

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on April 4, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Jon Verity and Commissioners Mike McNally, Wendy Zara, Keith Waldrop, Alan Dechovitz, Mike McFee, Henrietta Goode and Stephen Murray.

Commissioner Martin Goodman was 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 5:02 p.m. by Chairman Verity.

MINUTES

Commissioner McFee made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Zara, to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2013 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN (CIP)

Kathy Todd, Finance Director, made the presentation that she had made to council the previous Tuesday. This report is informative and in draft format, she said, and no recommendations are made in it. The CIP assesses what the capital facility needs are against the overall goals and objectives. It has a close relationship to the Comprehensive Plan. It contains projects for this fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years. It is a fluid document, Ms. Todd said, because it's not legally binding, as things change and opportunities arise. She went on to describe the documents that the CIP is related to, such as the "Vision Beaufort" Comprehensive Plan, the Civic Master Plan, and the capital and operating budgets. Ms. Todd read excerpts from the CIP that apply to the CIP as its "map."

Ms. Todd said the "heart of the CIP is the projects." It has a series of tables that show what projects will be built, when, where, and how much they cost. The capital budget is the first document of the CIP. This identifies the funding and where they receive authorization for the budget adoption process.

Ms. Todd explained the means for the development of the CIP which involves identifying projects from Chapter 11 of the Civic Master Plan with a 1-3 year implementation projection and capital projects related to stormwater drainage and other Public Works projects. She showed the projects in the preliminary CIP. Chairman Verity said the packet showed that the sharrow has a construction plan. He asked if that was being done in Sector One, and Ms. Todd said not necessarily; it's earmarked as a 1-3 year project. Ms. Todd said because this is a preliminary draft, next she will link it to the sector plans in Chapter 11 of the Civic Master Plan by sector. A review will follow to ensure the priority list is complete.

Commissioner McNally asked about the estimated total, and Ms. Todd said this is "a total budget," not an annual budget; it shows the full costs of a project, even if it's multi-year. Ms.

Todd said all of these projects are council-driven using city resources and assets, so council will prioritize them.

Commissioner Waldrop asked if they will be listed in priority order. Ms. Todd said she wasn't sure. She said the schedule would evolve in time. Commissioner McNally said some projects might be cut and Ms. Todd agreed. "The key to all of this is funding and those options will be reviewed as well as the timing for each project," she said.

Commissioner McNally said the total budget and estimated costs must have been estimated. Commissioner Waldrop said there's no connection there. Commissioner McNally said they might have funding for all or only some. It's a "wish list according to the Master Plan."

Commissioner Dechovitz asked about how the CIP is connected to the strategic objectives. He asked how to know "which drainage project allows them to hit a particular start objective." Ms. Todd said "stormwater is going to be a different animal." Commissioner Dechovitz asked how to know "if these projects are moving them toward their strategic objectives." Ms. Todd said this is yet to be determined; this is just the first of several steps. **Julie Franklin** said this came directly from the Civic Master Plan and its strategic objectives.

Chairman Verity introduced new commissioner, **Stephen Murray**.

COMMISSION WORK ASSIGNMENTS FOR 2013

Chairman Verity said housing is important to the Redevelopment Commission, and some Redevelopment Commission members will be working together and with other organizations to develop housing. Commissioner Goodman will tackle USCB, the northern end of Carteret and Boundary Street Jr. Commissioner McNally is working on other key areas, and they will be surveying property owners there. Chairman Verity said that Commissioner Murray will help coordinate in Commerce Park, the industrial zone, and "other places that might offer opportunities for commercial development." Commissioner Dechovitz will be working on the marina. Commissioner McNally asked the boundary of Bladen Street; Hamar to Harrington and Duke to North, Chairman Verity said.

UPDATE FROM HOUSING/RDC TASK FORCE

Commissioner Waldrop said they met with the Beaufort Housing Authority "for preliminary discussions of the potential collaboration." The Beaufort Housing Authority would be the implementation arm for projects that the Redevelopment Commission would like to see taken on. The Beaufort Housing Authority board had a lot of questions as to how this would function. He said he, Commissioner Goode, and Commissioner Zara need to get together to discuss this. Commissioner Zara said she feels they need to meet with the Beaufort Housing Authority board.

Commissioner Zara said they are still working on incentives; instead of incentives, though, now they are working on material to put on the web for information on where to go for various needs.

BOUNDARY STREET

Ms. Franklin said they had worked to revise the TIGER grant and are finalizing the details now. The right-of-way work is progressing, and they have developed a land swap for the redevelopment of Beaufort Plaza. They are ready to submit the final engineering documents and then will be able to prepare invitations for bids. The deadline to award construction is September 30. Commissioner McFee asked about responses from SCE&G, and Ms. Franklin said she was not aware of any.

