

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on June 7, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Vice Chairman Mike McNally and Commissioners Pat Kase, Martin Goodman, Keith Waldrop, and Wendy Zara.

Chairman Jon Verity, Henrietta Goode, Mike McFee, and Alan Dechovitz 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 Vice Chairman McNally.

MINUTES

Commissioner Goodman made a motion, second by Commissioner Kase, to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2012 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Finance Committee

Commissioner Zara said the committee had discussed incentives and is preparing a letter to architects for pre-approved designs for the Historic District that could be purchased from the architects directly. She said they will begin with designs for single-family detached dwellings and may go to commercial in the future.

They are also putting together a book of incentives to be organized in an understandable fashion. **Josh Martin** said that they will talk to legislators about doing property tax abatement in established districts, among other redevelopment incentives.

Commissioner Waldrop asked if the book would be online, too, and Commissioner Zara said yes, and that would probably be the easiest way to navigate it. Commissioner Goodman asked if they will have economic development incentives as well, and Commissioner Zara said they will. Commissioner Kase said the greatest incentive for the Commerce Park is that it be ready for business. Commissioner Goodman said he likes the idea of the process being a negotiated one-on-one process.

Commercial / Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Goodman said they had met with **Merritt Patterson** about leasing the Depot building and discussed what he would like to do with it. In regard to the RFP, Commissioner Goodman said the committee had decided the discussion should begin with Mr. Patterson who, along with his brother, owns much of the property surrounding the Depot building.

Mr. Martin asked if the boundary survey was ever completed. Commissioner Goodman said Mr. Patterson has one, which he shared with Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin said the Office of Civic

Investment had ordered a survey. Mr. Patterson's is dated 1995, and Commissioner Kase said they would need something more current. Mr. Martin said the city needs a survey of its own. Commissioner Kase said Mr. Patterson already has tenants lined up and a plan, so they feel like they might not need to expend the effort to put out an RFP.

Commissioner Zara said they can't negotiate with someone without approval of the zoning. Commissioner Goodman said Mr. Patterson is thinking of a bike shop and a snack bar / ice cream shop. Commissioner Zara asked if he'd asked **Libby Anderson** if they can do that under current zoning. Commissioner Goodman said they shouldn't request a zoning change before they know what Mr. Patterson wants to do exactly. He said in their meeting, it sounded like Mr. Patterson wants to do what would be appropriate and in line with what the Redevelopment Commission has been discussing and could lead to even more development down Depot Road. Also, Mr. Patterson said he'd do an RFP if that's what they decide to do.

Mr. Patterson and his brother own either side of the Rail Trail / Depot property. Commissioner Kase said many of the neighbors have been talked to already, and if they don't do an RFP, they could workshop a plan through a public-private partnership.

Commissioner Goodman said once that's developed, they should go to Ms. Anderson and make sure the zoning is appropriate for what everyone wants to do there. Commissioner Goodman said he's ready to go immediately and has plans to show the Redevelopment Commission. Commissioner Goodman said they should do it at a committee level first, then he can come and present to the Redevelopment Commission. Vice Chairman McNally said he'd look forward to the presentation. Vice Chairman McNally said the neighborhood's comments and concerns were all reasonable. Commissioner Goodman said the neighbors' concerns were the same as the Redevelopment Commission's in terms of having inappropriate businesses there.

Residential Committee

Vice Chairman McNally said they have been working with the Finance committee, including work on the pre-approved housing plans. It will be a letter of interest, not an RFP per se. Vice Chairman McNally said he and Commissioner Zara met with **Shirley Wilkins**, the Lowcountry Housing Trust representative, who's very experienced and has now been briefed on all the Redevelopment Commission projects. She will work for Beaufort and Port Royal Mondays and Tuesdays and having eight flexible hours for meetings, etc.

Vice Chairman McNally said there were three RFP responses for Lafayette Street, and one has been chosen to recommend to council, but it's not yet public until it goes to the mayor and council in Executive Session. Mr. Martin said they are trying to get it to council by 6-12-12 or 6-19-12.

Boundary Street Redevelopment District

Mr. Martin said the Boundary Street plan is in full force now. He showed a graphic of Boundary Street through the corridor. They are meeting with a variety of partners in Columbia for further design exceptions they will need; they have them for the roadway itself, and now they're asking for landscaping so they can get live oaks in the median strips. From Neil Road to City Hall, he showed where sidewalks, lanes, etc. are proposed to be. They want to create a tree canopy. Commissioner Waldrop asked how big the trees would be at planting. Mr. Martin said they'd like a substantial sized tree at planting, but they've not had it "spec'ed out" yet. Mr. Martin said palmettos break away most easily if hit by a car, which is why SCDOT favors them.

