

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on October 7, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Bob Pinkerton, Commissioners Martin Goodman, Mike McNally, Ed Barnhart, and Wendy Zara, Henrietta Goode, and Shirley Hughes and City Manager Scott Dadson and Shirley Hughes. Jon Verity, Pat Kase, and Keith Waldrop 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.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Pinkerton.

CARNEGIE BUILDING LEASE

Mr. Dadson said that materials regarding the lease were given to the commission in their information packets. Staff supports the contract. Commissioner Goodman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Barnhart, to approve the lease of the building to the Chamber of Commerce and to appoint the city manager to enter into the contract with the Chamber of Commerce for the building. **The motion passed unanimously.**

PARKING UPDATE

Chairman Pinkerton said the first meeting had taken place with the principal people involved: Lanier, representatives of Redevelopment Commission, Main Street Beaufort, and the city. They covered the financials, usage, marketing, and their priority is customer "complaints." They made a decision that they want Lanier to come in monthly with the 3 top complaints they're hearing. They'll try to solve the problems short- and long-term. They will do 3 each month in the hope of solving all the problems and making it better each month. Chairman Pinkerton said the gallery owners' guild was "intensely irate" about the parking meters. They are getting a lot of complaints from those who come into their galleries. They are doing anything to improve their economic situation, and they don't see the parking as helping. Main Street Beaufort has set up an e-mail address and is encouraging people to send them e-mails. That will be a database to tap into problems and solve them. The committee is supposed to discuss a voucher system.

Randall Burch said Lanier has added another person for 25 hours a week to be an ambassador and assist anyone having trouble with the kiosks. As of the past Saturday, this "has been pretty well received." The ambassador doesn't give tickets. They have also requested that the manufacturer of the kiosks come to the committee to discuss how to make it more customer-friendly and solve the problems.

The other issue tabled at the Main Street Beaufort board meeting is Christmas parking. Mr. Burch said he's received questions and it needs to be discussed in depth re: what will be done about free parking in December. They are continuing to take complaints at Main Street Beaufort and fix what's there. They feel they need to change the perception of the parking. The benefits are long-term, and a lot of people are looking at this in a day-to-day way instead of a

long-term look at parking. He'll bring these issues up at the committee level and it will work its way up to the Redevelopment Commission.

Commissioner Goodman said the discussion at the Main Street Beaufort board meeting was "lively," and they discussed how things can be done and what needs to be done. Lanier is testing the validation coupons, Mr. Burch said. He hasn't tried it himself yet. Commissioner Zara clarified what the validation slips were. Mr. Burch said merchants can give hour-parking coupons for subsequent visits downtown. This is meant to "engage repeat purchase."

Commissioner McNally said he has had no problems with the meters, but he wanted to know the difference between the 4-hour and 2-hour meters. Mr. Dadson said the differential is the times, and they won't be changed until more data is obtained. Commissioner McNally wanted to know what the big deal was about parking 3 hours in a 2-hour zone. There was a complaint in that day's newspaper about it. Mr. Dadson said council has designated timed sections of parking, and they'll still have them for now. Chairman Pinkerton said no one wants to move their car so they can spend more time downtown. On the other hand, they need short-term parking to enhance turnover.

Councilman **Mike Sutton** said as a merchant and city councilman, he feels extending the allowable time of parking on Bay Street must be a high priority. He'd like to see that come to the top of the list as soon as possible. Commissioner Barnhart said there is a way to get a new ticket from the kiosk at the end of two hours, allowing a parker to stay in the spot more than 2 hours, as if it were a "new" car parked there. Mr. Dadson said "time" is one of the issues that is important to discuss. Mr. Burch said he'll have plenty to present at the next Redevelopment Commission meeting.

Commissioner Zara left the meeting and was excused.

USCB IDENTITY CHANGE PRESENTATION

Lynn McGee, Vice Chancellor, USCB, introduced the university's mission statement, location, and definition of "What is USCB?"

