

## **GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**

March 6, 2007  
Greenville, NC

The Greenville Redevelopment Commission held a meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the second floor Board Room of the Bank of America Building located at 201 West First Street.

### **COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Minnie Anderson, Chair	Max Joyner, Jr.
Don Edwards, Vice-Chair	Dennis Mitchell
Melissa Hill	Robert Thompson

### **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Britt Laughinghouse

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Steven Kirkman

### **APPROVAL OF MARCH 6, 2007 AGENDA: APPROVED**

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Max Joyner, Jr. to approve the amended March 6, 2007 agenda to add Closed Session to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2007: APPROVED**

Motion was made by Mr. Britt Laughinghouse and seconded by Mr. Dennis Mitchell to approve the February 6, 2007 minutes with the amended changes made by Ms. Melissa Hill. Motion carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

There were no public comments.

### **CONSIDERATION OF OFFERS TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY**

Mr. Rees: There are no offers to purchase real property to bring before the Commission.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE 2007 – 2008 WORK PLAN**

Mr. Rees: The Work Plan Updates have been given on a quarterly basis and once presented and absent any changes, the Work Plan Updates are forwarded to City Council.

Mr. Rees went over the 2007 Work Plan Updates with the Commission. The Commission agreed upon the project updates for the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan.

### **Project Updates – March 2007**

#### **Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan**

##### **1. Center City Hotel & Alumni Center**

As outlined in the Revitalization Plan, this mixed-use, public/private venture will bring additional business to existing retail establishments in the Center City commercial district. It will be a signature project heralding the rebirth of Greenville's Center City. The Redevelopment Commission and its staff will provide technical and financial assistance as appropriate to facilitate the inception of the project.

**UPDATE:** At the present time, this project is under review by leaders at East Carolina University. Some discussions have taken place as to parking needs for the project, most likely including a municipally financed parking deck. There appears to be very little interest in this project at this time, both on the part of East Carolina University as well as private developers.

##### **2. Center City Design Standards**

As specified in the Revitalization Plan, City staff will lead a group of design professionals and other interested citizens in a process to develop and recommend a set of guidelines to address the design quality of public and private development projects within a defined, but as of yet undetermined, section of the center city. The new design standards will compliment existing architectural styles, while serving to address the form, scale and visual character of preservation, renovation and new construction projects. Ultimately, it is hoped that such design standards will help to make the center city area a safe, accessible and inviting place to live, work and recreate.

**UPDATE:** City staff has been continuing to work with a group of volunteer design professionals and business leaders to develop a conceptual framework for urban design guidelines in Uptown Greenville. In October, the working group completed a draft version of Design Guidelines and then hosted a well attended workshop at which members of the public offered many constructive criticisms and suggestions pertaining to the guidelines. In January, the group reconvened to work on Phase-II of the drafting

process. The group organized a Focus Group meeting with Uptown business and property owners in order to get feedback and buy -in from key stakeholders and recently conducted a walking field study of urban design conditions in Uptown Greenville. The group expects to complete the next draft of the Design Guidelines by summer 2007 at which point it will hold additional public meetings.

### 3. Sadie Saulter School Expansion and Renovation

This project will support new residential development expected to take place in the neighborhoods surrounding the school. As envisioned in the Revitalization Plan, the project includes the acquisition of several blocks of blighted housing in the Fourteenth Avenue – Tyson Street area. It is expected that City staff will provide technical expertise and that Pitt County will provide funding for the acquisition activities. It is expected that expansion of the school will serve to promote other uses such as after-school and community meeting facilities.

**UPDATE:** City staff is preparing to re-approach Pitt County Schools with the intention of reenergizing the planning process for expansion and renovation of Sadie Saulter. Recent news articles indicate that the Pitt County School Board is pursuing a “magnate school” approach for the school. City staff will contact school officials in order to learn how the City’s revitalization efforts in West Greenville might be paired with the School Board’s plans.

### 4. Adaptive Re-use Studies of Historic Warehouses

The Redevelopment Commission will solicit input and receive inquiries from interested parties including architectural and development firms intent on finding new uses for unoccupied and underutilized historic warehouses within the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Project area. The Redevelopment Commission will review any proposals, and where appropriate, may take action to partner with an interested developer and/or facilitate the redevelopment of these structures.

