

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on September 5, 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 Martin Goodman, Alan Dechovitz, Mike McFee, Henrietta Goode, and Keith Waldrop.

Commissioners Mike McNally, Wendy Zara, and Stephen Murray 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.

Chairman Verity called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m..

MINUTES

Commissioner Waldrop made a motion, second by Commissioner McFee to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2013 RDC meeting as submitted. Commissioner Waldrop and Commissioner Goodman abstained from voting because they were not present at the August 1 meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

BOUNDARY STREET UPDATE

Craig Lewis said July was very busy with a lot of last-minute things to be tied up in regard to right-of-way. They are “still progressing,” and have secured a substantial amount of right-of-way, though they “still have some final checks to write.” They have 2 pieces they are looking at: the Boundary Street “main quarter proper” and the Polk Street parallel road. They are in good shape with both, Mr. Lewis said. The engineering for the plans sat in Columbia for review for a period of time, so they have “yet another set of red lines” to take care of before it’s released for bid. Engineers are completing them now. They anticipate releasing it for bid soon; it’s now in SCDOT’s hands, he said.

They are not concerned about the TIGER funds scheduling, Mr. Lewis said; SCDOT will take care of that. In July, they had a conversation with Federal Highways; until they bid it, the final budget is complex and unknown. The bid climate is also unknown. They need to get an agreement about where the stopping point for the project will be if the budget comes in short. The agreement struck was that the logical stopping point for a phase, if it needs to be phased, is at Greenlawn. After Greenlawn, they will get as far as they can go toward City Hall with the money they have. They hope to stretch the money as far as possible, especially to bury power lines, e.g., in front of Beaufort Town Center.

Mr. Lewis said things are progressing well, and they expect that they will release it for construction bids in the next month. Chairman Verity asked if the bid includes money for a trailhead at Highway 170 for the Spanish Moss Trail. Mr. Lewis said it doesn’t include money for the trailhead park at Beaufort Plaza. That was dropped from the original grant proposal because they did not get the money for it. There have been “a few design changes as a result of

conversations with property owners,” Mr. Lewis said. They had “originally envisioned a boardwalk all along the back of the southern properties,” where the Sea Eagle, Wendy’s, etc. are. They can build it, “but once people get on it, they can’t get off for a long stretch,” so they are “holding off on its construction until later.”

They rerouted the bike path, and it will cross Boundary Street where Enmark is; they hope to install a new signal there, Mr. Lewis said. SCDOT agreed to that being installed if it’s the primary pedestrian crossing. Chairman Verity asked if the bikeway would be on the south end of Boundary Street and then cross over to the north end. Mr. Lewis said that was correct. Chairman Verity asked how far down it would go after that. Mr. Lewis said when they get it, they will do a multi-use path of 10’ of pavement on the south side of the road. It will then cross to the north side, and there will then be 10’ of pavement that “will take you all the way to Greenlawn.” Cyclists can use that street “and other streets to get into the street network.” Chairman Verity clarified that Mr. Lewis was “talking about it going east,” and Mr. Lewis said that was correct.

MARINA RLOI PROGRESS REPORT

Chairman Verity said some contractors are in mind, and they are “working through a memo of understanding with the city; it’s the city’s decision.” The memo will be discussed in an open meeting with the city in a public hearing in about the next 30 days.

LAFAYETTE STREET UPDATE

Chairman Verity said this is a project to “take some property on Lafayette Street and turn it into 5 houses.” **Eric Brown’s** firm is doing that. They have been waiting for a paving project to be finished before they began because they are responsible for the streetscape. They are hopeful that “construction will begin in the very near future.”

BEAUFORT CODE UPDATE

The form-based code committee was put on recess until the Civic Master Plan was approved, according to the chairman. Council will hear the Civic Master Plan proposal on October 8, potentially.

CIVIC MASTER PLAN

Chairman Verity said that the Redevelopment Commission would not vote on the plan tonight because comments are still coming in. The goal is to have all possible comments in by the Redevelopment Commission meeting on October 3 when they should have a final copy. Council will have a public hearing on it on October 8 or later.

