the City Council would review in August.

Mr. Thompson: They still have to maintain the same number of spaces it just changes the number of spaces.

Mr. Hamilton: It allows a wider variety of location of spaces.

Mr. Lewis: Is the 800 feet really arbitrary?

Mr. Hamilton: Other uses and other zones where there are nonconforming situations can have parking within 400 feet and so it is twice that, so I do not know where 800 came from, but since it is twice than 400 that is a reasonable distance.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to initiate the amendment to the parking regulations to exempt residential development in the Commercial District (CD) from the dwelling unit to the parking lot spacing standards

provided the minimum required remote parking facility is also located in the CD district. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING FOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. Rees: Staff is requesting that funds be moved around under the Commission's purview. The Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program has been around since 1999 and was established to preserve and enhance the unique historic character and architectural quality of Greenville's central business district. The grants encourage substantial, historically appropriate exterior building renovations with \$5,000.00 per façade, a matching grant where an applicant can be reimbursed for up to half of the total eligible project costs per façade (not to exceed \$5,000.00). There are two grant cycles per year. Some examples of these types of projects are the Jefferson Blount Harvey Building and Cox Floral Service. The average has been about twelve grants per year. The area of eligibility for the FIG program is First Street, the Town Common, with Evans Street as the spine with Pitt Street, Reade Street and Reade Circle out Dickinson on out Evans Street and to the Tenth Street area. This entire area falls within the Center City and West Greenville revitalization areas. With budgets being tight and the fact that the intent of this program in providing dollars to businesses for improvements falls within what the Redevelopment Commission's mission is in terms of providing business assistance and also what the 2004 general obligation bond issue was approved by the voters. Staff wants to move some funds around and for this fiscal year (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010) fund the Façade Improvement Grant program through the 2004 general obligation bonds as opposed to using the City's general fund. This would be a one year only request. These funds are available in the Commission's Development Financing account for the Center City West Greenville revitalization area.

Mr. Mansfield: Is this in the mission of the bond program?

Mr. Rees: Yes. This program is no different than the Building Blocks Grant program. This would not replace that program in any way. This would be maintaining an existing program for one year.

Staff recommends that the Commission approve funding in the amount of \$25,000.00 from the Development Finance account to support the Façade Improvement Grant program for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve staff's recommendation that the Commission approve funding in the amount of \$25,000.00 from the Development Finance account to support the Façade Improvement Grant program for the July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010 fiscal year. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT FOR REPAIRS TO STATE THEATRE

Mr. Rees: The western wall of the theatre next to the new restaurant has an existing brick wall not appropriate for the weather elements. The way a brick mason would describe this type of brick is that it is an orange brick that is soft. The wall needs to be made solid for the future. The deli will be opening in August or September, so the work needs to be done prior to the opening. Staff has consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office to look at conservation techniques for this wall. The bricks need to be replaced with proper bricks and mortar and a sealant needs to be used on this side. Then the brick will be painted to match the front. A Raleigh Company, Protech, has given a quote of \$17,400.00. Staff recommends that the Redevelopment Commission authorize the Secretary to contract for repairs to the western wall of the state theatre in an amount not to exceed \$17,400.00. Staff will try to get a lower quote for the work. However, this is a reasonable quote.

Mr. Mansfield: What portion of the wall would be soft orange brick?

Mr. Rees: The area of treatment is about 600 square feet. The entire façade will be painted.

Mr. Mansfield: Would any of the brick be above the painted line?

Mr. Rees: Our understanding is that a few bricks will be replaced, but the rest should be okay.

Ms. Williams: This figure includes the cost of painting.

Mr. Rees: It does.

Ms. Williams: Is the work being guaranteed?

Mr. Rees: I can check on that.

Mr. Mansfield: The critical thing is to get it sealed. Can Protech get the work done in August?

Mr. Rees: Protech said the work could be done by mid to late August.

Ms. Hill: How long has the wall been exposed?

Mr. Rees: I'd say about a year.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to approve the contract for repairs to the western wall of the theatre not to exceed \$17,400.00. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF DRAFT TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) POLICY

Mr. Rees: Mr. Kye Logan, an Intern, assisted me with the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) policy. We were also able to rely on some information provided by the Institute of Government. 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 the North Carolina's General Assembly in 2004 under the name "Project Development Financing." Local governments usually use TIF to stimulate economic development in blighted, depressed or underdeveloped areas by financing public improvements such as road infrastructure, parking, and recreational amenities. Examples would be:

A private developer wants to build a hotel within a redevelopment area. The developer tells local officials that he can afford to build his project if the city is willing to improve the streetscape and provide parking. The developer proposes a TIF;

The city determines how much property tax revenue the project area generates – a number based on the assessed value of the existing properties. That amount of tax revenue is frozen – it is all of the revenue the city will collect from the property for up to 30 years; and

The developer builds the hotel. Visitors check in, shop and dine in the area and the value of the land increases. Because the land is now worth more money, the assessed value increases, which means its owner must pay higher property taxes.

Mr. Rees: No action is required on the TIF policy at tonight's meeting. Commission members are being asked to read over the TIF policy before the August meeting when there will be further discussion.

Mr. Thompson: The purpose of this is for the City to have policies in place should someone come and ask the Commission.

Mr. Rees: The Redevelopment Commission would have a policy in place for TIF projects in the Center City and the West Greenville revitalization areas.

DISCUSSION OF TOWN COMMON MASTER PLAN SELECTION PROCESS

Mr. Rees: How would the Commission like to proceed in selecting a design firm for the Town Common? There have been two ways that the process has been handled. At one point, we had a joint team made up of two or three Redevelopment Commission members and two or three City staff members who would select a design consultant. At another point, Staff did the interviews, made recommendations to the Redevelopment

Commission, and the Commission made the selection. Staff wanted to run these by the Commission to select one of the ways to go or to come up with whatever may work as members would like. Request for Proposal (RFP) will be sent out soon, so the process needs to be outlined to those receiving the RFP.

Mr. Thompson: When will the RFPs be sent out?

Mr. Rees: I would say within the next week and receiving them back in the next month or so.

Mr. Mansfield: What Staff would be involved?

Mr. Rees: Staff would include the Recreation and Parks Department and the Community Development Department.

The Commission agreed that members of the Commission should be a part of the selection process.

Mr. Chris Mansfield and Ms. Terri Williams volunteered to serve in the selection process.

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.

Business Plan Competition

Mr. Rees: The Business Plan Competition closed on July 1, 2009. There were 26 referrals to Business Plan Providers. A total of 8 business plans were received with four for the Center City area and four for the West Greenville area. The subcommittee will meet, review and interview applicants. At the September Redevelopment Commission meeting, recipients will be selected.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Ms. Williams: I am concerned about the violence in the Center City. I would like for the Police Chief or City Manager to come before the Commission to discuss this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Evan Lewis and seconded by Mr. Chris Mansfield to adjourn the July 7, 2009 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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