

A work session of Beaufort City Council was held on March 26, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilwoman Nan Sutton, Councilmen Mike McFee, Stephen Murray, and Phil Cromer, and Bill Prokop, city manager.

In accordance with the 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.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Keyserling called the work session to order at 5:01 p.m. [SEP]

PRESENTATION: STORMWATER PROJECT AZALEA DRIVE

Neil Desai, Public Works, made a presentation about the stormwater project on Azalea Drive. He showed the design plans in the area and the project location. Mr. Desai said they had deviated slightly from the plan to save time, money, and materials.

The existing watershed had experienced frequent drainage issues for 15 years and the runoff was coming mostly from the Town of Port Royal watershed at Arthur Horne Park, Mr. Desai said. The drainage structure was undersized and remediation work was done 12 years ago.

Mr. Desai showed photos of the flooding in the project area in 2014 and of the work done on the project in its various phases. He then showed photos of the phases of work at Rosemont and the final phase of the project, which was putting up fencing.

Mr. Desai shared a project summary about Public Works' communication with adjacent property owners, and coordination with Beaufort County and SCDOT. The project budget was \$139,750, he said, and so far, the project expenditure is \$66,277, with about \$8,000 in purchase orders still pending. The lowest bid from contractors was \$118,000, and the highest was \$284,000. These costs were for materials and supplies, plus fencing and tree work, Mr. Desai said, "which was a little bit outside our scope," but costs do not include "the in-house hours for labor."

The next project is starting in May, Mr. Desai said; it is in the same area and would close off a 15' drainage easement to keep things from getting into it.

Matt St. Clair said on the Mossy Oaks stormwater project, they are awaiting word on the application for a "Rural Infrastructure Authority grant," and in April or May, they want to begin digging around the Jane Way canal, which is "a priority effort in Basin #1." Mr. Desai said they have asked for permission to start on that before the full Mossy Oaks project. It may be done in-house or by contractors, he said.

Mr. Desai said the county "will do work for us from a back truck," and they charge a fee

for that. They send their own people and charge a flat fee for the work, which includes the operators, he said. Councilman Murray said municipal residents pay to purchase this equipment; he feels a conversation might need to take place about an intergovernmental agreement to allow the use of county equipment without additional charges.

Councilman Murray said county equipment inventory is “sitting around somewhere,” and it could be better utilized to help with such projects.

DISCUSSION: UPDATE ON LADY'S ISLAND PLAN

Mayor Keyserling said the Northern Regional Planning Implementation Committee (NRPIC) unanimously approved (with only 1 of 4 county council members present) a plan modified significantly from the one that council first saw and the one that Councilman Murray had made detailed comments on.

Mayor Keyserling said the plan “doesn't have lot to do with the city,” which is a partner, but which is only going to be annex on Lady’s Island to correct donut holes. “The only significant action” for the city would be the changing of growth boundaries, he said. He and Councilman McFee feel that the growth boundaries to the north “are likely not an issue,” Mayor Keyserling said, but to the south, “we’ll have to do some work,” so as not to create “additional donut holes with Distant Island.”

Councilman McFee said, “We determined that the implementation” of the Lady’s Island Plan “would not be with the CPC” (Community Preservation Committee), but “request that [implementation] be with NRPIC,” which, with staff, were considered “most appropriate.” He said, “We were okay with the CPC being stood up, of course, and formalized,” but “in the city, it would be a voluntary presentation to the CPC from non-by-right developments and by-right developments of a certain acreage.” This presentation would be encouraged, “but it’s not a requirement that” developers “have to add another layer of bureaucracy to their process.”

Kate Schaefer said the new draft is being formatted now. It includes the text and map wordsmithing from city council work sessions, and the steering committee feels there are “positive changes” that “create a unified front on Lady’s Island,” she said, which was an objective of the committee.