Chairman Verity said the Civic Master Plan is not “fixed” and will change over a 5-year period. Council will also add to and subtract from the document. It is also a road map for the city to help it prepare for changes.

Mr. Lewis said he would share the changes made since the spring draft. They moved things around, tried to make things easier to find. They have eliminated redundancies, too. They have added an index. This is largely a strategic plan, he said. In South Carolina, things are done under the planning and coding statutes, which have two components; the first is the Comprehensive Plan. In South Carolina, comprehensive plans are not mandatory, but one needs to be adopted and generally followed. In South Carolina, it can be used in many different ways. The Civic Master Plan is a component of the Comprehensive Plan and will effectively replace many different sections of the Comprehensive Plan, e.g., the transportation and land use sections.

Mr. Lewis said it will be used to inform zoning decisions. It will also help guide changes in zoning. Planning staff will look at the Civic Master Plan in making decisions. It will also be used in implementation, "particularly the infrastructure side of things." It "prioritizes things to get done" by council, staff, other agencies, etc. It's already being used, Mr. Lewis said. Council used the document this year for work on the capital improvements program. Grants have been received, and they anticipate receiving more as a result of this planning work. It's "been leveraged quite a bit," Mr. Lewis said.

Mr. Lewis said the purpose of the plan is "to leverage public infrastructure with private redevelopment." They are looking to the private sector to do the bulk of redevelopment, about 98%. The plan is straightforward, and a number of things were clarified in this draft. The development drawings are conceptual in nature, he said, and they "have been trying to explain this all along." What a developer might want to do could vary. They want to show with the Civic Master Plan what is "possible and appropriate."

Mr. Lewis said there is probably still planning to do in some areas, especially in the Depot Road area and on Ribaut Road. They have had a lot of conversation with Depot area residents, but haven't been able to finish the conversations. Big changes are happening there, he said, and they will continue the conversation. Ribaut Road is not an immediate issue and will require very specific focus, like Boundary Street.

There are no absolutes in the Civic Master Plan, Mr. Lewis said, and it is a companion document to the preservation plan. It will be used in the regulatory process. They tried to improve the ability to find things in the document and have added cross-references.

In regard to the waterfront, he showed the changes they have made thanks to public input. They "have called back the marina drawings," but the expectations for the area are still made clear. They are doing more editing, though, and there's still cleaning up to be done, e.g., the doctor's office, etc. People who live on the west side of Battery Creek felt as if there was not enough discussion of the water access issues on that side, and Mr. Lewis agreed.

A member of the public asked if the public would have time to comment, and Chairman Verity said yes. Since she didn't have a particular comment on this section, he asked her to wait with her comment.

Commissioner Dechovitz said he "wasn't privy to that conversation" about the concerns of Battery Creek residents in regard to water access and asked for details of it. Mr. Lewis said that he can see in the diagrams that they "have noted ensuring public access to the waterfront everywhere except for that," so they have now noted where there will be access and view shed protection. It's not yet in the draft. It will be in the draft before it goes to the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

Mr. Lewis said in Chapter 3, a number of changes have been made, including to some things "that had already been adopted and agreed on." As an example, Mr. Lewis said that on the post office block, there were changes suggested which would justify the costs of redevelopment, but that "would come at the cost of changing the character of that unique area." The post office itself was the main "cost." That can be "healed," and the plan recommends going back to the original platting for the area. They suggest a plan for the area that is more consistent with that which already existed there.

Changes that were made to Bladen Street and USCB are in the Civic Master Plan as well, Mr. Lewis said. They also included references to where the Bladen Street boundaries are to make that clearer and more consistent.

In regard to "green and blue" natural infrastructure, a number of changes were made, Mr. Lewis said, mostly "tweaks" and changes to the wording after working with some residents. The overall inventory has also been tweaked. The city, when this process is all done, will have "a fairly robust set of GIS maps." Changes were requested in regard to labeling in the "courtyard commercial infill." Carteret, New, and North Streets bind the area. It will follow the existing zoning boundaries. There are infill opportunities in The Point area on naked lots. Those are not intended to be commercial, and Mr. Lewis said they wanted to be very clear about that.

