

A meeting of the Beaufort Redevelopment Commission was held on January 8, 2015 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 McFee, Keith Waldrop, and Martin Goodman. Henrietta Good, Stephen Murray, Mike McNally, Wendy Zara, and Alan Dechovitz 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.

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

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Commissioner McFee made a motion, second by Commissioner Goodman to approve the minutes of December 4, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

UPDATES ON LAFAYETTE STREET

Chairman Verity asked **Libby Anderson** about Lafayette Street, and she replied, "It is moving forward at last."

GREENLAWN DEVELOPMENT

Chairman Verity passed out a preliminary plan for the proposed rental buildings in the Marsh Gardens PUD. The plan is to put six buildings up that are adjacent to the Hilton Garden Inn, which will be the first part of the project. The Greenlawn section will have to be upgraded, and council approved the acceleration of the engineering plans for the street. It will be 137 units and "a boost for this part of town." There have been a lot of improvements and adjustments made already. There's no groundbreaking date, Chairman Verity said.

CITY HALL CONNECTOR/CORRIDOR

There will be a groundbreaking for a connector road between Marsh and Sycamore, which will be done in the next 30 days, Chairman Verity said. It will provide curb cuts for further development. The connector will be turned over to the city as a street. It will be an entrance to City Hall, etc. for people coming from the West. Ms. Anderson said they "are working away." **Mayor Billy Keyserling** said that while council had approved funding for the street improvements, no time frame was put on it.

Chairman Verity introduced **David Coleman** who had started working for the city on Boundary Street and other city projects. Mr. Coleman said they "are working diligently...to get started."

PRESENTATION: WHITEHALL PLANTATION

Steve Tully and **Dick Stewart** have taken an option on the property at Whitehall, Chairman Verity said. Mr. Tully is here to make an informative presentation. Mr. Tully said that his architect in Bluffton and **Lauren Kelly** had been cooperating and making changes. This is a

conceptual plan of 72 lots and two mixed-use units. There has been discussion of more mixed use, but Mr. Tully said that he is a single-family developer. The plan was initially for 99 lots. It's a 20-acre parcel. They have cut out a three-acre waterfront park. The goal is a three-acre public waterfront park. The streets are designed in a traditional neighborhood design. Streets and parks take up most of the property. The smallest lots are 40 x 125'. This is all urban infill; there are no estate lots. They want to do it traditionally, under form-based code with a waterfront park.

Mr. Tully reviewed the Civic Master Plan for Whitehall and the waterfront park area. He then passed around handouts. He discussed the waterfront park and waterway. They want to make as light an imprint as possible but develop it. There are conceptual plans, some of which are the waterfront park. It's a public/private partnership. He discussed their thoughts on this. The conceptual master plan and their plan both call for mixed use and multi-family units. There's a peninsula toward Beaufort, Mr. Tully added.

The conceptual plan, Mr. Tully said, is a basic Traditional Neighborhood design. He's heard comments that say it's "sexy." They want to make it "a walkable, homey neighborhood." The design standards would be like Midtown. They would like to develop it without a homeowners' association. They exist for architectural standard reviews and to pay for common property. They would have no shared property in their plan, and the city and the Open Land Trust would own the park.

According to Mr. Tully, if the homeowners have no common property, they will be charged a fee, and it will go to the owner of the park to maintain the common areas there. They are communicating with the Redevelopment Commission and have talked to other groups in the city. Individual and group meetings have been going well, Mr. Tully said.

Chairman Verity asked the timeframe for the project. Mr. Tully said they could finish the concept plan within the next 30 days. They have to get other ducks in the row before they start planning engineering, etc. Chairman Verity asked the price range. Mr. Tully said it's higher than he's developed before. An entry-level lot is \$125,000; the average home price would be \$500,000. Forty people are on the "interested party" list as of today. The property, he said, is expensive but "new...and a cool neighborhood" that allows for walking downtown. "There (are) going to be million dollar houses on the water in there, for sure," he said.

Mr. Tully said he and Mr. Stewart have a deal with the owner of the property, who has "a deed in lieu," and three banks are part of the deal to purchase it as well; they have benchmarks they have to make, including some agreements with the city in regard to viability, a form-based code or PUD agreement (which they're not interested in), but by June they "need to start putting some hard money on this. They are vested in the project, Mr. Tully said, but they're not required to close on it until November.

Commissioner Waldrop said it's not as intensively developed as in the Civic Master Plan; Mr. Tully said, "It's a third of the density, by my estimation." Commissioner Waldrop asked if there would be a provision for parking, and Mr. Tully said, "Every street has parking on both sides." Mr. Tully's planners have talked about softening the edge of the street up to the park. There will be adequate on-street parking. There are some trees that will determine where the parking goes; 18" and above trees may require porkchops around them.

Phil Cromer asked about the dock, and Mr. Tully described as being in bad shape; he then described their plans for "a simple sunset pier with no floating dock" and the boardwalk.

There are some important trees there, Mr. Tully said, though they do have some concerns about the "pine forest." He said, "Some of the trees will stay if they're in the right spot."

Chairman Verity said he believes everyone is excited about the potential development of this property; it's a key element in the master plan. There's been "no approval of anything to do with the city's involvement." Mr. Tully said, "We haven't asked for anything because we don't know what to ask for. Chairman Verity said they will meet with **Kathy Todd** to determine the potential benefit to the city and then what support the city can provide.

Maxine Lutz said she understands that it cannot remain a park, but she has hesitancy because "fewer people may move into the historic district" because of its proximity to downtown. Mr. Tully said merchants downtown have asked him if he is putting in commercial, and he has told them he doesn't want to. Thirty-seven of the people on the list he had are from Beaufort, he said.

Mr. Tully said he and Mr. Stewart had agreed that they "would continue to live here." They won't do the development as the Civic Master Plan presents it – at "super-high density," which they think is "too intense" – and they won't do it without a *public* waterfront park. He said they also wouldn't buy it if they can't do it "light imprint."

There being no further business to come before the commission, **Commissioner Goodman made a motion, second by Commissioner McFee, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously**, and the meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.