



CITY OF BEAUFORT
1911 Boundary Street
Council Chambers
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29902
(843) 525-7070
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA
April 5, 2012

PLANNING CONFERENCE ROOM – 1ST FLOOR
1911 BOUNDARY STREET

5:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

March 1, 2012

III. REPORTS

- A. Finance Committee
- B. Commercial / Economic Development Committee
- C. Residential Committee
- D. Boundary Street Update

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Incentives
- B. Lafayette Street RFP Selection Committee

V. PRESENTATION

- A. Beaufort County Affordable Housing Consortium - Stacey Collins

Proposed Mission Statement

The City of Beaufort Redevelopment Commission has been established to renovate, revitalize, and regenerate distressed areas of Beaufort.

BRC's mission is to lead a coordinated strategy of redevelopment and design strengthening the City of Beaufort as:

- The heart of economic development for Northern Beaufort County
- A prosperous place for business and institutions; and
- An attractive urban environment for residents and visitors

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS DUE TO A PHYSICAL CHALLENGE, PLEASE CALL IVETTE BURGESS 525-7070 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF MEDIA NOTIFICATION

"In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting."

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on March 1, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Jon Verity, Commissioners Mike McNally, Martin Goodman, Mike McFee, Keith Waldrop, and Wendy Zara.

Pat Kase and Henrietta Goode were absent.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Verity.

MINUTES

Commissioner Zara made a motion, second by Commissioner Goodman, to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2012 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Finance Committee

Commissioner Zara said **Josh Martin** had sent out an e-mail requesting ideas for incentives, and they had also discussed pre-approved designs. Mr. Martin said there are about 10 pages of ideas at this point, but they are not yet compiled. There was general discussion about an April meeting with all three committees on this.

Residential Committee

Commissioner McNally said that **Libby Anderson** had set up a presentation he'd given to the neighborhood meeting groups. He described what the Redevelopment Commission does and let the neighborhood associations know that the Redevelopment Commission wants to be facilitators in helping them out with residential issues.

There was a concern that Beaufort should be a more beautiful place to live, Commissioner McNally said, and **Paul Michau** has begun a group that is working on painting fire hydrants, cleaning and replacing signs, etc. There was concern expressed about the state of gateway roads into Beaufort, e.g., Highway 21. **Gary Kubic** had at one point gotten clubs involved in planting trees on the Broad River Bridge, for the county. Commissioner McNally said he and others will be joining forces with them to work on these issues.

The Lowcountry Housing Trust and Commissioner McNally have been looking at properties that can perhaps be redeveloped. He showed a graphic presentation of the highest priority properties. Commissioner McNally said Ms. Anderson has helped to identify seven that need to be sold in which the owners want to keep the property and rehab it but don't have the money to do so. This second scenario, Commissioner McNally said, is what Lowcountry Housing Trust could do. All the properties have land near them where a small cottage could be built to help

finance the upgrading of the building that is already there. None of these seven properties are heirs' properties. He went on to point out the properties under consideration.

The RFP due date for Lafayette St. is March 26, Mr. Martin said.

Commercial / Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Goodman said the committee is working on incentives.

Ms. Anderson said construction has begun on Bladen Street, and they are hoping they will be able to complete it in 90 days. Duke Street is out to bid and bids are due March 7. There has been a pre-bid conference attended by about a dozen contractors. They don't yet have an encroachment permit but are hopeful it will happen soon.

Chairman Verity said progress is being made on the bakery that may go in the Von Harten building.

Chairman Verity said he and Mayor Keyserling had met with people interested in the day dock and there are potential sources of outside funding. The Office of Civic Investment is putting together drawings at this time.

Boundary Street Redevelopment District

Mr. Martin said they are awaiting a permit from the DOT. Things are moving along with the TIGER grant. Next week, the surveying and soil testing will begin. The Boundary Street project will be structured so that the federal funds are used exclusively for the Boundary Street corridor. The county /city sales tax find will be used for the retrofit of Beaufort Plaza and two other aspects of the project.

