



CITY OF BEAUFORT
1911 Boundary Street
Council Chambers
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29902
(843) 525-7070
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA
August 7, 2014

PLANNING CONFERENCE ROOM – 1ST FLOOR
1911 BOUNDARY STREET

5:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

July 10, 2014

III. REPORTS

A. Baptist Church of Beaufort Property

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Lafayette Street

Proposed Mission Statement

The City of Beaufort Redevelopment Commission has been established to renovate, revitalize, and regenerate distressed areas of Beaufort.

BRC's mission is to lead a coordinated strategy of redevelopment and design strengthening the City of Beaufort as:

- The heart of economic development for Northern Beaufort County
- A prosperous place for business and institutions; and
- An attractive urban environment for residents and visitors

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS DUE TO A PHYSICAL CHALLENGE, PLEASE CALL IVETTE BURGESS 525-7070 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF MEDIA NOTIFICATION

"In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media was duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting."

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on July 10, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were and Vice Chairman Mike McNally, Keith Waldrop, Wendy Zara, Stephen Murray, and Martin Goodman.

Chairman Jon Verity and Commissioners Alan Dechovitz, Mike McFee and Henrietta Goode were absent.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

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

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Commissioner Goodman made a motion, second by Commissioner Zara, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

BAPTIST CHURCH OF BEAUFORT

Vice Chairman McNally gave a brief report on the status of the properties involved in the deal. On the lot the city swapped with the church, on Prince Street, the Baptist Church of Beaufort has cleaned up the rubble and weeds and on the property line, to the west, a thicket of wild bushes was ripped out. They have put in a sprinkler system and have decided not to use the parking in the rear part of the lot right now; they want to get a landscaper in and seed it. It will be a grass playground for now, though the future use is unknown.

DISCUSSION: 303 ASSOCIATES

Dick Stewart said that his company needs “advice and guidance” from the Redevelopment Commission. He said that development requires existing leases and easements to be dealt with. The city plan says it’s important to keep down commercial sprawl and to encourage development in places like Boundary Street. Mr. Stewart said they “can see sprawl coming back on Highway 170.” He read from the Boundary Street plan. In the Boundary Street corridor, “one or more national tenants might be sought,” which he said would take tenacity and focus. Beaufort Town Center tried to assist in the development of a Green Network, Mr. Stewart said. They wanted to remove asphalt and plant, but they “weren’t allowed to because it didn’t fit the picture.”

Mr. Stewart pointed out Beaufort Town Center on a graphic of the Boundary Street area. He said they have attracted \$32 million in redevelopment investment; \$13 million is the Ashley Point development. Additionally, Other investments in the Boundary Street corridor include City Hall and McDonald’s. He went on to point out green space development. His property is a PUD. His organization paid for the master stormwater system, a sea wall, and the street network. That totals \$570,000 in investment and allows them to develop as they would like,

Mr. Stewart said. They “wanted to have standards,” so no building is shorter than 24’, so it feels urban when one is walking. “Developers want to be in a Town Center,” he said. In the Beaufort Town Center buildings, they didn’t require a second floor so as to avoid having excess space. Beaufort Town Center has been successful; \$33 million is not bad, Mr. Stewart said, and \$14 million is pending. Since 2004, the property taxes in the area have increased by \$424,000, which doesn't include Hospitality Tax, Accommodations Tax and business license fees. As the area has redeveloped, Bi-Lo’s profits went up and shrinkage went down.

In regard to the Boundary Street Design Standards, Mr. Stewart said they were meant to foster redevelopment. These standards require a second story, but that increases costs, and they require a minimum of 75% glass. In restaurants, those two things reduce Mr. Stewart return to less than 1%, he said, which doesn’t include the cost of land. That will not attract redevelopment.

Arnie McClure of Coast Architects in Charleston indicated Greenlawn Street on a map. He said for the development there, there are 3 different building types and they “are looking to develop townhouse apartments with street parking and parking behind it on the right behind the row houses.” On the left side of Greenlawn, parking would be on the rear in a garage on the first floor. Mr. McClure said they would develop to the marsh; they plan 137 units between these 2 areas and they “would like to build it all at once to meet the economy of scale.” There are some trees in the Greenlawn area where there were individual small houses and lots, Mr. McClure said. The 3 building types offer flexibility to work around property lines and *some* trees, but they “can’t save every tree on that site,” Mr. Stewart said, and they “are looking for relief on that.”

Vice Chairman McNally asked, in regard to the trees, if they had developed a streetscape plan. Mr. Stewart said there’s a defined plan for that type of development – parallel parking, streetlights and trees. In the plan, the trees are removed, and new ones are planted, but they are trying to keep as many trees as possible.

Mr. Stewart said in regard to zoning in that area, part of the housing development is in the PUD and part is not. They want to put in residential capacity and will need to change the PUD to add in 15 units more than previously permitted. One building bridges the PUD and non-PUD property. Some of these lots are not yet in the city, so the Boundary Street Plan does not govern them. They have to do a rezoning, and they have to decide how to do that. Expanding the PUD has been done already; city planning would like this to be simple, Mr. Stewart said, and “would prefer not to have to have extra documentation.” He can expand or reduce the PUD and depend on the Boundary Street standards, “but those are new and make us nervous.” They support the concept, he said, but in execution, “we don’t want to be a casualty.”

Mr. Stewart passed out an aerial photo. He reiterated that his organization had applied in 2004 - 2005 “to take out asphalt” in Jean Ribaut Square “and put in a green space,” but they were

denied. He referred again to “the picture,” which he said was the reason he was denied; “the picture” required that development needed to be closer to Boundary Street. They couldn't do that because of an agreement with Kmart, Mr. Stewart said. Commissioner Murray asked what “the picture” is that he is referring to, and Mr. Stewart said it's the Boundary Street Master Plan (though there was no Boundary Street Master Plan in 2004-2005, it was pointed out.) In lieu of the civic building in the Boundary Street Master Plan, Beaufort Town Center “wanted to put in a playground or some other kind of planters and plants,” Mr. Stewart said.