Ms. McGee said the Beaufort community has unique needs and strengths. She showed slides of artist renderings of what the campus would look like if it were a "new" Beaufort College. There are funding and growth challenges; affordable access is their number one goal. Tuition increase was higher than some expected, and their percentages went up; they want to be comparable to Aiken. They're the fastest growing baccalaureate organization in the USC system, but the state funding model does not reward growth. Mr. Dadson said the county does contribute to the institution, almost as much as the state by way of the Beaufort-Jasper Higher Education Commission. The state hasn't supported higher education, and USCB is not even getting what other state institutions are. They get less than \$1000 per student.

Ms. McGee said the name of the university has been changed several times in its history. Sitting in Beaufort, the two different campuses with one name doesn't seem like a problem, but

incoming faculty and baseball players come to the Beaufort campus when they should go to the "Gateway to Hilton Head" campus in Jasper County. Explaining what the Beaufort campus is led to the branding issue. The idea is to create a position in the minds of audiences outside this region and reposition it in the minds of locals, Ms. McGee said. She presented the reasons that the name should be changed to convey the area's strengths. It's divisive between communities and doesn't convey the idea that it serves multi-counties.

What they are looking for in a regional descriptor is something that tells something about the university and tells about the unique region and promotes growth. The deal with Sea Islands is that they opened the conversation with the chain of command a year ago. They tried to find something that describes the whole region that both campuses are on. The descriptor they can unite around – "Sea Islands" - was chosen from a Pat Conroy quote. This is the distinctive geographical feature, Ms. McGee said. Sea Islands is "authentic," "historic," and "good for USCB" because it will help attract people who care about the Sea Islands and is good for the region because it unites the entire region.

Ms. McGee said African American leaders she has spoken with are 100% supportive of the change. It offers unique positioning because few other universities use the term. They are floating this idea first. Commissioner McNally said in the area of expanded studies, the term "environmental" has been so overused; he thinks the university should consider something more specific than "environmental" and could be tied to the Sea Islands.

Ms. McGee gave out pamphlets about the USCB art program. She said they have a 3-5 year window to prove that the programs can work. Ms. McGee commented that money from the TIF funded the Highway 278 campus; the money that comes out of that district is poured back into it or else it's not a TIF, which is the money it was built with. There will have been \$1 million spent on the Beaufort campus in the last year when the current phase is completed.

MINUTES

Commissioner McNally made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2010 meeting. Commissioner Goodman seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE – REPORT ON CITY HALL BUILDING

Commissioner Goodman said the committee has found an adequate RFP from the city of Greer. They have received bids for the appraisal. The timelines are to get the RFP's out in the next 3 weeks to a month and allow 30 days to get them back. A week after the RFPs are available, they'll hold an open house for interested parties to come and see the building and do a walk-through. Ms. Hughes said they would publish in the local newspaper, on the web site, state websites and a number of others that people look at on a regular basis, i.e. the Carolina Business Journal. They ideally would like to get something done by the end of the year.

Mayor Keyserling asked what is being offered. Commissioner Goodman said the committee has said they'd include parking that was with City Hall when the employees were parking there. Ms. Hughes said she had gone over the deeds and there are two easements on the property. The SC

archives may have to be gone through and they're not sure exactly how that will work. There's an exterior easement and an additional easement to the county that runs parallel to Port Republic. They will have to consider the easement that goes to the county. Commissioner Goodman said the property is more squared off and better than they had originally thought.

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REHAB COMMITTEE

Commissioner McNally said a month ago the project they selected at 1203 Prince Street encountered problems. An inspection of the building showed the building has to be demolished and can't be rehabbed. Libby Anderson was in contact with the owner, but she wants an amount that is out of reason; it's worth maybe \$30-40,000 and she wants \$100,000. It's been put on the back burner. The new project looks very positive and a meeting has been set up with the owner's representatives. They discussed numbers with the owner's preliminarily and they seem to be in line. They'll probably be making an offer to purchase the property. There are no strings attached as far as its use.