The Office of Civic Investment is also working with the media in regard to public relations, Mr. Martin said. They have gotten questions about who will and won't have access. They have met with the Trask family, who own Beaufort Plaza, about the retrofit of it. The new McDonalds is progressing and is a good model for the coming urban area. Chairman Verity asked which part of the pot would help with the Rail to Trail. Mr. Martin said condemnation and property acquisition has to come from local funds. The Neil Road streetscaping has been put on hold and will probably not be a part of this project; Boundary Street may only go to a certain level in the corridor. The trail along Battery Creek will also need to be separated from auto travel.

Commissioner Goodman asked if Butler Auto dealership would be taken out, and Mr. Martin said yes, as will Kentucky Fried Chicken. Mr. Martin said they have been trying to work on rights-of-way exchanges with the Trasks. Commissioner McNally asked if those businesses were relocating to other sites, and Mr. Martin said he wasn't sure.

PRESENTATION: RAIL TO TRAIL UPDATE

Tony Criscitiello said the county council at their retreat had discussed this, and it's a high priority for the county council. The county expects it will pay dividends in the long run. Mr. Criscitiello said **Rob Merchant** from the Planning Department would be giving ideas about where they are at this point. Mr. Kubic wants them to put together something that will fund a large effort to make the Rail Trail happen. Mr. Criscitiello said there's no time line, but it is a high priority for county council. Chairman Verity asked Mr. Criscitiello what his role is with the county. Mr. Criscitiello said he's the Planning Director.

Dean Moss said they have been focusing intently on the first mile of the trail which would run from Allison Road to Depot. They're creating an intergovernmental agreement between the city, the county, and the Friends of the Spanish Creek Rail Trail. There is a good possibility that a private donor will fund the first mile on an expedited basis, and it could conceivably be built by this summer.

They are working with the Path Foundation in Atlanta, which has built many miles of trail, for technical assistance and guidance. They will work with the county, the Town of Port Royal, and Beaufort on the design. At this time, it's 12' wide with landscaping and lighting in various places. The trestle is a major issue that must be dealt with. Mr. Moss said the design considerations in the first section will form the model for the remainder of the trail and will "hopefully be worked out on somebody else's nickel."

Mr. Moss described the benefit to bike riders of riding in low traffic. He said from the Redevelopment Commission's perspective, the first challenge is the Depot Road area. The depot building has been granted to the city as an easement that will support the Rail Trail. Mr. Moss said he feels optimistic, and once people start to use it, they will build public support, expectations will rise, and more money may appear. The prospective developer for the port property is showing a trail running from Ribaut to the end of the walkway around the marsh.

Mr. Criscitiello said they have a grant which they are "trying to unlock the dollars from." They hope to work the project locally rather than through the SCDOT. Mr. Merchant showed a map of the trail and explained its current implementation status. The county's grant for \$1 million was matched with \$260,000 by the county. They are doing what they must to manage the project locally and expect to have RFPs out by late spring, early summer, but because it's federal money, it's slower going than they would like. The county's project will dovetail with the Boundary Street project, Mr. Merchant said. The trailhead design is occurring now and should sync well together. The county has applied for funding to bringing it up to Laurel Bay Road. Mr. Moss said the trail will go around Clarendon, owing to the legal and political process in regard to the acquisition of the right-of-way.

Mr. Merchant said the funding source for the area from Depot to Parris Island Gateway would apply to another section as well. Mr. Martin asked Mr. Moss if they had designers on board,

and Mr. Moss said yes. Mr. Merchant said they have been using a \$75 per linear foot ballpark figure, though that assumes not having waterways to cross.

Chairman Verity said that the Alison to Depot section could begin this summer, and the Depot to Parris Island Gateway the county has funding for. Then the city would build the trailhead at Highway 170. Mr. Merchant said they have looked at whether a signal is warranted, or if it should be aligned with Salem. Mr. Martin asked if it has the volumes at peak tourist season that major corridors on Hilton Head Island do. Chairman Verity clarified that he meant the crossover at Neil and Salem. One property had suggested a roundabout there as an approach, Mr. Martin said.

Mr. Criscitiello said there's no specific location for the bond issue yet, but it's something they need to explore and go back to Mr. Kubic with suggestions and ideas. Mr. Moss said there's a draft MOU out now. Commissioner Goodman said the port developers are considering the stretch from Ribaut to the port, and Mr. Moss said yes, it's in their master plan and may come out of their TIF funds.