There are other changes to the Depot area. They had a good conversation with property owners, including development at the end of North Street. Working with the owners, they developed plans consistent with the property owners' thinking. It's a potential acquisition tract for the Open Land Trust or another partner because of its adjacency to the Spanish Moss Trail.

In regard to the transportation section, Mr. Lewis said, the Spanish Moss Trail has opened and they can include pictures of it. In Chapter 5, key changes include clarification of the expectations of uses of the Spanish Moss Trail, which will change over time. He discussed a trail in Greenville that is well-used even though there's not much to it. He feels the first phase of the Spanish Moss Trail is better than Greenville's. They have scrubbed all references to the parallel road running behind TCL and the new hospital building.

Mr. Lewis said at the last public workshop there was a request for more emphasis on street lighting for safety and they will do that. They have suggested a kit of parts for considering in the future, including sidewalks, medians, bike lanes, etc. Those who come later will be able to look at what the thinking was now and they and see what was being considered.

Mr. Lewis said they had discussed walkable neighborhoods, an important part of the city that was founded on a walkable grid. He referred to some of the changes that had been made, including Southside Park, where housing has come into the park and it's been agreed that that should be moved off of the park property but keep it facing the park.

They have discussed house types to make sure that they are appropriate to Beaufort. They are building. types and styles can be attached to it, but they have tried to capture types that are in use here currently or in the region. There is an opportunity to add and clarify and they will do that, Mr. Lewis said. There was a request made to make sure language was clear in regard to The Point, the Old Commons, etc.

Mr. Lewis showed changes to the Southside Park drawing and the property lines and other redraws and different conceptual lines. They discussed institutions – USCB, the Air Station, TCL and the hospital – as critical to the community and its vibrancy. He said that in the first draft, the MCAS was not made as important as the others, but now it's taken care of, and all of the institutions are happy with their contributions being included in the Civic Master Plan.

In regard to the major corridors, the streetscape projects have been consolidated in the plan, and they showed a tool box of strategies for improving streets. The city, SCDOT, others by partnership, and the private development community will do some. Mr. Lewis said they pointed out the Robert Smalls Village. In the Burton area, some things are happening that are long-term temporary uses. They asked what if they took the land and redeveloped it as if they were resettling it 300 years ago; they did drawings and designs that may be possible if a road network is set in place that could handle redevelopment. They have also done something similar to Beaufort Plaza and considered development in the long-term. The big box shopping areas will continue to be auto-oriented for now and into the foreseeable future.

Mr. Lewis said they considered - at Ribaut Road, Bay Street, and Depot Road - implementing roundabouts and getting rid of traffic signals. It helps change the character and is conceptual, but they would like it to be embedded into a future Ribaut Road redevelopment plan.

In regard to economic development, Mr. Lewis said they identified locations for high-quality jobs in the community. They have a number of different scales for where people are working and could potentially work in the future, and he gave examples of those. There have been wording changes made in regard to the AICUZ boundary, particularly. The street regulation plan has had changes and tweaks. An amendment in the last few months changed the adopted

street sections and that change needs to be made and included as a comment. A lot of changes have been made to clarify what is regulatory and what is not. This will affect what will and won't be included in the code. Hermitage Road, for example, has been clarified to show what the street section "would be or doesn't need to be."

Finally, in regard to the implementation section, they tried to upgrade it from feedback received from the Redevelopment Commission, council, and city staff as to using the document. They wanted to improve how to find different key and prioritized projects. They wanted to give a better sense of what any particular drawing represents. They made changes, too, to clarify and make the document more useful.

Mr. Lewis described the next steps for the Civic Master Plan and the scheduled meetings. The Redevelopment Commission could see the document again in October and endorse it, if the Metropolitan Planning Commission does, before it goes to council.