He said Cooter Ramsey, Commissioner Zara, and Commissioner McNally will meet with Alan Patterson. They will then go talk to bankers. Mike McFee has been invaluable, Commissioner McNally said, with real estate sale prices, etc. What is designed and built will fit the price range of \$250K+. Houses that are comparable have been taking a year to sell, but some of that is because of owners being slow to bring the price down to a realistic sales price. Commissioner Zara and Ms. Hughes have found that there are numerous small lots owned by the city that could be used as financing leverage and possibly taking one of the 3 in the Northwest Quadrant to put it in with the historic structure rebuild to sweeten the deal with the builder.

BOUNDARY STREET PROJECT

Josh Martin made a progress report on the Boundary Street Project. He showed an artist's rendering and Mr. Dadson distributed a memo containing the status report. He showed the parameters of Phase One of the project. The project has changed to include the parallel road. They're at 40% design, and it's an overlapping scheme which will go to bid and it will be 70% complete.

Phase 2 is from Neil Road to Hogarth, and it will reach its 30%; it's an overlapping process and it yields a revised project schedule. The traffic study is being reviewed by DOT and the second step is the re-designation to offer more flexibility in design. Mr. Martin said the speed reduction request is a cue; when one hits the Boundary Street Redevelopment area, it will be a signal of a more urban environment. The third request from DOT is to reduce it to 35 mph. The three things on the DOT desk are all part of the schedule which must be approved before they can move forward. The reason for the speed reduction also is that certain sight triangles must be met to obtain DOT approval. They wanted to have a street that slows cars and allows pedestrians to move easily. The Master Plan approved by the city was considered and what they needed to do to get there.

As the design build is done, Mr. Martin said they are looking at conceptual plans for the area beyond Boundary Street proper. They will have to be cognizant of traffic flow while the

construction is going on. Coordinating utilities is difficult in a redevelopment area such as this, he said. They have precedents in Bladen Street, for example. The duct bank alignment is being coordinated. There are 10 existing businesses on the south side of Boundary Street. They would run the duct banks on the north side and drill on the south side where the ten businesses are. All utilities are being coordinated. They're waiting on SCE&G.

Mr. Dadson said they have 2 parts of the non-standard service agreement with SCE&G, and they have \$400,000 or so in that, which wouldn't get much more than a block. The second part of the agreement is that a district can be charged up to 7% of their utility bill if that's to happen. Port Republic Street is an example of that. Whether the other franchise utilities get into it is unknown, and the city doesn't have the ability to force them. Mr. Dadson said this is a complex duct bank.

Commissioner McNally asked if there was a study on other utilities, i.e., water, sewer, gas; Mr. Dadson said all of them have been at the table with this. Mr. Martin said that they want to do a little bit absolutely right and per the Master Plan so pedestrians will be able to see the before and after, which may garner public support for the plan. The coordination of the property owners is the first phase; there will be a shifting over of property. He indicated a portion of the plan and said they are going to mimic Bellamy's Curve to cover the right-of-way issue and proper access with the property owners.

Commissioner McNally said the state has had the traffic report for 4 months; when will they bring it back? Mr. Martin said that various people at DOT "are saying they're getting very close." Mr. Martin said they're thinking acceptance of the roads will happen soon. Commissioner McNally asked how the process works. Mr. Martin said they'll ask questions on details but typically they'll receive a "yes," "yes with conditions," or a "no" letter.

Commissioner Goodman asked if the roundabout was still in. Mr. Dadson said it had been reintroduced because they realized that stopping at Neil Road and tapering is bad. It would help; also if they do a u-turn that would be alright or it could be round again which makes more sense to allow better turn movement, and it will provide a way to turn around. They asked the engineer to analyze this to see if it makes sense to alleviate complaints about getting off the property by going down and back. Mr. Martin said the angle necessary for a u-turn would not meet DOT standards.

Mr. Dadson said there's a separate contract with Thomas & Hutton Engineering to do the off-site road issues. The slip lane creates issues with some property owners and meets DOT needs to approve the traffic study. They can negotiate once the bidding process starts, and there may be opportunities if property owners become more interested, etc. once it starts. They're trying to plan for that, and they will truly have a road network that is supported and a complete project.