PRESENTATION: OPEN LAND TRUST

Patty Kennedy said she was going to offer a general introduction to the Open Land Trust and talk about new projects with the city and the county. Land preservation and economic development are integrally tied together, Ms. Kennedy said. This is the oldest land trust in South Carolina. For many years its work was preserving the "treasured jewels" in the area. Since then, they have evolved and have preserved 19,600 acres to date in Beaufort County.

The Vista Projects work with communities to document and target areas with historic value and work to preserve them; Historic Beaufort Foundation is an important partner in this. They preserve land in Northern Beaufort County in Whale Branch and St. Helena.

They work in Southern Beaufort County as well, and are doing preservation directly related to the Port Royal Sound drainage basin. They have been administering the Rural and Critical Lands Program with the county and are working with municipalities to identify and acquire parks and open spaces.

Ms. Kennedy described land acquisition prioritization and how it fits into economic redevelopment. She said the county is very diverse in its makeup, with differing topography and ecological bases. There's a strong preservation program on Hilton Head Island. The county is creating a program with Hilton Head Island on one side and the ACE Basin on the other.

Ms. Kennedy went on to describe the Open Land Trust's work in RACL and easements vs. fee-simple arrangements. The program was funded with bond measures and has about \$11 million remaining of which \$4 million is committed. She went on to discuss the need to preserve land

for economic development, cultural protection, over-development problems, and environmental protection.

The number one job creator in Beaufort County is the MCAS, she said, and the partnership with the county has allowed the dollars to be leveraged. They can protect rural lands that also keep the MCAS operating. The USDA has millions to go to agriculture, and they have come to Beaufort County because they require a local match. Ms. Kennedy said quality of life and eco-tourism are important in land preservation, but so is economic development.

Ms. Kennedy said Greenville has said that land preservation was essential to Greenville's re-branding. Chairman Verity asked about the vista project on Boundary Street. Ms. Kennedy said the Bay Street Bluff was their first project. The Factory Creek vista is a long-standing vista project for the Open Land Trust. She said they have closed on all four of them, and the county has agreed to raze the buildings, but the tenant is in the building until December of this year, then it will be turned into a park.

On Boundary Street, the Open Land Trust has had a desire to target the area where the auto shop is now; past the Hess station there is a parcel, and south of Wendy's, too. They have target areas that they will get as they get funding and opportunity. Mr. Martin described the Boundary Street area that is designed like Bellamy Curve, and said they would like to have a vista on the marsh there. Ms. Kennedy said the Open Land Trust has a lot of flexibility: donated land or membership money to pool for opportunities, or as for The Green, where they fundraised for an option. She feels it's critical for the Rail Trail to help determine the corridors and access.

Mr. Moss said Boundary Street is an example, between McDonalds and the MCAS; there's marsh there, and there are businesses that could be moved to more appropriate locations. They need to think long-term about how they can open that up.

Chairman Verity asked Ms. Kennedy if they have other projects that people have said they'll be willing to match. Ms. Kennedy said yes and no. They have had donors come in and say they would like to put money in a land acquisition fund, but sometimes it's about the project to determine where the money comes from. Many people are interested in leaving a land legacy, she said. Commissioner Zara mentioned Factory Creek, and Ms. Kennedy agreed.

Mr. Criscitiello said the county is trying to open up parks for use, so they are always looking at public private partnerships. In 2012 there will be another bond referendum, Ms. Kennedy said. Both bond initiatives in the past have been 73-75% supported, and they continue to be in spite of the economy or politics.

Commissioner Waldrop asked about the land on the marsh behind K-Mart and the Hilton. Ms. Kennedy said it's all privately owned. One Town Center has an easement on it and that edge is

permanently protected. Other than that, there are opportunities beyond there that have been widely discussed. The entryway has been focused on, but as the redevelopment happens, the opportunities are going to be tremendous.

Chairman Verity said if the Rail Trail is built from Allison to Depot Roads, they will have to create sharrows.

There being no further business to come before the commission, **Commissioner Zara made a motion, second by Commissioner Goodman, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously,** and the meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.