**UPDATE:** There continues to be interest from the private sector in redeveloping various sites associated with Greenville’s historic tobacco industry into new uses. Current discussions include the possibility of renovating the Albemarle Warehouse property which is currently owned by the City. Such a development could provide housing for a variety of income levels as well as commercial space.

It is also important to note that a recent study commissioned by the Greenville Historic Preservation Commission has indicated that it may be appropriate to create a new national Register Historic District along Dickenson Avenue. The New Dickinson Avenue Historic District was recently adopted by both the Historic Preservation Commission and the Greenville City Council. As a result of this designation, property owners within the district are eligible to receive significant tax credits from the State and Federal governments for improvements to their properties.

## 5. West Greenville Façade Grants

In an effort to facilitate the expansion of small business in appropriate locations within the West Greenville Redevelopment Project area, the Redevelopment Commission will develop a façade grant program. The program will be based on an existing program currently serving much of the Uptown commercial area, with modifications as necessary to serve the West Greenville market. This program will be paired with other business and employment-creation programs in order to maximize the potential for expansion or creation of business ventures.

**UPDATE:** After developing a set of guidelines for the West Greenville Building Blocks Program last year, City staff coordinated the first ever Building Blocks grant application cycle in Fall-Winter 2006-07. Upon review of their applications by the Redevelopment Commission and City staff, two grant applicants were approved to receive grant awards. The awards will be disbursed to the applicants upon completion of the projects. The next application round is slated to begin in April 2007.

## 6. West Greenville Business Plan Competition

In an effort to facilitate the expansion of small business in appropriate locations within the West Greenville Redevelopment Project area, the Redevelopment Commission will develop a business plan competition program. The program will be developed in conjunction with the local office of the North Carolina Small Business Technology Development Center and will utilize existing SBTDC training and assistance programs to help participants develop their plans. This program will be paired with other business and employment-creation programs in order to maximize the potential for expansion or creation of business ventures.

**UPDATE:** City staff has worked with the local office of the North Carolina Small Business and Technology Development Center to develop program guidelines for the Business Plan competition. The guidelines, review and application procedures will be finalized during the spring, and it is expected that the program will be advertised and that the competition will begin in the late spring of early summer.

## 7. West Greenville Small Business Loans

In an effort to facilitate the expansion of small business in appropriate locations within the West Greenville Redevelopment Project area, the Redevelopment Commission will develop a low interest loan pool. The program will be designed to assist existing businesses and start-ups that have limited access to financing through conventional means. It is expected that the Redevelopment Commission will partner with at least one lender to guarantee conventional loans that will provide working capital and/or operating funds to qualifying business ventures. This program will be paired with other business

and employment creation programs in order to maximize the potential for expansion or creation of business ventures.

**UPDATE:** City staff is coordinating with the Community Investment Corporation of North Carolina, (CICNC), to design a small business loan pool to serve the Center City - West Greenville Revitalization area. City staff along with CICNC staff hosted a meeting in the first week of March to discuss the establishment of a loan pool that was attended by representatives of eight financial institutions. The response from the bankers in attendance was largely positive, and it is expected that the group will reconvene in early April to review loan guidelines and agreements for the establishment of a loan pool.

#### 8. West Greenville Assisted Living Center

In conjunction with a goal established by the Greenville City Council, the Redevelopment Commission will assess the feasibility of establishing an assisted living center within the bounds of the West Greenville redevelopment project area. Assisted living facilities are typically designed for residents who need assistance with many of their daily routines but still wish to live as independently as possible. Assisted living centers bridge the gap between independent living and nursing homes and can serve as an intermediate level of long-term care appropriate for many seniors.

Assisted living centers also represent enticing investment opportunities for developers of low-income projects who rely on tax credits to make a project feasible. State Financing Agencies tend to look favorably on assisted living centers, giving them higher “scores” in the competition among developers to land available low-income tax credits.

**UPDATE:** City staff has received interest from three different development entities, including the Greenville Housing Authority. Discussion with each of these developers, along with any additional interested firms will continue. Ultimately, the Redevelopment Commission will likely need to go through a developer selection process if a developer expects any sort of public support or contribution to the project. As the Redevelopment Commission has recently signed off on a separate partnership for a multifamily housing tax credit project in the 2006 round, it is most likely that such a project will need to be planned for the 2007 round of tax credits. City staff is in the process of conducting research on Assisted Living Centers in North Carolina and in other states in an effort to gather and analyze data for purposes of feasibility analysis.

