

## **GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**

October 7, 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:**

Don Edwards                      Dennis Mitchell, Chair  
Evan Lewis                        Robert Thompson, Vice-Chair

### **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Melissa Hill                      Britt Laughinghouse                      Terri Williams

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Steve Hawley, Audio; Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner; and Tom Wisemiller, Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jeremy Jordan, Historic Preservation Commission Member; Joseph Morici, Concurrent Technologies Corporation; Candace Pearce, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission; N. Yaprak Savut, Historic Preservation Commission Member; and David Sykes, Concurrent Technologies Corporation

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2008: APPROVED**

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Don Edwards to approve the September 2, 2008 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Presentation by the Greenville Historic Preservation Commission Chair on the Establishment of the Downtown Historic Overlay District**

Mr. Rees: Ms. Candace Pearce, Chairperson of the Greenville Historic Preservation Commission, will talk to the Redevelopment Commission about the establishment of the Downtown Historic Overlay District.

Ms. Pearce: At the August meeting, the HPC requested that the Chair begin a dialogue with the Redevelopment Commission concerning establishing a zoning overlay of the Greenville Commercial Historic District. I am here today to begin this dialogue. This is not a presentation or a formal request. It is just an overview. The HPC is requesting nothing more than feedback from the Redevelopment Commission (RDC). The HPC was established in December 1988 by the City of Greenville. Its responsibility is to protect the architectural integrity of the historic districts and landmarks. The HPC has

the power to recommend to the City Council the designation of any buildings, structures, site or object as an historic property or an area as an historic district. The concerns of the HPC as a body, as volunteers and in response to phone calls, e-mails and concerns as expressed by the public is now with the Greenville Commercial Historic District. The need for Design Guidelines in that district is not new. In 2006, the Uptown Design Review Advisory Committee was working with the Planning Department on Design Guidelines for the area that includes the Greenville Commercial Historic District and the Dickinson Avenue Historic District. When I call them a Historic District, they are National Register Historic Districts. This effort has more or less evaporated. For this reason, the HPC would like to work towards establishing a zoning overlay for the Greenville Commercial Historic District which would require contributing properties in this district to conform to the Historic District and Local Landmark Design Guidelines as adopted by the HPC and the City Council. While property in the Commercial District is sometimes privately owned the taxpayers have invested millions of dollars in the heart of Greenville since Greenville's inception. People have some misunderstandings regarding the function of the HPC. The Design Guidelines are based on the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitating and Illustrating Guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings. HPC does not make subjective decisions. We enforce a set of Design Guidelines through an orderly process with public input. Demolition of property is possible under the guidelines through this process. The Design Guidelines may be altered through a process that includes public input. There is a thirty minute public comment period during each meeting. As well as public comment and testimony during each request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), the HPC does not act alone. The Design Review Committee is available to help applicants before, during, and after their projects have gone before the Commission. We request professional opinion from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for any issue that is not covered by the guidelines or is a gray area. Many projects may be good projects but are missing the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The guidelines specifically discourage the creation of historic looking projects. It recognizes the importance of each period of architecture, so that a town may show its growth through the built environment. It covers infill projects. The most important single thing the Zoning Overlay does for a Historic District is to provide assistance at no cost to property owners and to provide a forum for the public to voice its opinions about the historically significant character of the district. By the time an area has been selected as a National Register Historic District, it has been deemed significant to the character of that area. The National Register District in this Greenville Commercial District was created to provide qualification for State and Federal tax credits as an incentive to historically accurate projects. If a building is historically accurate, it does not mean it is old. It can be historic to a particular period. The Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program which is funded by the City of Greenville and has been heavily funded by Uptown Greenville has created millions of dollars of character defining projects in this area. These are tax dollars and volunteer dollars. The character of the commercial district is important to the citizens of Greenville. On February 10, 1994, an ordinance establishing a historic district overlay was adopted by City Council for the College View Historic District. During the City Council meeting, the public had input. East Carolina University

requested that their property be excluded from the zoning. Citizens spoke for and against the Zoning Ordinance. One of the most important comments in the minutes of that meeting was made by Don Edwards. He said, "They are not talking about the government. They are talking about revitalization. This overlay zone will make the residents keep their property properly maintained. The concept is in line with downtown revitalization. Greenville needs a great part of the City." It is true then and it is true now. Does anyone have any questions?

Mr. Thompson: What is the definition of an overlay zone?

Ms. Pearce: When the City Council puts a zoning overlay district on a National Register Historic District, it provides guidelines. For instance, you cannot put vinyl siding on a building that was originally wood sided unless you leave it there. If something is to be repaired or replaced, the guidelines say that original materials should be used. The zoning overlay makes it zoning code instead of a suggestion.

