

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on February 2, 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, Pat Kase, Henrietta Goode and Wendy Zara.

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.

Chairman Verity reviewed the agenda for the retreat the following week, which will be held at USCB. There are plans, he said, "to transition it to a Gant chart." He added that a group would be coming the following Monday to consult about plans for the marina. During the retreat, on Wednesday, project review will continue; there will be a review of committee structure and participation, with a focus on members of the community and partners to see if the right partnerships are there and if they're missing anyone. Thursday, the marketing campaign will be the first discussion item, focusing on a regional and national basis.

Chairman Verity said that Lowcountry Produce, to be known as "City Market," will have a soft opening the following Wednesday and then one with the Redevelopment Commission and City Council on Thursday since the retreat will bring everyone together.

MINUTES

Commissioner Goodman made a motion, second by Commissioner Zara, to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2012 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Finance Committee

Commissioner Zara said she, Scott Dadson, and Chairman Verity had met in a preliminary meeting with Ken Griffin, who will replace Dean Moss at BJWSA.

Chairman Verity said Lowcountry Housing Trust has a meeting on heirs' property coming up. Commissioner Zara said they have a lot of money to lend right now; she went on to describe some of the projects they are currently working with.

Commercial Committee

Commissioner Goodman reiterated the soft opening of City Market on 2/8/12, and said they have begun receiving merchandise. He feels it will be a nice addition to other developments downtown on Carteret Street. At their committee meeting, they'd discussed ongoing projects; they're looking for contacts and will prioritize the list at the retreat.

Residential Committee

Commissioner McNally said Historic Beaufort Foundation had filed for a stabilization grant for 1407 Duke Street for \$30,000.

Commissioner McNally had attended the Beaufort Housing Authority board meeting to meet their board. George Post is the chairman of that group now. They have several other vacancies and will be three short by October. Commissioner McNally discussed what the Redevelopment Commission is doing in relation to housing, and discussed possible joint efforts that could be made on projects. He said Beaufort Housing Authority is “all for that,” especially when they get more people on the board. They discussed a work session for both groups to discover their commonalities.

There was a shareholders workshop with Lowcountry Housing Trust which Commissioner McNally said was very well attended. After that, Commissioner McNally and Commissioner Zara had lunch with Patrick King and **Eric Moser** to discuss creative ways to work together. Mr. Moser is very interested in participating in infill projects in the Northwest Quadrant and the whole Sector One area. He had developed “the Katrina cottage.” For those who don’t have the money to refurbish their small homes on large lots, workforce housing or additional cottages could be put on the property, accessible by an alley or driveway. He’d also like to work with owners to give up a piece of the property in exchange for fixing their home up for residence or rental.

The at-risk properties lists developed by **Libby Anderson** and **Julie Goode**, Commissioner McNally said, should go to the Office of Civic Investment to create individual plot plans that would allow them to go a step beyond the lists and show developers properties where infill could be done. **Josh Martin** agreed. He said it would be difficult to do plots for every Sector One lot, and Commissioner McNally said they should pick out ones that are suitable from the lists they already have, particularly those that are distressed and deteriorating.

Chairman Verity showed a graphic that Mr. Martin had created to show council and others but said it was not for developers. Commissioner McNally said he’d like to have Mr. Martin create an additional sheet. Commissioner Zara said the houses on the graphic sheet need to be updated. Ms. Goode said she has an update she will send to Mr. Martin. Commissioner McNally went on to mention some properties that are no longer on the at-risk sheet.

Commissioner McNally said he heard from **Eric Brown** that Jim Moss wants to get his project going again, so Commissioner McNally has a call into Mr. Brown. Ms. Goode suggested calling them “highest priority” properties instead of “at-risk.” Commissioner Zara noted that two properties share the same picture.

Commissioner Goodman asked what Lowcountry Economic Network (LEN) has to do with the Von Harten property. Ms. Anderson said that at one time, the owner of the property was interested in expanding it and contacted LEN. State funding didn't work out, Ms. Anderson added.