#### 9. West Greenville Scattered Site Multifamily “Big House” Project

The Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan identifies the provision of diverse forms of affordable housing as a high priority for the West Greenville Redevelopment project area. While a number of homeownership initiatives are underway through ongoing CDBG programs, the development of high quality yet affordable multifamily rental housing units will provide good options for those West Greenville residents who do not have the desire or capacity to reside in ownership housing.

The Redevelopment Commission will work to secure a partnership with a private developer to construct between four and six scattered site multifamily structures using the “big house” concept. This concept provides for three to four separate dwelling units within one large structure that resembles a single-family house and is architecturally compatible with the surrounding structures.

**UPDATE:** The Redevelopment Commission along with private development partner Landmark Development has submitted a tax credit application to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) for the construction of 48 residential rental units. If funded by NCHFA, the affordable rental development will be constructed along Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in close proximity to the City’s Central Business District. It is expected that notifications of preliminary project approval will be issued by NCHFA in May, with final approvals and funding in August.

#### 10. Streetscape Pilot Projects

As part of its 2005 – 2006 Annual Work Plan, the Redevelopment Commission selected a consultant to develop a set of design guidelines for future streetscape improvement projects undertaken within the Revitalization Project area. The goal of the design process was to create a unique and distinctive vision for public spaces within the project area. Key factors considered in the process included, vehicular/pedestrian/bicycle access, public utility location and improvements, street and gateway character, and way finding.

Based on cost estimates and prioritization developed as part of the master planning process, the Redevelopment Commission through City of Greenville staff will select a firm to prepare construction quality documents for initial pilot projects in the Uptown and West Greenville areas, and will ultimately select a contractor to construct those projects.

**UPDATE:** Through a nearly nine month process that included substantial public participation, the Streetscape Master Plan has been completed and presented to the Redevelopment Commission and City Council with both bodies giving the Plan their stamp of approval. Next steps include final design, preparation of construction documents and bidding for three pilot projects. These include a Center City Comprehensive Wayfinding System, Cotanche and Reade Streetscape Project and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Gateway Project. It is expected that the wayfinding project will be completed by the end of 2007, and that the two streetscape projects will be completed by the end of 2008.

#### 11. Uptown Community Theatre

The Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan cites a latent demand for additional entertainment and cultural activities within the Center City area. One strategy to provide additional entertainment and cultural outlets within the Center City is to develop a community theatre in the Uptown commercial district. The Redevelopment

Commission will examine the feasibility of developing such a theatre, and will seek out locations, funding, and development partners interested in pursuing such a project.

**UPDATE:** Progress on this project has been temporarily halted when the Uptown property that was most suitable for theatre development was purchased by a private party. City staff will continue to work with not-for-profit theatre groups to develop a long range plan to bring a community theatre facility to the Center City area. At this time however, there appears to be little momentum for this project.

## 12. Center City – West Greenville TIF District

In the fall of 2004, voters in North Carolina passed Amendment 1 authorizing the use of *project development financing*. Now available for the first time in North Carolina, this tool is already authorized in 48 other states, where it is known as tax increment financing. Tax increment financing (TIF) allows cities to establish special districts and to leverage public improvements within those districts that are expected to generate private-sector investment. During the development period, the tax base is frozen at the predevelopment level. Property taxes continue to be paid, but revenue derived from increases in assessed values (the tax increment) either go into a special fund created to retire bonds, or to leverage additional growth in the district. Each of the taxing jurisdictions (municipality, county, school district, and special taxing jurisdiction) continues to receive its share of the taxes collected on the assessed valuation that represents the original assessed value, just as though the district had never been created and there had been no change in the assessed valuation of the area.

The TIF District must meet North Carolina's unique laws and standards for project development financing. It is important to note that N.C. law requires collaboration with county government, the N.C. Local Government Commission, and equity investors; therefore planning is vital to establishing an effective TIF District. The location and size, and quality of development within the district can determine whether the project will be successful. By performing fiscal due diligence and market analysis on all proposals and alternatives, the Redevelopment Commission will ensure that any new TIF District is viable.