The potential rail trail also introduces a complication, Mr. Dadson said, but this design makes more sense if it's going to happen. If there's a linear park, he indicated a space that would be

the end of it. They will need to figure out that particular intersection because it's part of the trail. They have asked Thomas & Hutton Engineering to work through that and think "beyond the roadway."

Commissioner McNally asked about traffic signals on the roundabout to make it a rotary. Mr. Dadson said it's really a "T." A legal u-turn is easier by a rotary. The roundabout argument, Mayor Keyserling said, is that it promotes a slower flow of traffic than would be had with lights. There was a general discussion about u-turns on Boundary Street and the traffic flow. Mr. Dadson said the slip lane is one-way with on-street parking. Chairman Pinkerton said it's not commercial-friendly. Mr. Dadson said the parallel road is so important in the first phase to build blocks in the urban environment. Not all of the buildings and businesses currently there will be there by the time they're in the other phases.

Ms. Hughes said one thing about being able to come out in certain areas is a safety issue. This plan is attempting to create safety, among other things. Mr. Dadson said the lanes are being narrowed and the speeds slowed so those intersections will be different. There are currently 128 curb cuts, which is more dangerous than what is in the plan. Mr. Martin said on the fatalities map, all of them were all along the Boundary Street corridor but not in the Historic District and elsewhere.

Mr. Dadson said if the majority of local traffic knows how to get around, it takes a percentage off the main road. Mr. Martin said it's also about the visual cues. When you see an accident and there are no options, you can only sit there, but as this becomes more established and urban, you will know your alternatives. The visual cues will be for an urban environment, not suburban.

The Boundary Street Master Plan, Mr. Dadson said, suggests the parallel road be built first. Commissioner McNally said that seems like the slip lanes (Phase 2) will be a big advantage when construction starts. They are spending the penny sales tax as well as the TIF, Mr. Dadson said, which puts \$12-15 million into the kitty, and they have to play by a couple of different sets of rules as a result. Council agreed that the best way to do this was to do the first phase of it. If that's as far as they get, that's all they get.

Commissioner Barnhart said the re-designation seems to be really essential. Mr. Dadson said if they do the re-designation, they have flexibility. Commissioner Goode asked about the time-frame. Mr. Dadson said they're in design. Chairman Pinkerton asked for an estimated time from construction to completion. Mr. Martin said the first phase will be in the 4th quarter of 2012 or the first quarter of 2013 before it's complete.

WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSAL

Craig Lewis, of The Lawrence Group, introduced the proposal. He said he was there to ask the Redevelopment Commission to consider a proposal that shifts resources in the city. There are a lot of things going on in the city: investments, interest, and energy. A goal is to get their arms around all those pieces and make things happen. There are three things that have contributed

to the end of the suburban model for communities: peak oil prices, global financial collapse, and climate change. It's car-based and about communities competing about how far one can drive. This is a non-resilient pattern. The city needs to be positioned to prepare for reinvestment and encouraging growth over time, not to maintain the status quo but to be resilient to economic and environmental changes.

Mr. Lewis said the neighborhood is the ultimate, most resilient organizational unit. It's more important for architecture to come from *place*, not time. His group is proposing bringing together a lot of things: hardware (physical infrastructure) and software (management, programming and marketing). Successful cities integrate these things and then can encourage investment. The more complicated the process, the greater the lack of vision. The civic vision needs to be decided upon and then converted into an implementation model.

The process starts with a detailed audit for existing and preferred conditions. The pieces are implemented and then private investment is enabled. Implementing the Vision Beaufort plan means it needs to be dealt with comprehensively, not "catch as catch can." Current zoning administration is comprised of the staff and boards that serve the status quo. Redevelopment planning / city building are staff/consultants/ad hoc/opportunistic.