Mr. Martin said the Lafayette Street RFP went out, and he brought hard copies for the Redevelopment Commission members to look at.

Mr. Martin said representatives have been in town in regard to the TIGER grant and what work should be done with county and TIGER money. There needs to be contact with the federal government in regard to priorities. The environmental work will be within existing pavement as much as possible. All funds have to be committed by June 2013. The design exceptions have been approved by the SCDOT.

Ms. Anderson discussed some progress on the Bladen Street II project.

Commissioner Kase asked if the funds were for infrastructure only. Mr. Martin said they could be for acquisition, but "the timeline makes the NEPA process difficult," so the strategy is to work within existing rights-of-way. Commissioner Kase said there's a warehouse property that would be best suited to demolish and then market it. Commissioner Goodman said in the master plan, everything on the marsh side would be a park, so if funds could be identified to buy the warehouse, it would become a park. Commissioner Zara suggested involving the Open Land Trust.

Ms. Anderson said Duke Street is out to bid, and they have gotten verbal comments from DOT.

Chairman Verity asked about TIGER 4, and Mr. Martin said it is being evaluated. Chairman Verity asked if enough plans are done for Boundary Street, Jr. to make use of it. Mr. Martin said Craig Lewis had said that he's heard TIGER 4 is geared to projects submitted previously in different geographies. Mr. Martin said the TIGERs are for projects that were committed to but not completed, so TIGER 4 might be geared to projects that didn't make the cut for TIGER 3.

Ms. Anderson said in regard to Basil Green, there's a parks grant given to local governments, and the county is interested in making improvements to it that will benefit everyone. The city and county will each contribute \$20,000 to put in about 64 free parking spaces. The parking will be pervious so as not to create stormwater problems; she called this "a win-win" for residents and participants. There was a discussion of its use as an area for stormwater drainage. Chairman Verity asked the timeframe. Ms. Anderson said she would say within 12 months, though it won't expire. Chairman Verity said it would be good to use in coordination with the Lafayette Street proposal.

Ms. Anderson said 1203 Prince Street, which is on the at-risk property list, has an application for demolition before the HDRB. She added that anything with proper funding can be saved. Chairman Verity suggested that this be put on the residential committee's agenda.

Commissioner Zara asked about the Jim Moss property which had a notice on it; Ms. Anderson said it's been stabilized and secured properly, and the grass has been cut, etc. in the eleventh hour.

1408 Green Street, Ms. Anderson said, "has pulled a permit to stabilize, though they're working slowly." The corner store had the front painted, so they'll begin working on the east façade, Ms. Anderson said. Chairman Verity asked Mr. Martin to update each of these on the list, based on Ms. Anderson's comments. 1310 Washington Street will probably be the next focal point, Ms. Anderson said.

Commissioner Zara asked what they can do if there's no clear title to a property. Ms. Anderson said that's what the owner had said, and there are three siblings who don't agree.

Commissioner McNally asked about 1408 Green Street and said it's a deep property, and the size of the house is small and close to the street, so something could be put in the back yard, which is what Mr. Moser was suggesting. Ms. Anderson said the owner would likely be very open to working something out.

Chairman Verity asked about an update on Road Fish Bike Shop. Commissioner McFee said they are moving forward with clean-up. Ms. Anderson said eventually they'll need permits to do more than clean up. There was a discussion about who the shop's owners are and who had a relationship with them.

Ms. Goode said there will be Preservation Leadership Training June 2-9; the director will be coming to Beaufort next week for a site visit. The project supports the classroom work. They want to focus on the project, which she finds exciting for Beaufort. They will look at the 1400 block of Duke street, and the preservationists may bring in new ideas to Beaufort. She said PLT projects have been successful, and she's excited about it coming to Beaufort.

Mr. Martin said the next Redevelopment Commission meeting will have presentations in regard to the Rail to Trail and public and private sector contributions.

Commissioner Zara asked about legislation in regard to demolitions. Chairman Verity said it's been introduced to the Senate and the House. Mr. Martin said he'd check on that and offer an update. Commissioner Zara said they could write their legislative delegates to help.

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 5:52 p.m.