Commissioner Dechovitz said, if "the western suburbs" are going to be introduced "at this point" – a matter that he brought up earlier in the year but was told weren't important to this – then they "should engage the people who live in the western suburbs." They live at the junction of the county, the city, and the Town of Port Royal, and when there's an issue about planning, management of assets, or whatever, "it's sort of like a Mel Brooks movie." He feels the city ought to be trying to clean up the problems for those residents. Also, he said, if they are introducing water access to Battery Creek to the western side of the city, he would like a better impression of where that might be. Battery Creek, Commissioner Dechovitz said, is "intensely developed," and the water flow patterns were changed by development. Battery Creek is the only impaired body of water in the City of Beaufort with periodic coliform bacteria problems. Given these things, it's "probably not the best place to be launching motor boats to go up and down the creek." Anything they might do will have an impact on "us" and on "people living in the county," none of whom might appreciate it. He said it's more than a matter of "getting an intern to sketch out ... a boat ramp."

Mr. Lewis said they were not referring to water access as much as to *visual* access, like at the ends of major streets in Sector 1. They are not discussing boat launches at all. Commissioner Dechovitz said he had misunderstood. Commissioner Dechovitz said that if Mr. Lewis decides that they want to engage the western communities, he can help with that. They have attempted to engage with government for some time without success but would be willing to talk to anybody. The core of whether the city's successful or not, Commissioner Dechovitz said, is whether Sectors 1 and 2 are successful, "and the rest of the stuff is interesting, but Sectors 1 and Sector 2 will make the city or break it."

Commissioner Dechovitz said he's not clear how this plan integrates with the Comprehensive Plan to be a regulating plan for the city, and he was made "uneasy by comments that the city might modify it." For instance, he said, the city turned to the language of the Comprehensive

Plan when it defeated Wal-Mart's attempt to put in a store and during the development of the Darden restaurants on Boundary Street. He asked if this was "a regulating plan whose words carry weight when a developer wants to do something, or is it a vision? And whichever it is," he asked how the city would integrate it with the Comprehensive Plan "in some rational fashion," particularly since the Comprehensive Plan needs to be renewed in 2 years.

Mr. Lewis said the Comprehensive Plan is the overarching document. In South Carolina, every community has to address 10 or 11 categories. In 2009, the Comprehensive Plan was adopted. It had vision statements and goals and consolidated previous plans that had hundreds of similar things that were culled and consolidated in the Comprehensive Plan. Many of the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan were to do detailed planning and develop strategies for certain blocks, etc. The Civic Master Plan brings the Comprehensive Plan down to the block level, Mr. Lewis said. It's the umbrella document in South Carolina; other plans are appendices to the Comprehensive Plan, and all of the documents under the umbrella are referenced when recommendations are crafted. The Comprehensive Plan is an *advisory* tool, but the code is the *regulatory* tool. The Civic Master Plan will be an appendix to the current adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Dechovitz said the Comprehensive Plan is meant to answer certain specific to-dos, so he asked how a developer will know if the Comprehensive Plan general language or the Civic Master Plan's more specific design is what he needs to concern himself with when planning for his project. Mr. Lewis said the Civic Master Plan should incorporate all of the themes and direction from the overall Comprehensive Plan; they should be consistent documents. Commissioner Dechovitz said developers would discuss how their plans for their projects fit in with the language of the Civic Master Plan, and Mr. Lewis said yes.

Commissioner Dechovitz said there's no language in the Civic Master Plan that explains that. Mr. Lewis said in the first section, there's a section called "How to use this plan." Commissioner Dechovitz said he'd go back and read it. Commissioner Dechovitz then said, having read through the Civic Master Plan, he wanted to understand the strategic choices the city is trying to make if it adopts the Civic Master Plan. He said "we've decided we're going to focus on organic growth through redevelopment inside the city boundaries vs. what we have done in the past" which was to focus on growth by acquisitions made through annexation. Mr. Lewis said that's correct. Commissioner Dechovitz said the city has also decided that, in the past the focus was solely on military, government, and tourism as sources for jobs, but the plan says that it will be augmented with a substantial emphasis on job creation in the private sector at average or above average wages for semi-skilled and skilled people." Mr. Lewis said that is correct. Commissioner Dechovitz said that the city is also saying that it wants to enhance its water orientation and "to create lifestyle assets" to bring people back into the city "for the residential experience inside the city." To do this, the regulatory framework will be modernized. Mr. Lewis agreed with that as well.

