

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

April 1, 2008
Greenville, NC

The Greenville Redevelopment Commission held a meeting on the above date 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
Dennis Mitchell, Chair

Robert Thompson, Vice- Chair
Terri Williams

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Don Edwards
Britt Laughinghouse
Evan Lewis

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Merrill Flood, Director of Community Development; Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner; and Tom Wisemiller, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Sara Bacon; Casey Craig; Nancy Colville; Nancy Connor; Holly Garriott, Emerge Gallery; Greg Graham; Brenda Highsmith; Roger Kammerer; Charles Pace; Franceine Rees, Historic Preservation Commission member; Frederic Salle; Teresa Salle; Mae Stancill; and Jack Taft

RIVERS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.: Marvin E. Garner, Jr., AICP, Associate Project Manager and Myriah Shewchuck, ASLA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 4, 2008: APPROVED

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to approve the March 4, 2008 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF WEST FIFTH STREET GATEWAY DESIGNS

Mr. Rees: Marvin Garner and Myriah Shewchuck of Rivers and Associates and Holly Garriott of Emerge Gallery are in attendance at tonight's meeting to offer information about the West Fifth Street Gateway Design. Myriah Shewchuck will give a presentation on the West Fifth Street Gateway Designs.

Ms. Shewchuck: On January 15, 2008, January 17, 2008 and March 25, 2008, public input on the project was received. Public input included:

wider sidewalks;

a safe well lit area;
pedestrian friendly area;
slow traffic on Fifth Street;
new bus shelters;
benches with backs;
a new gateway at Memorial Drive;
memory markers; and
decorative neighborhood markers and crosswalk paving.

Ms. Shewchuck: The citizen's vision is to see the West Fifth Street Gateway as being alive, safe, beautiful, well lit and walkable. The citizen's priorities are to have utility improvements, lighting, site furniture and pedestrian safety. Professor C. M. Eppes was a teacher, a leader, and an advocate. Mr. Eppes was a cornerstone of the community who had great concern for children. His moral values were respected throughout the community member. I would like to ask Holly Garriott of Emerge Gallery to comment on the civic art component.

Ms. Holly Garriott: The C. M. Eppes memory marker will be created for the man and for what the man stood for in the community and the City. The space will be used for bringing the old and young together, storytelling, interacting with art, connecting to history, relating the values of Professor Eppes, and holding reunions and community events.

Ms. Shewchuck: Between now and the May 6, 2008 meeting, concepts will be refined and the refined concepts will be presented at that meeting.

REVIEW OF WAYFINDING DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Mr. Rees: The Commission engaged RMJM Hillier Architecture of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to design a system of wayfinding signage. The comprehensive system is designed to direct vehicles and pedestrians to and from key destinations throughout the City of Greenville. The Schematic Design should be a design of direction. Use Greenville colors with a traditional orientation. There should be multi-sided kiosk signs. The City Gateway signs should incorporate message: "Home of East Carolina University." As a result of comments from City Council members at the January 7, 2008 City Council meeting, as well as on comments from Redevelopment Commission members, City staff instructed staff from wayfinding system consultant Hillier Architecture to prepare design alternatives that include reference to Greenville's past as a center of tobacco related commerce. Based on those instructions, the consultants prepared a design alternative that may be used in and around the National Register

Tobacco Warehouse and Dickinson Avenue Historic Districts where much of Greenville's tobacco related commerce was conducted.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Mitchell: Each member of the public has three minutes to talk, and we are going to try to adhere to that.

Ms. Nancy Colville: The tobacco leaf is on the City seal. Tobacco should be used on the icon. Tobacco has been used for medicinal purposes, and it is not going away. The history of Greenville needs to be represented on the sign along with the University.

Mr. Roger Kammerer: I am a local artist and historian. Caps on the columns are needed. Make sure the materials you are paying for will last. Choose the things that you are proud of and choose the things that will last. History, business and the university all want a part in saying what to have and it is a hard judgment to make. The tobacco leaf should be used in some sort of design.

Frederick Salle: Tobacco is on the seal of this City. The desire to have an icon is obvious.

Brenda Highsmith: Pirates are a symbol of East Carolina University, but in history, pirates do not necessarily have a real good reputation. Tobacco is a part of our history.