**UPDATE:** City staff has dedicated considerable time and effort to investigating the suitability of TIF district to assist with the financing of public projects. As TIF financing remains new to the State of North Carolina, implementation of a district will depend on the strength of the private development projects that are proposed for the district. It appears at this time that several private sector development projects may be reaching a stage in their planning process that make the creation of a TIF district feasible. Beginning early in 2007, the Redevelopment Commission and City staff in consultation with the Greenville City Council will begin a process that could potentially lead to the creation of a TIF district. It is important to note however that a recent legal challenge to North Carolina's laws allowing TIF financing may cause delays in Greenville's ability to institute a district.

### 13. West Greenville Re-zonings

The Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan calls for a substantial number of zoning reclassifications, particularly in the West Greenville portion of the project area. Such changes will require study by city of Greenville staff, followed by review and public comment during hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

In most areas of West Greenville, rezoning actions are on hold pending the City's acquisition of specific properties for redevelopment projects. In the shorter term, a move to rezone portions of West Greenville that have traditionally maintained a single-family characteristic to a single family zoning classification could have a strong impact on neighborhood preservation.

**UPDATE:** At the present time, it would not be appropriate to consider rezoning of much of the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization area due to potential impact on ongoing real property acquisitions related to various projects. One notable exception however is the core of the West Greenville neighborhood, presently zoned R-6. Initial studies conducted by City staff indicate that it would be appropriate to rezone this area to R-6-S in accordance with the Revitalization Plan, in order to preserve and stabilize the levels of home-ownership. As such, the Redevelopment Commission initiated such a rezoning process at their September meeting. Since that time, the Greenville Planning and Zoning Commission has acted to recommend the zoning changes, and the City Council approved the rezoning in November of 2006.

### 14. First Street Redevelopment

The Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan calls for mixed use development inclusive of office, residential and retail in proximity to the First Street – Pitt County Courthouse area. Toward this end, the Redevelopment Commission will explore concepts associated with redeveloping the First Street corridor. Redevelopment of this important but underutilized corridor has the potential to jumpstart downtown office, residential, and retail sectors while creating a vital node for cultural activity. By introducing mixed-use office/residential development centered around the Town Common and the underutilized corner of First & Evans streets, redevelopment of First Street would reestablish the Town Common as an important public space; it would “pull” commercial activity down the length of Evans Street all the way to the Common, instead of it being limited primarily to Evans Street between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> streets; and it would establish a stronger residential and office foothold downtown.

**UPDATE:** In 2006, City staff entertained significant interest in this project from two separate developers. To determine the viability of such a project, the Redevelopment Commission authorized staff to commission a market study examining the likely market for a mixed use project along south First Street. Vogt, Williams and Bowen, a real estate



research firm out of Columbus, Ohio was hired to conduct the market study. VWB completed the study in December. Both VWB and City staff have since printed higher quality versions of the report's Executive Summary, which are available to interested parties by request. City staff has also created a new webpage highlighting key findings and recommendations from the study, with links to a condensed, reader-friendly 2-page Executive Summary, which focuses on the investment positives in Uptown. City staff continues in discussions with two private developers who have expressed an interest in undertaking such a development project.

#### 15. West Greenville Business Incubator

Development of a business incubator in West Greenville could support the creation and development of small, creative businesses in diverse industries by providing office space/amenities and technical assistance to fledgling companies and entrepreneurs. Amenities might include furnished office space; conference and training rooms; computer lab with high-speed Internet connection or wireless technology; office equipment; and reception services. Technical Assistance allows entrepreneurs to consult with business experts; collaborate with other tenants on problem solving, lead generation, and new ideas; and to get referrals on training programs, workshops, and financing. Incubator participants also reach new clients through onsite networking resources. As other North Carolina cities such as Raleigh have experience with the establishment of business incubators, it would be prudent for the Redevelopment Commission to study such models in an effort to determine if the incubator model is appropriate for Greenville.