Commissioner Dechovitz asked if there was anything else he was missing in the city's strategy in the Civic Master Plan apart from the list he'd just given. Mr. Lewis said he'd add the leveraging of city infrastructure to create development and redevelopment, which is what precipitated this. This plan identifies "where you're going to get more bang for your buck to make those investments."

Commissioner Dechovitz said he likes that plan. He thinks those are good choices, and he feels the people he's talked to want the city to make those choices.

Commissioner Goodman said that in regard to economic development, the city has always emphasized diversity, and in the past, diversifying has been discussed, and that's how the Commerce Park was developed. Larger businesses now can have spaces big enough to locate in the city.

Commissioner Waldrop said his questions were covered though he's not fully up to speed on how the Comprehensive Plan and the Civic Master Plan mesh with the Beaufort Memorial Hospital and TCL's plans. He gave the elimination of the parallel road as an example.

Mr. Lewis said TCL created a master plan of its own, and the Office of Civic Investment redrew it to make it more consistent with the rest of the drawings. He discussed the trail briefly. In regard to the hospital, they don't have an adopted master plan; they follow the next evolution of health care, and they don't know yet what that will be. They created an envelope to operate within for the hospital and recommend no big changes in the near-term. They can build a replacement hospital on-site so as to stay in the area. Mr. Lewis said they were open to that idea. Chairman Verity asked about Allison Road. Mr. Lewis said that they had applied for a grant for improvements to Allison Road that encompass a trail extension and connecting a parking lot to Allison Road and the Spanish Moss Trail.

Commissioner Goode suggested the Civic Master Plan summary to Commissioner Dechovitz, "for those who don't want to read the whole thing."

Cynthia Jenkins said when she first read the document, she thought "it was pretty good," but on re-reading, she was "pretty concerned at the errors and the omissions and the misstatements." She thought that the obvious ones would be corrected in the re-write. She gave as an example the Waterfront Park never being referred to in the document as the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park. Since it's meant to be a 100-year plan, she feels the errors need to be corrected, and she's working on a list with others. She cited an editorial in the *Beaufort Gazette* and read a paragraph from the Civic Master Plan in regard to "the Beaufort vernacular." She said this was an example of the confusing language. Ms. Jenkins went on to cite the conceptual drawings, which she said she has "criticized since Day 1." One of the buildings in a drawing is out of scale, Ms. Jenkins said, and is not oriented south, and she said that the statement that the mass, scale, and orientation are all correct is not the case. Other cities on the national registry will look at this document, she said, and they will be "in shock."

She said Mr. Lewis had asked her to do “this topology thing,” which was difficult because it “goes against my entire belief, ingrained, of my career.” There are many maps that show scale and density, Ms. Jenkins said, and they should be used “for the parts of the city that have character.” She went on to say that there are many areas with character in the city. “The typology part of the New Urbanism evangelical belief,” Ms. Jenkins said, “that that’s the only way to go” is problematic, she feels. The typology “calls an apt house, a mansion house,” she said. This is in every form-based code plan in every city and “confuse a sense of place.” She said the Beaufort style of architecture is not mentioned in the entire Civic Master Plan. She said there are “dozens and dozens” of other concerns such as a reference to Bellamy Curve and the use of the term “antebellum architecture.” She feels Beaufort is already remarkable and is horrified to read that if the Civic Master Plan is implemented, Beaufort “will be” remarkable.

Ms. Jenkins went on to describe what typology is and then said brick and stucco is not appropriate for infill houses in the Historic District of Beaufort because only a few large buildings. In the Historic District are made of those materials, not homes, which are mostly wood framed. She fears that the character of the Historic District will not be preserved; Ms. Jenkins believes it will be destroyed and Beaufort will be a “theme park.” She said few people are interested in building big buildings in the Waterfront Park at the marina.