CONSIDERATION OF WAYFINDING DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Mr. Rees: City Council sent this item back to the Commission to reach a resolution to the issue of using the tobacco leaf as the icon. Members of the public had expressed concerns over the tobacco leaf being used as an icon.

Mr. Thompson: City Council wants the Commission to send them a recommendation.

Mr. Mitchell: I understand both points of view on tobacco. The Commission needs to make a decision as to what that general icon should be. I like the G.

Ms. Hill: The G could be used as the cap.

Ms. Williams: When the two symbols that are present now with the G, both of those have a resemblance of a leaf in them. Were those two ever considered?

Mr. Rees: At the time, that was the compromised position to have that leaf. Those in support of the tobacco leaf could think of the leaf as a tobacco leaf and those against the tobacco leaf could think of the leaf as green.

Ms. Hill: Would the group in favor of tobacco be fine with the leaf in the G?

Ms. Colville: That would be a compromise.

Mr. Mitchell: Does City Council know that there were public meetings held to gather information for the Wayfinding System Design Alternatives?

Ms. Colville: Excuse me there were no meetings for the public. I have asked for a list of who the stakeholders were and have yet to receive the list. There was no meeting where people like us came. Government entities were the ones who did not want the tobacco leaf. Please think about that.

The Redevelopment Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the original wayfinding design scheme approved by the Redevelopment Commission (“Exhibit A”) and that the Council consider the tobacco district option as illustrated in (“Exhibit B”). This would be using the letter G with a leaf being illustrated in the actual G.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to approve the modification for the wayfinding system. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY

Mr. Rees: The Commission approved negotiations to obtain the Carolina Music Building at 1407 West Fifth Street prior to tonight’s meeting. The Internal Revenue Service has a lien on the property, but the City will still be able to purchase the property. The Commission agreed that an offer of \$60,000.00 for the property could be offered.

CONSIDERATION OF INCUBATOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Wisemiller: The Greenville Small Business Incubator Steering Committee’s member confirmation list is as follows:

- Minnie Anderson, active citizen, community leader
- Marvin Arrington, entrepreneur
- Michael Best, entrepreneur
- Tony Cannon, Greenville Utilities
- DeDe Carney, realtor
- Joseph Dawson, Pitt County Development Commission
- Joyce Jones, business service provider (Strive)
- Adelcio Lugo, banker/investment specialist (Self Help)
- Van Madray, Pitt Community College
- Don Mills, executive with NACCO
- Ernest Silver, banker with BB&T

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the abovementioned list as members of the Greenville Small Business Incubator Steering Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF 2008 – 2009 ANNUAL PROGRAM OF WORK

Mr. Rees shared the draft 2008-2009 Annual Work Plan items with the Commission.

Proposed:

1. Business Retention Program (carryover)
2. Center City Design Standards (carryover)
3. Adaptive Re-use Projects for Historic Structures (carryover)
4. West Greenville Building Block Grants (carryover)
5. West Greenville Business Plan Competition (carryover)
6. Streetscape Pilot Projects (carryover)
7. Comprehensive Wayfinding Project (carryover)
8. Revitalization Areas TIF District (carryover)
9. Restaurant Start-up Initiative (carryover)
10. Residential and Mixed Use Project Development (carryover)
11. West Greenville Small Business Incubator (carryover)
12. Open Air Market Initiative (carryover)
13. Civic Art Initiative (carryover)
14. Revitalization Area Marketing Program (carryover)
15. Town Common Area Improvements Study (new)
16. Assisted Living Center (new)

Items from 07-08 Work Plan not recommended for carryover:

1. Sadie Saulter School Revitalization (no progress)
2. West Greenville Small Business Loan Pool (not feasible)
3. West Greenville Big House Project (completed)

REPORT FROM SECRETARY

Expenditure Report

Mr. Flood distributed the Expenditure Reports for West Greenville and the Center City for review by the Commission.

Meeting Request from City Council

Mr. Flood: City Council has requested that the Redevelopment Commission hold their meetings in the City Council Chambers, so that the meetings may be televised.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to change the meeting location to the City Council Chambers on the third floor of City Hall. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Ms. Williams: I happened to see Mr. Rees on G-TV talking about the business plan, and he did a really good job helping me understand the information better.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to adjourn the April 1, 2008 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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