**UPDATE:** In March, a three member study group of the Redevelopment Commission along with City staff initiated site visits of small business incubators in North Carolina that could serve as models for a prospective incubator in West Greenville. The group has visited, or is expected to visit, business incubators in Durham, Siler City, Raleigh, and Chapel Hill. As staff proceeds with efforts to conduct a preliminary feasibility study for the project, they will continue to consult with specialists in the field. At the completion of that study, the Redevelopment Commission and the City will report to City Council and make appropriate recommendations concerning the cost effectiveness of pursuing a West Greenville Business Incubator. It is expected that such a feasibility study will be available by early summer.

#### 16. Intergenerational Community Service Center

During the public participation and comment process included in the development of the Center City – West Greenville Revitalization Plan, many West Greenville citizens expressed that they would like to have a community center in their community. While no specific community center format was identified, a variety of general needs were identified including quality child day-care, parenting classes, adult education and job skill classes, programming for seniors as well as a variety of arts and cultural programming.

The development of such a “one-stop” center presents a variety of challenges yet remains an intriguing concept. As such, the Redevelopment Commission will study potential locations for such a center, and will solicit and receive inquiries from service providers interested in partnering on such a project.

**UPDATE:** Following the purchase by the Greenville City Council of the former St. Gabriel’s church and school site on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, City staff has worked diligently to negotiate agreements with East Carolina University, Pitt Community College and other potential service providers on management and program provision within the center. To date, programs associated with the ECU School of Human Ecology, Pitt Community College and the Little Willie Center have all agreed to locate programs in the center. City staff continues to recruit and negotiate with other not for profit agencies to bring their services to the center.

### 17. Intermodal Transportation Center

In March of 2006, the Greenville City Council received a presentation from Martin Alexiou Bryson (MAB), a transportation consultant firm hired to explore the feasibility of building an Intermodal Transportation Center in Greenville. An intermodal transportation center places multiple transportation modes under one roof. Typically, it serves as an enclosed hub for local, regional, and express bus routes, as well as cabs and other forms of public transportation. It also provides space for lockers, bike racks, bathroom facilities, rest areas, and other amenities that support and encourage commuters to walk, ride bikes, and utilize public transportation. An intermodal center allows travelers to conveniently combine two or more modes of transit in the same trip.

In their Final Report of the feasibility study, MAB concluded that development of an Intermodal Transportation Center in Greenville is feasible and would be a reasonable use of public funds. The report also suggested that, if an intermodal center were located downtown, in West Greenville, or in the Tobacco District, it would support ongoing revitalization initiatives, especially projects that aim to bring additional dining, arts, and entertainment options to the center city.

**UPDATE:** City of Greenville Public Works staff has developed an RFP for the facility/building program that will be used in a site selection process and will soon be interviewing and selecting a consultant. The consultant will be charged with conducting environmental and site analysis, as well as initial project design. It is expected that this phase of the project will be complete by the end of 2007.

### 18. Eastern North Carolina Regional Science Center

The Eastern North Carolina Science Center is proposed as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, which will enhance the level of science and math literacy for the people of Greenville and eastern North Carolina. Envisioned as a teaching, learning and research center, the

science center will offer programs from kindergarten through twelfth grade as well as undergraduate and graduate-level programs for the independent adult learner. Proposed components include planetarium, exhibit space capable of hosting a wide range of life and physical science displays, a Challenger Space Shuttle learning center, as well as a gift shop and café. The center would be open to the general public as a regional resource.

**UPDATE:** Dr. John Meredith, who serves as Chair of the Science Center Committee, has indicated that substantial progress has been made during the past year including acquisition of a Challenger Learning Center simulator in September of 2005, completion of a Concept Refinement Study by Lord Cultural Resources in December of 2005 and an agreement on formal affiliation established with East Carolina University in January 2006. The steering committee continues to work to locate a site that can house the facility.

Mr. Rees: If there are no questions, I am finished with the updates.

### **DISCUSSION OF THE 2007 – 2008 WORK PLAN**

Mr. Rees reviewed the 2007 – 2008 Work Plan items with the Commission. This is the visioning part to decide what some of the key items need to be worked on for the next fiscal year from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

The Redevelopment Commission agreed upon the following 2007 – 2008 Annual Work Plan items.

