

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OF GREENSBORO
SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Redevelopment Commission of Greensboro was held on Wednesday September 11, 2013 in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, commencing at 5:00 p.m. The following members were present: Chair Dawn Chaney, Charles McQueary, Robert Enochs, and Clinton Gravely. Staff present included Dyan Arkin, Chancer McLaughlin, Hanna Cockburn, and Cyndi Blue. Also present was Jim Blackwood, Attorney for the Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

(a) July 10, 2013 Regular Meeting

Mr. Gravely moved approval of the July 10, 2013 regular meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. McQueary. The Commission voted 3-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Chaney, Gravely, McQueary. Nays: None.)

(b) August 22, 2013 Special Meeting

Mr. McQueary moved approval of the August 22, 2013 special meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Gravely. The Commission voted 3-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Chaney, Gravely, McQueary. Nays: None.)

Chair Chaney introduced Suzanne Stafford, United States host for the country of Moldova. Ms. Stafford introduced the delegation from Moldova who was present to observe the Commission and learn how information is processed and decisions are made. The group's focus is on urban revitalization.

SOUTH ELM STREET REDEVELOPMENT AREA:

(a) South Elm Development Group Update

Bob Isner, 447 Arlington Street, was present to update the Commission on progress being made at the South Elm site. The South Elm Development Group (SEDG) is in the final stage of negotiating the land swap with the Gray family. The development group has also presented engineering budgets so that site work and street improvements can begin. Mr. Isner indicated that SEDG is coordinating closely with the Greenway Committee on the Bragg Street portion of the Greenway relative to streetscape improvements. In addition, the South Elm Street site is still in contention for the Downtown University Center.

(b) Site Events and Installations

Ms. Arkin reported that fencing is being installed on the west side of the site for a 700 square foot dog park. A substantial amount of money has been raised for the dog park through sponsorships and donations. The grand opening is planned for September 28, 2013. Food trucks will be present and there will be a mobile dog wash.

A wildflower garden, sponsored by Burt's Bees, will be located on the Lee Street side of the dog park. There are also plans for a movie night in the future. Members suggested having food trucks available at the site on movie night.

Mike Akins asked staff to review details of the dog park. Mr. Akins lives in the Arlington Park neighborhood and is on the Board of the Ole Asheboro Neighborhood Association.

Ms. Arkin reviewed the preliminary budget for site events and installations, as distributed to members.

Mr. Enoch arrived at 5:22 p.m. for the remainder of the meeting.

(c) Exchange of Property

Ms. Arkin stated that the paperwork for the land exchange is complete. She described remaining steps necessary to finalize the exchange of property with the Gray family.

WILLOW OAKS REDEVELOPMENT AREA:

(a) Request for Public Hearing for Plan Amendment

Ms. Arkin explained staff's request for a Public Hearing at the next meeting for a plan amendment to the Morningside Lincoln Grove Redevelopment Plan that governs the Willow Oaks community and the surrounding area. She described multifamily housing units in the area that have reached the end of their useful life. The plan amendment would add four buildings to the acquisition list of the Morningside Lincoln Grove Redevelopment Plan.

Cyndi Blue, Planning and Community Development, stated that the units are at the end of their life span and she described the reuse plan to demolish, rehabilitate, or rebuild some of the units if necessary. A detailed presentation will be given at the Public Hearing.

Celestine Simmons, 612 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, expressed concern about properties she owned at 1026 and 1028 Pearson Street.

Mr. McQueary moved to set a Public Hearing for the next Redevelopment Commission meeting, seconded by Mr. Gravely. The Commission voted unanimously 4-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Chaney, Gravely, McQueary, Enochs. Nays: None.)

(b) Cottage Grove Initiative Update:

Skip Crowe, 4520 Vickery Chapel Road, is the Executive Director of the Cottage Grove Initiative. He updated members on activities and priorities of the Cottage Grove Initiative. They are working closely with the City, non-profit organizations, and financial institutions on a large property known as Avalon Trace. The property has outlived its useful life and the floor plan is obsolete. They are looking at ways to make a better use of the property. Community Foundation is interested in participating in the project and the owner is very anxious to sell. They would like to use a mix of market rate and subsidized housing. In addition, Mr. Crowe gave an overview of the educational component of the project. They are partnering closely with Guilford County Schools on Hampton Elementary which is located close by. They are working with Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) on adult education and retraining programs in addition to local non-profit organizations such as Step-Up Ministries.

Mr. Crowe invited Commissioners to attend a public meeting at Hampton School on September 21, 2013 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 pm.

(c) Staff Update on Strategy for Completion of Redevelopment Activities

Ms. Arkin described strategies to complete redevelopment activities in Willow Oaks. Staff plans to send out a Request for Proposals or a Request for Qualifications by the end of the year to create builder interest in Willow Oaks. In addition, a Request for Proposals will be sent out for the commercial section of the Village Center. Staff will continue to update the Commission each month on activities and strategies.