LAFAYETTE STREET UPDATE

Chairman Verity said they are on track for this to move forward. **Eric Brown** and **Scott Dadson** met this week. The due diligence is to be up at the middle of this month. Commissioner McFee said the Master Plan for Lafayette is not affected by the need to pave Rodgers Street.

MARINA RLOI PROGRESS REPORT

Chairman Verity said they have been working on this for some time and will make it public next week, ideally. They wanted the Redevelopment Commission to have a final look at the plan. He feels “Ms. Franklin and the group have done a great job putting it together.”

The cover picture, Chairman Verity said, which is a rendering of possible development on the waterfront, “has drawn comments”: it’s nice for a developer to see what’s possible, but no one is committed to that drawing.” Chairman Verity said “there’s room to talk about and make changes to this if the Redevelopment Commission thinks it’s necessary.”

Chairman Verity showed an aerial photo of the area. In regard to the rendering, the “pros” are that “it shows the mass and scale of what could go on the site” and provides guidance for developers. It gives an idea of what’s possible on the site, and “though it’s just a concept, it gives life to the whole project,” Chairman Verity said. The “cons” are that “it doesn’t represent real possibilities” and “may mislead developers to feel that that is what they are expected to do.” There are also some issues with the drawing in that it “represents an awful lot of buildings we probably aren’t going to be building,” Chairman Verity said. The only way for developers to know the potential is to come to Beaufort, he concluded.

Commissioner Zara said her concerns are that they don’t mention that these properties are in the National Historic Landmark District until one is “well into the document.” That is critical, she feels, and should be up front. Chairman Verity agreed, and Ms. Franklin said at the beginning when they discuss the location and site, they can say it’s located in Beaufort’s Historic National Landmark District, “so it’s said twice.”

Commissioner Zara said “it’s unlikely that the rendering is something that will be acceptable.” It’s “not remotely close to the mass and scale of the surrounding area,” and is therefore “misleading.” Commissioner Zara said that there’s a parcel listed as developable but it’s not developable: where the Christmas tree is. Chairman Verity said it is developable. **Dean Moss** said that the organization has an MOU in regard to the parcel. A provision of it is that this parcel is to remain an open space. Mr. Moss is chair of the Beaufort County Open Land Trust, and he said he would like the parcel removed from the packet as developable land.

Commissioner Dechovitz told Mr. Moss that “we were operating in good faith,” and said that neither staff nor the city attorney could find the MOU; they “were not ignoring it, but it wasn’t in the records.” **Terry Murray** said the document was signed in 1989. There were two years of discussion with the City of Beaufort and the Open Land Trust, and it was determined that it was always to remain open as a vista to the water. Ms. Franklin said she never got a copy of the MOU. **Patty Kennedy** had said that she had supplied it to Ms. Franklin “in the first part of the year.”

Commissioner Zara said they will be more successful in their projects if they are starting out with all the parties at the table who have an interest in it, so when they send out letters requesting letters of interest, it’s as clear as possible to those who might be responding what the conditions are. She’s concerned that this document doesn’t give the proper picture. Chairman Verity said they want potential developers to go to the website and pick up the survey and read in more depth about it.

Commissioner Zara and Commissioner McNally said they both voted for the aerial photo, not the rendering on the packet cover. The Christmas tree area should be clearly identified as not for development, they agreed. Commissioner McNally said they “need to get a developer’s attention and this does it.” Commissioner Zara said when the developer gets here, what’s represented in the document is what they are likely to find. Commissioner McNally said they can show them the renderings then and say that this is the city’s vision and how it could fit in.

Commissioner Goode said if they use the photo, they can show their vision. Commissioner Zara said developers may think the rendering would be misleading in that they will assuming it will be approved. Commissioner McNally said the idea and the business deal needs to come in first and then they will have the input of the community. Commissioner Dechovitz said the Civic Master Plan in general has a lot of pictures that are “...architects’ visions that are not reflective of what could possibly happen in the city.” He prefers no picture at all on the front and to make the photo an attachment of the “current state.” There was general discussion of the photos in the packet and what could replace the rendering that is inside the packet as well as the one on the cover.

Commissioner Waldrop said he agreed with the consensus. “The clean slate approach is preferable,” and he feels they should guide developers to look through the Civic Master Plan as

well as telling them that that is not necessarily a plan of what will be implemented. He said it's a balance between scaring someone off and "making clear that (they) want more than park benches there." Chairman Verity said a single point of contact – Mr. Dadson's assistant – and the website "will list all the points of reference they might want."