#### 2007 – 2008 ANNUAL WORK PLAN ITEMS

#### REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF GREENVILLE

##### Carryover items:

1. Center City Design Standards
2. Adaptive Re-use Projects for Historic Resources
3. West Greenville Building Block Grants
4. West Greenville Business Plan Competition
5. West Greenville Small Business Loan Pool
6. West Greenville Assisted Living Center
7. Streetscape Pilot Projects

8. First Street Redevelopment
9. West Greenville Business Incubator
10. Center City TIF District
11. Sadie Saulter School

Discontinued/Completed Items:

1. Center City Hotel & Alumni Center

Mr. Rees: Staff is recommending that this item be discontinued; however, if there is a development opportunity for the Center City Hotel and Alumni Center, Staff would be supportive.

2. West Greenville Multifamily (Big House Project)

Mr. Rees: Staff feels that this is a completed item, and all has been done that can be done on the Tax Credit Project. We hope we are funded.

Mr. Thompson: If the tax credit is received, when is the Commission's part done?

Mr. Rees: City Council and the Commission have agreed to provide a loan as well as leasing the property. The loan will actually come from City Council, and this Commission will actually execute the lease agreement and they will build it to specifications.

Mr. Thompson: Will that all occur before the end of this Fiscal Year?

Mr. Rees: Signing the lease agreement won't happen until just before they are ready to break ground, because they are not going to want to make lease payments on the property. It could be after the first of the year before they begin work. If the Commission feels that this item needs to be placed under the carryover items, we can place the item there.

The Commission agreed to leave the West Greenville Multifamily (Big House Project) under the carryover item section.

3. Uptown Community Theatre

The property has been purchased by a private citizen, plus there is not a structure in place at this point to make a Community Theatre work.

4. West Greenville Re-zonings

Mr. Rees: West Greenville Re-zonings are done at this point. At some point, there will be a need for more re-zonings but not in the near future.

Mr. Edwards: A while back there was some controversy about the rezoning from commercial to office/residential on Martin Luther King. Where does that stand?

Mr. Flood: That is a rezoning that we would bring to the Commission or City Council as more property is acquired.

Mr. Rees: That was one of the key components that we spent a great deal of time with citizens and new business owners from the West Greenville community and in the end, the negotiated position or settlement was that some point in the future that essentially from 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Albemarle along Martin Luther King would be rezoned to Office Residential which would allow some light commercial uses but would not allow some of the heavier commercial uses that were seen as negative influences.

5. West Greenville Intergenerational Community Center

Mr. Rees: The property has been purchased and tenants have been found. There still may be a few more, but it is not something that Staff will be working on.

6. Intermodal Transportation Center

Mr. Rees: On the Intermodal Transportation Center, it is a project that we support, but City Council is working on it. This project is not something that we are actually working with.

7. Eastern NC Regional Science Center

Mr. Rees: The Eastern NC Regional Science Center is a good idea and I have been to a couple of meetings, but they are sporadic.

2007 – 2008 City Council Goals:

1. Create more downtown residential housing with historic architecture for all incomes.
2. Increase adaptive reuse of historic properties in redevelopment areas.
3. Support and advocate investment for a vibrant Center City.

4. Retain businesses in redevelopment areas.
5. Encourage small business development.

Staff Initiated Items:

1. Center City Wayfinding Project

Mr. Rees: The Center City Wayfinding Project is certainly an offshoot of the Streetscaping process, but it is slightly different.

2. Center City Farmer's Market

Mr. Rees: The West Greenville area has informed the City of the lack of food stores in that area. If there was a Farmer's Market that was opened once or twice a week, it would be a good thing.

Mr. Thompson: Will the City's Farmer's Market be in competition with the County's Farmer's Market?

Mr. Rees: Some questions to consider are if there is a pool of farmers out there or produce growers who would be willing to come to another market? There are more and more Individual produce vendors setting up at a variety of areas around Greenville. Is the County's Farmer's Market meeting everyone's needs?

3. Civic Art Initiative

Mr. Rees: This again was part of the Streetscape Master Plan. We think that if there is enough to it that is different than standard streetscape work that it needs to stand on its own. The Director of the Greenville Museum of Art is putting together an information packet to bring to the Commission and eventually to City Council about the different ways to set up the Civic Art Programs.