Mr. Martin reviewed other plans including right-of-ways, the two "takes" that will be made, and a review of the schedule. The goal is for the bid to go out in April and have construction begin in June of 2013. Mr. Martin said this is their estimate based on the engineers' work with DOT and TIGER 3 guidelines. Vice Chairman McNally said the plans seem very accelerated compared to Bladen Street. Mr. Martin said they're "applying a lot more resources to this project" than they did to Bladen. Commissioner Kase said there needed to be multiple appraisers for Bladen which they learned delayed the process. Mr. Martin said Beaufort Plaza will start in January 2013. By June of 2013, Mr. Martin said, they have to have their funds allocated for the TIGER grant.

Discussion: Spanish Moss Trail

Dean Moss made a presentation about the Spanish Moss Trail as a representative of Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail. He discussed and showed examples of the PATH foundation's work. The PATH Foundation in Atlanta has built more than 170 miles of trail in Georgia. This trail is a cooperative effort between the public and private sectors, he said. Mr. Moss showed photos of some of the trails PATH has created. \$1.16 million was given by the Cox Foundation for the Spanish Moss Trail, \$100,000 of which is for planning of the *entire* trail. \$497,960 is for construction of the trail from Allison Road to Depot Road. \$600,000 is for a challenge grant for construction of the trail from Laurel Bay Road to Clarendon Road. Mr. Moss said the county is following up for the area from Depot to Parris Island Gateway, which leaves a section between Parris Island Gateway and Laurel Bay, which he said is currently being worked on. They feel that once people experience the first mile, they will have "an amazing amount of support for continuing the trail."

Mr. Moss showed the logo for the trail and described the particulars of this phase of the trail. A bridge to TCL will cost about \$50,000, and that's not been raised yet, though there is a place designated for it. There's also a place for access near Grayson Street. There's a crossing at Hermitage which DOT will have to deal with and then the trail ends 200 yards past the Depot. The path will be 12' wide, 5" thick. What they do on this section will set the standard for the rest of the trail, Mr. Moss said. The rest needs to be consistent in terms of features, design and logos. BJWSA owns the Depot building and has given the city an easement on it, so the city can decide what it does with it. The space in the building that is not used as part of the trail would

be good for development. The Office of Civic Investment has made sketches of what they would like to do with that section of the Depot building.

Mr. Moss showed various signs that would appear on the trail as well as the benches, trash cans, and bike racks. The trail will go right on the trestle with bump outs for fishing. This section is all under city permitting. The bridge will be treated lumber with stainless steels cables on it. The first mile will include all amenities, he said. There are public art opportunities along the path that can also be used as bike racks. The concrete color changes just before road crossings.

Mr. Moss went on to show the schedule of meetings in regard to the Spanish Moss Trail. Design for construction began May 11 and will run through June. They hope to start construction by Labor Day. He showed a graphic of the Spanish Moss Trail design to show how road access is blocked for three properties. He suggested that the most critical problem for the City of Beaufort is how they will move vehicles through via a crossing. He showed his suggestion for where that should be. They will need to acquire a right-of-way access. He said the same problem exists for Hay Street.

A general conversation ensued about possible locations for the road. Commissioner Kase asked how important it is that the trail goes right through the building. Mr. Moss said "very important." Commissioner Kase said that it presents a problem to a private developer in an already small building. It's going to present a lot of practical issues. Mr. Moss said the city has an easement and a lease on the building. Commissioner Goodman said one of the properties showed him a lease for a section of property and Mr. Moss said he owns it. Commissioner Zara asked if the BJWSA see the plans and Mr. Moss said the easement document gives the BJWSA the authority to review plans.

Mr. Martin said Demetri Martin has been looking at this road issue and he would check with him on Office of Civic Investment plans. Commissioner Kase said this issue strengthens the argument to not do an RFP and work a plan with Mr. Patterson. Mr. Moss said from the perspective of the development of the trail, resolving where the road will cross soon is important. The Friends of Spanish Moss Trail will put the parking in and get it landscaped as part of the deal, but if the City of Beaufort decides otherwise, he will spend the money elsewhere.

Vice Chairman McNally asked if there will be bathrooms, and Mr. Moss said they will be in the Depot Building itself and there are plans for elsewhere on the trail as it's developed. There followed a discussion about walling off the building, with Commissioner Kase saying that in his opinion it takes away from the design.

Mr. Moss said there's no current plan for equestrian uses, but there could be a dirt running trail alongside it or an equestrian trail. The easement is plenty wide to allow these.

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 6:12 p.m.