Mr. Edwards: Any renovation would have to be approved by the Commission.

Ms. Pearce: Any external renovation would have to be approved by the Commission.

Mr. Edwards: Would new construction have to come before the Commission?

Ms. Pearce: Yes, new construction has to come before the Commission. New construction just has to be a good representative of what it is.

**Presentation on the West Greenville Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownsfield Grant by Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC)**

Mr. Rees: The City applied for the \$200,000.00 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment grant in December 2006. The City was awarded the grant in October 2007. The project period is October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2010. The City selected Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC) to assist with grant management. Joseph Morici and David Sykes from CTC are present tonight. CTC partnered with Duncklee and Dunham (D&D) and Land Design. Mr. Sykes will be speaking to the Commission tonight.

Mr. Sykes: Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects the environment. The EPA Brownfields Program was established to provide funding to local governments for the inventory, characterization, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment planning of brownfields. The program operates on an annual grant cycle and offers assessment, cleanup, revolving loan fund, and job training grants.

Grant funds will be used to support the following activities in the West Greenville Redevelopment Area:

- Community Outreach and Education
- Site Inventory and Selection
- Environmental Assessments
- Visioning
- Cleanup and Redevelopment Planning

The Community Outreach Activities encourage community participation and awareness; keep the public informed of project progress; and include activities such as public and neighborhood meetings and workshops as well as educational information like a brochure/a fact sheet/a website.

Site inventory and selection for past activities with initial inventory efforts identified 10 sites and developing a preliminary prioritization model. With future activities, expand inventory efforts, contact property owners, determine site eligibility, and select sites for environmental assessment and redevelopment planning activities.

Environmental Assessments include:

- Complete Phase I Environmental Assessments: Site visit, historical and regulatory review, and interviews;

- Complete Phase II Environmental Assessments: Sample soil and groundwater;

- Complete Lead and Asbestos Surveys;

- Complete Threatened and Endangered Species; and

- Complete Threatened and Endangered Species and Cultural and Historical Resource Surveys.

The focus area will be the Imperial Tobacco site and immediate surrounding area. Build upon the West Greenville Revitalization Plan. The review of existing data, a 2 day charrette and the development of plan and design will be the visioning activities.

Grant funds cannot be used for actual cleanup or redevelopment. Determining the extent and cost of cleanup will be dependent upon the proposed redevelopment. Assistance will be provided to prospective purchasers with liability protection.

### **Public Comment Period**

There was no public comment.

**Consideration of Change Order to West Fifth Street Gateway Project Design Contract**

Mr. Rees: The Commission is being asked to consider a change order to the West Fifth Street Gateway Project Design Contract. The amount of the change order from Rivers and Associates is for an additional \$1,560.00 for the management of the civic art installation on the site.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Don Edwards to approve the change order amount of \$1,560.00. Motion carried unanimously.

**Consideration of Amendments to Business Plan Competition**

Mr. Rees: December 1, 2008 is the due date for Business Plan Competition submissions. Staff has engaged with our business counseling partners to establish procedures that we believe will lead to a more competitive round of submissions.

The consideration of amendments to the Business Plan Competition will consist of:

Grant awards of \$15,000.00 or 10% of total investment with \$30,000 cap whichever higher;

Eligibility expanded to include Center City Revitalization Area;

Two awards per cycle; two cycles per year for Center City and West Greenville areas; and

Award format remains zero interest loan forgivable at 1/3 of total grant per year that the business enterprise operates primarily within the bounds of the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Area.

Staff recommends:

Amend grant awards to \$15,000.00 or 10% of total investment with \$30,000 cap whichever higher;

Expand eligibility to include Center City Revitalization Area; and

Amend program guidelines to allow two awards per cycle; two cycles per year for Center City and West Greenville areas.

Mr. Thompson: These are good recommendations.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to approve staff's recommendations for the amendments to the Business Plan Competition. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Report from Secretary**

#### **Expenditure Report**

Mr. Rees distributed the expenditure reports for West Greenville and the Center City for review by the Commission.

#### **November Meeting Date**

Mr. Rees: Since the November meeting is scheduled for Election Day, Commission members may want to change the meeting date.

The Commission members asked that members be polled as to when they would like to meet in November so a decision can be made that way for the November meeting date.

### **COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

There were no comments.

### **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 Mr. Evan Lewis to go into closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

### **110 WEST FIFTH STREET**

Mr. Rees: Upon approval from the Commission, Staff will offer the theatre owners \$281,000.00 plus \$1,200.00 per month for three months for the theatre at 110 West Fifth Street. The City can agree to a 15 foot subdivision at the rear of the property.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to contract and purchase the theatre for \$281,000.00 plus \$1,200.00 per month for three months. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Evan Lewis to adjourn the October 7, 2008 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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