Ms. Jenkins said she was also upset about the redevelopment of Whitehall. From a historic preservation planning perspective, she said the buildings that were there “should be guarded carefully.” To have five Main Street / Town Center areas “will fracture” this small community. Whitehall could have more infrastructures, but an image that shows “dozens of out-of-scale, inappropriate buildings that all look back architecturally” say that “Beaufort is frozen in time and (it) will become Colonial Williamsburg.” She said she and **Maxine Lutz** are working on the document and want to work with the Office of Civic Investment. She warned that everyone must read the Civic Master Plan carefully.

David Tedder said he’d like to address the integration of the Civic Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan into the form-based code. He said he works on form-based code, and that is what a developer would look at when they try to decide what they want to do. He described the integration of these as a funnel and spout. The Civic Master Plan will be an important step in the formation of the form-based code. He said he has concerns but finds the language more flexible than in the previous draft in some parts. He said in regard to the road sections, when some are picked out, the way things will look will be what those working on the form-based code will look at.

Mr. Tedder said he’s lived in Beaufort 60 years, and he’s scared of the traffic being six lanes at the Air Station, then narrowing down on Boundary Street to two 14’ wide lanes shared with bike lanes and on-street parking. He said he will “guarantee that this will be a nightmare.” He suggested doing an experiment with it now, though engineers will say it will work, because they need to account for all of the traffic and for human nature as it relates to driving.

Mr. Tedder went on to say, in reference to an earlier statement about the strategic decision not to annex, that there are intergovernmental agreements with the county to relieve density, which needs to be done. There are “beneficial annexations that can occur,” so he feels such a broad statement is “foolish.” He feels that those who use the amenities should be part of the City of Beaufort or the Town of Port Royal. Chairman Verity said annexation will continue as it has at the Vaden Chevrolet location, for example, and he doesn’t have the sense that if annexation works, it will be eliminated, but they have rejected as a strategy the growing of the city strictly through annexation. Commissioner Dechovitz said he thinks he’s saying the same thing as Mr. Tedder. The Town of Port Royal annexed Lemon Island because it was available, but it was not a strategic move.

Chairman Verity said that he likes the idea of a trial on Boundary Street to test how the idea will work; he said he thinks it’s a good idea.

Don Starkey commented that when the Civic Master Plan was originally done, it was said “that figures and drawings don’t really matter,” but he looked at the pictures and read the comments under them because of not having time to read the whole document, so he thinks it’s important that the pictures and title under them need to be correct because many people won’t go through and read the whole document.

DS said he was on the Comprehensive Plan committee and is now on the form-based code committee. He thinks it’s important that the Civic Master Plan be summarized for the community in as succinct a way as possible. Finally, DS said, he feels there’s not enough information on “the outlying areas and how we funnel traffic into the city.” If the city grows, he asked, how will it affect traffic into the city?

Ms. Lutz commended Commissioner Dechovitz for reading the whole document and “being able to distill something from it.” When she read it, she found it “sloppy, sloppy, sloppy.” She said she wanted to talk about the National Historic Landmark District and “to raise some broad issues that remain with the document.” The new draft, she said, is a new document, not just a revision. The issues related to the National Historic Landmark District have been “so diffused throughout that it takes real sleuthing in some cases to discover how the Historic District is impacted.” She feels like there is deliberate obfuscation. Ms. Lutz said she feels this new document might be so flawed as not to be of use as a guide for developing in Beaufort. She found it to be filled with “feel-good, New Urban planner jargon.” She gave as an example of language that she feels needs to be simplified: the term “hobby farms.” She feels there’s too much “wobble room” in the language.

Ms. Lutz reiterated the idea that readers are told not to pay attention to the drawings and then re-read the paragraph that Ms. Jenkins had read from the introduction. Ms. Lutz speculated about its possible meanings. She also feels that the document is “so prescriptive” about change that “it allows no room for architectural creativity.” Though Beaufort has an architectural history, if all future development is based only on these past designs, Ms. Lutz said, it will be

“phony.” She cited a number of ideas suggested in the document which she said were not appropriate or historically accurate for the Historic District.

Ms. Lutz said infrastructure needs are also not addressed, including transportation, stormwater, roads, or parking plans for USCB. She cited the recommendation for student parking in the blocks surrounding the school rather than building a paved lot and said that Chairman Verity had told her that the Redevelopment Commission also doesn’t want students parking on streets in the neighborhoods around campus.