Ms. Franklin said that looking through her email, she had communicated with Ms. Kennedy who said she had the history of the MOU in question, but no documentation, and then Ms. Kennedy sent a scan of the MOU to Ms. Franklin on March 11, "and for some reason (she) didn't get it."

Ms. Franklin showed the web page for the marina redevelopment which is currently hidden and not yet public. She detailed what links are on the site.

Chairman Verity detailed the timeline in the packet for developers. **Maxine Lutz** asked if the preservation plan would be on there. Commissioner McFee said it's on there: the manual and manual supplement. Chairman Verity said putting the plan on would be a good idea. Ms. Lutz asked how the packets are sent out and how the developers are chosen. Chairman Verity said it will be on the Urban Land Developers website. "Numerous developers have already expressed interest," he added, because "they have read about it in Erin (Moody)'s columns."

Ms. Lutz said they thought the land would be leased, and this says it could be purchased. Chairman Verity said they don't know, and if a developer wants to buy it, "they need to make their case." Ms. Lutz said she feels the community would not be in favor of that, and Chairman Verity said they didn't want to leave the option out.

Mayor Billy Keyserling said that in regard to the rendering on the cover, when there was no plan for the Town of Port Royal, there were people coming who wanted to build skyscrapers at The Sands. He said everyone knows that what goes there has to fit and will go through regulatory processes. Mayor Keyserling said if they use the rendering, people will have an idea of what they are considering. He said they "don't want people to *copy* Bay Street," but "whatever goes there needs *to go with* Bay Street." They could put a picture of an elevation of Bay Street "so no one comes with a grand idea of something that won't work," Mayor Keyserling concluded.

Commissioner Dechovitz said they have said it has to go with the Beaufort style and blend with downtown. Mayor Keyserling said a developer will pick it up as a great piece of property and not have a sense of the constraints they will face. Commissioner Dechovitz said the commission should look at the Preservation Manual.

Ms. Franklin said the pictures are to show that a lot of investment is going on in the City of Beaufort. A photo of a historic building in downtown was suggested since the site is in the heart of a historic district.

Commissioner Waldrop asked if there should be a drawing of the day dock and the water sports center. Chairman Verity said the day dock is “moving along,” and the water sports center is “an unknown.” Commissioner Dechovitz said this is “not meant to be a recreation of the Civic Master Plan.” It’s meant to convey that they are interested in developing a site in the historic downtown and in getting people with the skills and finances to “come here and talk to us” so they “don’t want to beat it up too much.” The water sports center and day dock “have been rendered in ways that aren’t executable,” Commissioner Dechovitz said. He thinks it’s not the time to fix those pictures which are “really of no impact to the overall plan.”

Commissioner McNally said the crux of it is in the packet; as a developer, if he got this now, he would come take a look. Commissioner Dechovitz said if a developer came down and offered all the right things, the last thing they have in mind is something that wouldn’t blend appropriately with the character of the city because it would not be accepted. If all is right, they “will do something that is right visually as well.” Chairman Verity said Ms. Franklin should re-do the packet and then send it out.

Chairman Verity said he’d like a motion to move forward once all the commissioners are on board. Ms. Franklin reviewed what they would change in the RFLOI. There was a discussion about Parcel 1 and how it should be presented: as being included as additional green space or taken out of the development altogether. Commissioner McNally said if they take it out, a developer will ask about the green space. Commissioner McNally said they can list it as a city-owned property. Commissioner Zara said it’s not the city’s piece of property to bargain with. Ms. Franklin asked how it should be conveyed on the website. Chairman Verity said it will remain green space and in the Open Land Trust’s ownership. Commissioner Zara said it “should be left as project acreage” and has nothing to do with development. Chairman Verity said it will remain green space in the development.

Ms. Franklin went on to review the changes to the draft of the RFLOI. **Commissioner McNally made a motion that, pending review and concurrence, the RFLOI be sent out to interested parties. Commissioner Goode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

In regard to the form-based code committee, **Terry Hussey** and **David Tedder** are the co-chairs now, Ms. Franklin said. Drafts are published on the web site, and documents are posted as they are reviewed.

In regard to the Civic Master Plan it’s also available on the web site, Ms. Franklin said. There have been presentations made, and Ms. Franklin announced the dates for the other sector presentations as well as a city-wide workshop. Chairman Verity said the input from the Planning Commission was well-received.

Merritt Patterson congratulated Commissioner Murray on his future twins.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Zara made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Murray, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously,** and the meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.