4. Center City Marketing

Mr. Rees: Uptown Greenville has hired their first Executive Director who will help with Center City Marketing. The Executive Director with the Pitt County Development Commission has been working with us on some joint marketing and also with Debbie Vargas with the Convention and Visitors Bureau. In terms of marketing, they are the most active of anybody. Staff will be working on that with your approval.

5. Business Retention Program

Mr. Rees: Staff has indicated to City Council that with the type of Work Plan that

Staff has, we are maxed out on what can be done as a Staff. If we start adding things like Business Retention Programs that are intensive, there is a lot of personal contact there that is required of businesses that would probably need additional staff. Staff will use interns to get started with the beginning phases.

6. Restaurant Start-Up Initiative

Mr. Rees: I have heard that there needs to be more restaurants in the West Greenville area. I am starting to hear it more and more from the rest of the Center City as well. Winston-Salem, North Carolina has a Restaurant Row Initiative program, so Staff will look into the success of that program.

Consolidated Work Item List:

1. Center City Design Standards
2. Adaptive Re-use Projects for Historic Resources
3. West Greenville Building Block Grants
4. West Greenville Business Plan Competition
5. West Greenville Small Business Loan Pool
6. West Greenville Assisted Living Center
7. Streetscape Pilot Projects
8. Residential & Mixed Use Project Development

Mr. Thompson: Is that a combination of some things?

Mr. Rees: It is. With Residential and Mixed Use Project Development, First Street Development is specifically on the Work Plan from last year and that is not going away. There are a couple of projects on Reade Circle. It made sense to combine that into one large work item.

9. West Greenville Business Incubator
10. Center City TIF District
11. Center City Wayfinding Project
12. Center City Farmer' Market

13. Civic Art Initiative
14. Center City Marketing

Ms. Anderson: What about Center City Marketing?

Mr. Edwards: Uptown Greenville has been an all volunteer organization for all of these years. Uptown Greenville has hired a Director. Her name is Denise Walsh.

Ms. Anderson: Parking is a problem especially for handicapped people.

Mr. Rees: With the wayfinding system in place, we hope to do a better job with directing people to parking and handicapped parking.

Ms. Anderson: Could there be a bus that takes people to the Center City for shopping? There should be some discussion for some other form of transportation.

Mr. Rees: Nancy Harrington, who works with buses and parking for the City of Greenville, could come in and give an informational presentation. There are a couple of parking lots that will be getting makeovers that could help some. Whenever the point comes that there is a development project for which there will be Municipal covered parking at the parking deck at that point I think the Center City parking will change. People will have to become protective of their parking.

15. Business Retention Program
16. Restaurant Start-Up Initiative
17. Sadie Saulter School
18. West Greenville Multifamily (Big House) Project

Ms. Anderson: Are there anymore questions?

Mr. Rees: What Staff will do is take these items and put them into a form that the Commission had last year with Work Program steps under each one with general timeframes and bring it back before the Commission at the April meeting for adoption. A budget will be formed around this Work Program. Would the Commission like to have a presentation on bus service and parking?

The Commission agreed.



## **REPORT FROM SECRETARY**

### **Expenditure Reports**

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

### **West Greenville Intergenerational Center Event**

Mr. Flood: On Saturday, March 24, 2007, the City of Greenville will begin the Spring Cleanup. The School of Human Ecology has also decided to adopt the West Greenville area as an area that they will focus the activities of their alumni students and friends, and they will meet at the West Greenville Intergenerational Center to get started with the Spring Cleanup.

### **Subcommittee Meetings Reminder**

Mr. Rees: The Wayfinding proposals are due from the consultants on March 16, 2007. According to the schedule, interviews with the firms should occur during the week of April 16 – 20, 2007. The subcommittee of Melissa Hill, Max Joyner, Jr. and Britt Laughinghouse should meet on March 26 or 27, 2007 to narrow down the responses that are received for interviews.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Rees: The purpose of the Closed Session is to establish or 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, lease.

### **Approval of Closed Session Minutes for February 6, 2007**

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Dennis Mitchell to approve the February 6, 2007 Closed Session Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Max Joyner, Jr. to move into closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Thompson and seconded by Mr. Max Joyner, Jr. to move into open session. Motion carried unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Mr. Don Edwards and seconded by Ms. Melissa Hill to adjourn the March 6, 2007 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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