Another issue, Ms. Lutz said, was that the cost of maintenance of some of the projects is not tallied, and she cited that the city has just cut the budget for The Greenery, which has affected the downtown area. The city can’t pay for maintenance of the Spanish Moss Trail and therefore shouldn’t consider maintaining other things like a boardwalk on Boundary Street or an amphitheater. She feels that the document isn’t ready for approval, and it was “rushed to completion to give more guidance to” the form-based code committee, but instead it muddies the water.

Jay Weidner said he knows they talk about the city’s historic character, and grant money is given with specific parameters for things like the development of Duke Street, which is fine, but the “overblown and corporate-looking streetscape” is spreading. He’s concerned that there are rumors that this will spread to Charles and Green Streets as well. He feels that the streetscapes are both “plain” and “fake.” He’s really worried that this will continue in further development and feels “many people in planning and design are clueless.” The talent in Beaufort who understand the city should be consulted, Mr. Weidner said.

Conway Ivy thanked Commissioner Dechovitz for his succinct distillation of the city’s strategy as it appears in the Civic Master Plan. He requested that “preserving the National Historic Landmark District” be included in the Civic Master Plan strategy. When the plan was introduced, he said, he asked why burying the utility cables wasn’t in the plan, and though he knew Mr. Lewis added it in a revised section he hasn’t seen, he feels there needs to be detailed planning on this because of all of its effects on the infrastructure. It should be added to the plan, he said, so that it’s not “out of sight, out of mind.” Mr. Ivy said he has also commented in the past on stormwater. He thinks the interrelationship between the Comprehensive Plan and the Civic Master Plan has been discussed well in this meeting but thinks stormwater needs to be included because of the effects of future development. Having the cost of sewer upgrades is an important element to be considered in this plan, Mr. Ivy said. They should also examine capital requirements, he feels. Also, as a resident of The Point, the single family residential apartments referred to in the Civic Master Plan confused him, and “how the large homes will be utilized.” He feels the language needs to be clear so that it’s not misinterpreted in the future.

Chairman Verity said he agrees, and in regard to stormwater, he said he’s not sure that it’s in the Civic Master Plan that this should take place. It’s an infrastructure issue, and he feels it

“more properly comes out of the Comprehensive Plan.” In the Bladen Street development, the sewers were replaced; this Civic Master Plan doesn’t green light any project to avoid any oversight panels and review.

Mr. Ivy asked, when the Civic Master Plan is approved, what the process is for amending it in a situation, for example, involving stormwater and sewers where it needs to be modified because of high costs. Chairman Verity said that this hasn’t been tested yet, but everything ends up in city council, so he assumes there will be a process for amending the plan with the normal city council approval process of a hearing and two readings. Mr. Ivy suggested that this process be included in the Civic Master Plan. Chairman Verity said that made sense. Commissioner Dechovitz said the plan would need periodic review and change. Mr. Ivy said that there needs to be an understood mechanism for making changes and the process should be clearly stated.

Ms. Lutz described the traditional Beaufort style.

Eddie Rodgers said she had been out of town so she’s not completely up-to-date. She expressed gratitude to those people who are expert in Beaufort architecture. She asked if there was a package of the proposed changes that were put on the overhead screen, and Chairman Verity said yes, there was, and pointed them out. She described the areas where waterfront access is listed and then asked, if waterfront access for Battery Creek is view-only, what it means for those areas that are listed in the Civic Master Plan. Chairman Verity said it’s all about views; no docks are proposed.

Ms. Rodgers said she had seen surveyors downtown at the end of July and asked why they were there. Chairman Verity said he believed it was the Department of Transportation. She asked if it had anything to do with the marina proposal, and Chairman Verity said he didn’t think so.

Chairman Verity said that they would take everyone’s comments and questions into consideration and continue to work with Ms. Lutz and Ms. Jenkins on language.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Dechovitz made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McFee to move into Executive Session, Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70(a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, for a discussion of contractual matters. The motion was approved unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, **Commissioner Dechovitz made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Goodman to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously,** and the meeting adjourned at 7:57p.m.