Vice Chairman McNally questioned Mr. Stewart about the planning staff's adherence to “the picture,” as the drawings are supposed to be conceptual, and a developer should be able do what they like. Commissioner Zara asked if the written code says that they can do what they want to do, as opposed to the drawings, and Mr. Stewart said, “Of course not.” Commissioner Murray asked about the process for appeal. Mr. Stewart said, “We could have built a park, but it wasn't the highest, best use of our time.” His organization is “already thought to be [full of] difficult characters,” Mr. Stewart said, so they “didn't want to go back to the well for this.”

Mr. Stewart questioned if redevelopment is going to be different than current development. Greenlawn pictures show row houses on it. In 2010, they “had to build to the picture, but now it's 2014,” he said. Commissioner Zara asked what was in the unincorporated area, and Mr. Stewart showed her. She observed, “They are not even contiguous.”

Mr. Stewart said the city is moving the sewer off the property, and they “are cleaning up the mess to the tune of \$240,000.” **Courtney Worrell** said two restaurants are stalemated currently because of this process. She said that “some trees still need to be removed,” and “that's where we are in a stalemate with the city.” Mr. Stewart said that May 5, he was told to talk to **Liza Hill** about the trees, though their plans had already been approved. Mr. Stewart said there are “a couple of trees” that the city wants to preserve that are where Beaufort Town Center wants to develop parking for Starbucks. The Town Center group had already had **Michael Murphy** do a tree study. There is a tree, Ms. Worrell said, that they were told needs to stay, and as a result, they “had to give more parking up in a restaurant we have developed for months.” They want to take out the tree and remediate in the parking lot at Jean Ribaut Square, Mr. Stewart said, but they can't; they also can't develop where they want to because of the trees (and the required percentage of glass and a second story). Mr. Stewart said he's coming to the Redevelopment Commission “for a grant.” He wants to know that if he spends money to develop, he won't be hamstrung by the city's requirements.

Commissioner Zara asked, “if it is possible to extend the PUD to do this.” “This makes city planning nervous,” Mr. Stewart replied, “and city council has so much invested” that Beaufort Town Center was told “that everyone else will want a PUD if they allow me to do that.” Commissioner Zara said that would be the logical thing to do. Mr. Stewart said he and his people “can't figure this out; we think we're missing something.”

Vice Chairman McNally said in his experience, if trees have to go, Mr. Stewart will still need to remediate, and plans to do that are shown through a landscaping mediation plan. If the Redevelopment Commission can see “a mediation plan that has value,” they can talk to staff and see if there’s a compromise to be made. Commissioner Zara said, “The Metropolitan Planning Commission seems to be smart and does their homework.” Vice Chairman McNally asked if Beaufort Town Center had developed a full mediation plan. Mr. Stewart said they had asked if the city would consider remediation, and they were told no. “There is no flexibility” in the Starbucks lot; they have to lose two spaces, Ms. Worrell said.

Mr. McClure said 75% of the first floor wall has to be glass on the side facing Boundary Street, and that leaves little wall for the structure to hold up the building. The restaurant is 2000 square feet and has 50 – 75% more steel than it would have normally. Mr. Stewart said, “To get the Starbucks, if we can’t get concessions, we would like to take our land, close off the street, and move on.” He added that his group doesn’t “want to go over the heads of the planning staff.”

Mr. Stewart said again that Beaufort must avoid sprawl, and they need to be careful not to turn Highway 170 into Highway 278. Commissioner Waldrop asked if the 75% glass was in the code, and Mr. McClure said yes. They had a lot of glass for the Starbucks building, but not the minimum 75% that’s in the ordinance. You’re required to have glass facing the street, Mr. McClure said; he believes that percentage “is pulled out of a hat” and planners “didn’t think of the consequences.”

Mr. Stewart said, “The Urban Land Institute dictated the second story and glass to make people feel as if they were in a bigger city.” Commissioner Waldrop said he is “having trouble picturing what a building with 75% glass looks like.” Mr. Stewart said that Starbucks has no interest in a second floor and will not pay extra rent for it.

Commissioner Zara asked what the Redevelopment Commission could do to help Mr. Stewart. He said they could convene a meeting with “moderate folks like you” instead of going to council or planning staff. Vice Chairman McNally said one of the Redevelopment Commission’s jobs is to be a facilitator of development. He said “there may be arbitrary and capricious ideas in the plan,” and the Redevelopment Commission “should carry this discussion into the next meeting with planning.” They can convene a workshop meeting as soon as possible, Vice Chairman McNally said, adding, “This is a huge project.”

Commissioner Zara said Mr. Stewart “deserves some credit for his investment in the city thus far.” Vice Chairman McNally said the commissioners needed to review the memo packet from the city manager. He thinks some problems may be resolvable, and they can “get compromise, so this development can be an economic engine for the city.”

Vice Chairman McNally suggested to the commissioners that they have a special meeting with

Ms. Hill, **Lauren Kelly, Libby Anderson**, and anyone else they would like to have. Mr. Stewart said his business is “spooked to spend a lot of money on Greenlawn and find out later that we have to change the plan.” They would like to break ground on Greenlawn this year, he said. Starbucks said they hoped to be open before the holidays, but now that will not happen.

There being no further business to come before the commission, **Commissioner Zara made a motion, second by Commissioner Murray, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously**, and the meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.