PHILLIPS LOMBARDY REDEVELOPMENT AREA:

(a) Request for Easement for Dollar General Construction

Mr. McLaughlin distributed the site plan for the Dollar General development and a map illustrating its relationship to adjacent properties.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that when the current development was approved for permitting, it included a required storm water system to allow for surface runoff from the proposed driveway entrance off of Phillips Avenue onto the adjacent creek along the eastern property line. While awaiting the final inspection for the Certificate of Occupancy, stormwater management concluded that an additional stormwater system needed to be installed that would extend the initially proposed device to the top of the bank of the existing creek along the eastern property line. Referring to the map, he pointed out that the proposed easement is to the north of the proposed fence line for the EDGE development and it does not create any conflicts with the two developments.

The easement site is owned by the Commission. Glandon Forrest LLC, the builder, is requesting the approval of a 1,339 square foot easement to allow them to construct the required device to comply with stormwater management. Staff is recommending approval of the easement request with the following conditions: (1) that the maintenance of the easement area is considered a responsibility of Glandon Forrest LLC, and (2) that the Redevelopment Commission is exempt from any liability associated with the use of the easement.

Counsel Blackwood reviewed highlights of the easement document.

Mr. Gravely moved to grant an easement to Glandon Forrest LLC, seconded by Mr. McQueary. The Commission voted 4-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Chaney, Gravely, McQueary, Enochs. Nays: None.)

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:

(a) 601/605 Martin Luther King, Jr. Street

Celestine Simmons, 612 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, stated that on June 26, 2013, staff submitted a proposal to sell 601 and 605 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive to the Durbin Group. The sale was approved by City Council at a later meeting. Ms. Simmons lives directly across the street from these properties and was unaware of the sale prior to the City Council meeting. She referred to a 1997 redevelopment plan for the neighborhood where 12 or 14 houses in Ole Asheboro owned by the Redevelopment Commission were to be preserved and the streetscape improved. Ms. Simmons later purchased one of these homes and spent a large amount of money on the property. She discussed TN (Traditional Neighborhood) zoning and indicated that there are plans to put two large buildings and three small houses across the street from her residence. She stated her disappointment that the streetscape has not been improved, the proposed townhomes were not built next to her property, and nothing has been done to build up the distressed neighborhood as promised. She has made unsuccessful attempts to sell her property in the past. She felt that no one would be likely to purchase her property if it was across the street from a Family Dollar store or a Rite-Aid drugstore. She asked the Commission to rescind the contract or purchase her property to make the area a commercial hub.

Mr. McLaughlin described the process that staff has gone through working with the neighborhood since March, 2013. Staff received support and direct feedback from the community and several conditions were added to the approval including the prohibition of on-site consumption of alcohol and non-vinyl building materials. He addressed the matter of notification and stated that staff goes to the established neighborhood association and redevelopment areas to make sure that information is conveyed to the community.

He clarified that the original plan called for mixed-use and not specifically townhome development. The Southside development is considered a live/work model. As the economy changed, the townhouse market became more difficult to support. A market study done in March, 2013 identified the site as a prime location for retail development. He is currently talking with the Durbin Group to create a pedestrian oriented layout to

preserve the development of the remaining piece of land so it is cohesive. Prior to the next phase of special use, a public meeting will be held to allow the developer to come in and speak directly with the community. He stated that staff is significantly engaging with the community and they are working with the neighborhood association to try to increase the amount of people attending meetings to insure that everyone can be involved.

Chair Chaney clarified that this is not a zoning change and either retail or commercial will likely be placed on the site. Responding to a question from Ms. Simmons, Chair Chaney described different types of zoning located in traditional neighborhoods.

Mr. McLaughlin commented that TN (Traditional Neighborhood) zoning is a mixed-use development. The intent is for smaller scale commercial development mixed with residential which is why it is important to put language together to require a developer to go through a special use permit application if they wanted to construct a larger building. The special use permit application would require going to the community and to the Planning Board.

Mike Akins, Old Asheboro Neighborhood Association Board member, commented that Mr. McLaughlin has participated in meetings on a regular basis for some time. He initially brought limited information about interest in the property; however, he was unable to share details at the time. The neighborhood association was concerned about the type of entity that would be placed on the site. They learned that the entity would be a small-box retail establishment and there was opposition to having a Family Dollar at the site. The association was hopeful that the new entity would provide jobs for the neighborhood and would be compatible with the community.

Chair Chaney asked if the matter to rescind the proposal was in the hands of the City. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the window of time to rescind the decision has passed and the decision of City Council to approve the sale is final.

Mr. McLaughlin will keep the Commission updated with staff's efforts to increase participation in neighborhood meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Group, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Schwartz
Planning and Community Development, Director

SS:sm/jd