Mr. Lewis showed the proposed work flow plan, comprised of five boards. They need to discuss having a new form-based code first, though. He went through the costs for the status quo and said they need to leverage the investments being made and "prepare the community to emerge like no one else will in 2 years."

His group proposes establishing the current zoning administration and focusing them on maintaining the process until a new code is in process. There need to be conversations about other growth pieces as well, according to Mr. Lewis. They're proposing other pieces be incorporated under one shell – the Redevelopment Commission – and his company would coordinate existing city staff in parallel for about 2 years to get the codes in place.

Mr. Lewis showed a proposed organizational chart, including a Planning Administration Team and a new City Building Team. There will be overlap for 1.5 – 2 years and then it will get more efficient. The City Building Team will be managed by him and Demetri Baches and there will be a team of various other experts.

When the new code's in place, Mr. Lewis said, some boards may be consolidated. The process has a base services piece and a program services piece. The base piece is him, Demetri, principals on-call and their associate-in-residence. They would be the direct staff support for the Redevelopment Commission. They'll be co-located in City Hall to integrate with other teams (zoning administration and permitting). The work program will be a detailed Beaufort Civic Master Plan including implementation of Southside Park, the rail-trail, Boundary Street, workforce housing initiatives, emissions, energy audit, the downtown area strategy, economic development, etc. The Beaufort Civic Master Plan will create a huge but specific "to do" list.

He detailed other services they will provide. They want to transition the costs, shifting focus to implementation over the current focus on process. He detailed the key benefits / measures of success of their proposal for Beaufort.

Mr. Dadson said 2 years ago, they began the right-sizing process for their administration. The planning staff was cut significantly as was the organization overall. When City Council adopted the comp plan, they wanted to get things done. At the retreat, they developed work plans for the Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Commission. Various plans are now synched together in the Metro Planning Commission.

Mr. Dadson said he had asked Mr. Lewis, after the comp plan was complete, for ideas on how to get things done. Staff has reviewed re-allocations of resources to be more efficient. There has to be a period of time of the status quo, but staff needs to transition to a new way of doing business as the code changes. They met with the Redevelopment Commission and Planning Commission, and Mr. Dadson had “asked Mike and Ms. Hughes to crank through the contract.” They brought it to city council, who were very supportive of “doing,” as opposed to planning, and they feel that this is a “do” commission. Mr. Dadson said after two years, if this doesn’t work, “it unwinds”; if it works, “2-5 years from now, it’s a different world.”

Commissioner McNally said after his meeting on this, he spent two days reviewing the contract draft, and he feels “it’s an extremely comprehensive job Mr. Lewis has done.” There will be a records kept as they go along. Commissioner McNally feels the final document is just what they need.

Mayor Billy Keyserling, speaking for council, said council members “were unanimous” after two presentations. They have fiduciary responsibility, and “they are the software.” Every time they do something new, i.e., parking, fire trucks, etc., staff reviews with them the complex financial details, but like TIFs, it’s easier to choose not to understand those things and be against them. Council has learned that they can’t be so divorced from staff and the other things that are happening as they have been historically. They need to be on the streets and as elected officials, they’re the targets.

Council agreed to each write a paragraph about this potential contract. He summarized it as “the vision plan”: they set out goals and objectives and they hand it off to the Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Commission to make it happen. Council and the commissions realized they need the tools/resources to make the vision happen. Mayor Keyserling said it’s important to emphasize that the city is “not hiring planners or consultants; the council is calling them Redevelopment / Economic Development Specialists.” Council believes “they’re more than planners or consultants.” Mayor Keyserling said this is “a bold new way of doing things” and the group “stands to be criticized.”

The Lawrence Group will have the full attention and support of council, Mayor Keyserling said, and council will do on the street what is expected of them. He added that they’ve been putting in the framework for people but not engaging them for mutual benefit, so money hasn’t been

spent as well as it could have been. It's created cut-throughs, but it hasn't brought vitality. There have been plans that sat on shelves; they have expectations, and they need the tools to "do" rather than plan.