Mr. Prokop asked for clarification about whether developers in the City of Beaufort would have to go through the CPC. Councilman McFee said, “Our proposal was clear:” the CPC “would be stood up and formalized . . . but in the county, for non-by-right development and by-right development of a certain acreage, it would be a requirement” to go through the CPC, while “it would be made voluntary in the city for non-by-right development and developments of a certain acreage.” Councilman Murray said developers can “take the opportunity to go to the CPC” to get feedback from stakeholders before they start the process. Creating another regulatory stop for

development on Lady's Island "didn't seem to make much sense," he said. Councilman McFee said the steering committee and the Northern Regional Planning Implementation Committee were "clear on that." Ms. Schaefer said formalizing the CPC is important from the county side, but it's voluntary from the city side.

Councilman Murray detailed the positive changes that had been made in the plan and thanked the Lady's Island Steering Committee for its hard work. He thinks the city and county will soon approve the plan, but he thinks it should be clear that "the hard work is just beginning."

Councilman Murray said he thinks some of the issues that were brought up near the end of the plan would have been resolved sooner, but the city's representative on the steering committee was making "inaccurate representations". He thinks that has been rectified now, with a new member being placed on that committee.

Councilman McFee said there are "a lot of moving pieces" in the Lady's Island Plan that "effect jurisdictions very differently." It "took a lot of doing" to understand the original plan and to "get it to mesh" because of its complexity, he said. Also, a lot of the partners weren't fully engaged with it initially, but now they have been, so the work on it was worth it, Councilman McFee feels.

There was a general discussion about being able to contain shopping on Lady's Island for its residents via the "village center" idea. Councilman Murray said he is not sure that the current codes "get us to what is laid out in the plan," and the implementation committee needs to take a look at today's plans and the "visioning exercises" to see if those plans will "get us to where we want to be in 20 years." He thinks they "may get us partly there." This effort needs to be county-led, with a Boundary Street-type "visioning exercise, Councilman Murray said, at least along the corridor and the village center. Mayor Keyserling said the county was not prepared to hire the Boundary Street consultant, but he feels "a Boundary Street-like study and plan will need to be done."

Mayor Keyserling said the Stantec traffic plan isn't premature to mitigate traffic today, but by the time it's done, he "can assure you it will be outdated." He would like more thoughts on a parallel route on Highway 21. Councilman Murray said the Stantec plan is "solely a transportation plan," and in hindsight, they should have done a bigger, more expansive study "before we went out and got the money" for what it proposes. It would be a shame to spend \$30 million on the corridor and have it be outdated, he said, adding that the city's "responsibility is limited."

Councilman Murray said a "positive thing that the county is considering" is buying the Pine View tract, which is 100+ acres, and it has made a presentation to the Natural Resources Committee, which approved the plan and "moved it to Open Land Trust for due diligence." Acquiring the site would cost "about \$3.5 million," he said. There's "potential for 214 residential units," Councilman Murray said, and "almost 1,000 daily

car trips.” He suggested people “talk to Rural and Critical Lands folks or the county” to support acquiring this parcel.

Councilman Murray said a part of the Lady’s Island Plan is better monitoring of development agreements, and the county will look into reducing the density when possible.

For next steps, Councilman Murray said the revised draft of the Lady’s Island Plan would come back to county and city councils. The Northern Regional Planning Implementation Committee has asked for nominations for the subcommittee that will implement the plan, he said.

A member of the public asked for a potential timeline, so the public would know when they were able to offer input on implementation. Mayor Keyserling said they anticipate the next step will be in April. Councilman Murray said at that month’s NRPIC meeting, the subcommittee will be stood up. He said the city has asked that the portions on the rising sea level overlay and the sewer ordinance would be completed within 6 months. Councilman McFee said the people who will serve on the implementation committee should be decided “fairly quickly.”

Councilman McFee said the Lady’s Island Plan’s edits should be done by the time of the NRPIC meeting in April. Ms. Schaefer said the plan’s been to the county’s Natural Resources Committee, and it was approved.

Mayor Keyserling said the work on the fill, overlay, and the sewer issue will “fall on the county,” and the city hopes “they would get on it.”

There being no further business to come before council, the work session was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.