Mr. Dadson said planning staff is excited about the idea of having this kind of support. They are excited to learn how to "do." There have been many years of "process," so now they're very excited about getting things done.

Commissioner McNally made a motion that the Redevelopment Commission fully support the contract with a recommendation to the city manager's office "to sign it, execute it, and get this show on the road." Commissioner Barnhart seconded the motion. Commissioner Goode abstained because she's a new member. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner Barnhart asked about finances for the contract and asked if that was the point of the executive session planned for the end of the meeting. Ms. Hughes said existing money would be reallocated; there is money set aside already or they have existing contracts, the money for which can be turned over to this contract. The Redevelopment Commission has money for consultant services that they knew would need to be budgeted for, and there is consulting services money in TIFs 1 and 2, because they knew they were going to need it to be available, and it had already been processed through the budget.

Mr. Dadson said the group will report to him, but they will be Redevelopment staff. A portion of what they do may be charged to the Redevelopment Commission budget, but other money sources are across several funds. Commissioner Goode asked the total dollar figure for a year. Ms. Hughes said current planning staff services cost about \$800,000 a year and what The Lawrence Group would do is comparable. Mr. Dadson will coordinate these various efforts. Commissioner Goodman asked if that was a public number and Mr. Dadson said yes. Ms. Hughes said they're using existing, appropriated dollars.

Commissioner Goodman asked if Historic Beaufort Foundation was supportive of making this work. In the Historic District, he said, there seems to be a lot of energy to do things, and then Historic Beaufort Foundation and Design Review Board "stop the energy." Mr. Dadson said it's like what Commissioner McNally and Chairman Pinkerton are doing on Bladen: they have discussions with many folks doing the process, and The Lawrence Group can streamline the process more than current staffing ability allows.

Mayor Keyserling said that USCB wanted to pave its parking lot 6 years ago, but the neighbors who didn't like it and Historic Beaufort Foundation and the Open Land Trust prevented it. He's starting a different process with it – as the software – this time. Mr. Dadson said the city's relationship is different now with the Open Land Trust and the Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood Association. That work has been being done, and then if they have the support, it will be even better.

Commissioner Goode said she's excited about this because now she can explain this process so people can understand where it's coming from. Ms. Hughes said currently there are small contracts here and there to make up for a lack of certain expertise in-house. These miscellaneous contracts can go away and The Lawrence Group can do it. These will be rolled into one, more manageable process.

Commissioner Goodman said he supports it but has two challenges. The Redevelopment Commission needs to help Mr. Lewis and insist that it's streamlined so if someone wants to do something, it can be accomplished in a reasonable period of time, as opposed to what has historically been the case. They will need to monitor feedback. Second, the Redevelopment Commission is a new group, and it has energized him to see that something is really being done, but he challenges the group to find projects to go vertical and see it work, i.e., Northwest Quadrant projects. They need to make the commitment to make things *happen*, "not just support it."

Mayor Keyserling said The Lawrence Group can help, for example, with the short-term rentals by special exception matter. Council decided that the short-term rentals are important to economic development, but they're not important where they don't fit. Now instead of doing a zoning change, they can go to The Lawrence Group and say, where in the context of your plan can we put 100 short-term rentals units? That takes a year or two out of the City Council process on that matter alone. Mayor Keyserling said that when John Gadsden retired from Historic Beaufort Foundation, he agreed to go on the Housing Authority. His specific assignment is to be put to work, or he won't stay there. "He is the bridge that was missing – the guy on the inside – when one is looking for a housing partner," Mayor Keyserling said. They will figure out how to wake up the dormant non-profit.

Mr. Dadson said, with a contract with The Lawrence Group, physically someone is here, not a long-distance call away. The Lawrence Group and Mr. Lewis are out of Davidson, NC; Mr. Lewis wrote the comp plan and Demetri is global but out of Habersham. They can pull in architects, finance experts, etc. as they're needed and go away as the project goes away, which the city can't do now.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Goodman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Barnhart. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

ATTEST: _____
IVETTE BURGESS, CITY CLERK