

MINUTES

COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 – 4:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Maureen Copelof, Chair, Council Member
Gary Daniel, Vice Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
Paul Ray, Planning Director
Nicole Bentley, Heart of Brevard
Melanie Spreen, Heart of Brevard Representative
Dee Dee Perkins, Citizen Member
Susan Threlkel, Council Appointed At-Large Member

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Maureen Copelof welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

C. Approval of Minutes from February 27, 2020 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Perkins, seconded by Ms. Spreen to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

D. 2020 BUILD Grant

Mr. Fatland reported that our 2020 BUILD Grant application was submitted on May 18th. This is our third attempt for this grant and is by far our strongest application. He said our consultant Julie Metz put together a source and use statement totaling \$62.4M. He explained that \$39M was from DOT and included the Access Management Plan on Asheville Highway, the Davidson River Connector and Ecusta Road roundabouts, the Pisgah improvements in the National Forest where they are going to do the widening, and the Davison River pedestrian bridge. The BUILD Grant focused on three areas: the streetscape improvements on Broad Street and Main Street, the completion of Estatoe

Trail from the Depot all the way to Brevard High School, and a pedestrian tunnel underneath Asheville Highway. We also included the Ecusta Trail project connecting into Brevard. The local match would be \$4M. Mr. Fatland explained that we currently designate two cents of the tax rate to the Downtown Master Plan and two cents to Parks, Trails and Recreation, which equates to \$360,000 per year which could be used toward repayment of the loan. The theme of the application was focused on the FOCUS 2020 Report's "Gateways, Corridors & Downtown" chapter. Mr. Fatland noted what better way to talk about multi-modal transportation...it included safety for the motorists, bike paths and the trail system. We will find out if we are successful before Thanksgiving.

E. City of Brevard Small Business Support

Mr. Fatland reported that on May 18th Staff took a report to City Council for them to consider a plan to support small businesses downtown. We included a number of things that the City could do. Staff communicated with Heart of Brevard and the Chamber of Commerce to look at opportunities of where the City could come in and help. The first element of the plan is we have ordered more tables to put on the lot beside the barbershop, in the alleyway next to Hunters & Gatherers, and in the alleyway next to Sully's Steamers. Ms. Copelof added that we have ordered umbrellas for the tables by the barbershop and we will be putting out signs indicating all these tables are for public use. Ms. Bentley noted that Heart of Brevard created a map of all those public spaces which also includes public restrooms and handwashing.

The second element is that City Council donated an additional \$25,000 to the Transylvania Tomorrow Small Business Emergency Fund. The City had previously donated \$5,000 to the fund in April, making a total donation of \$30,000.

Under the Governor's Phase 2 reopening, restaurants are limited to 50% capacity in order to meet social distancing restrictions. The third element of the plan was a resolution to close parking spaces along Main Street to vehicular traffic and parking. Those parking spaces will be used for pedestrians and the sidewalks will be used by stores to expand their operations and by restaurants to expand their seating capacity. Restaurants that serve alcohol will be allowed to serve alcoholic beverages between the entrance/exit of the individual restaurant and the outdoor dining space on the sidewalk space immediately in front of the restaurant. Mr. Fatland said we have strong support to go ahead and put the fencing in.

Ms. Bentley added that we do have a lot of support from businesses, and not just restaurants. She thinks retail is excited about expanding to the sidewalks. Some of the artists are planning to set up a workspace outside and possibly do some live demonstrations and maybe do some workshops/classes. She said the Heart of Brevard will help beautify that area with plants and some public art and she feels that this is an opportunity to bring the community together and shine on downtown.

Ms. Copelof noted that we will add solar lighting along the top of the fencing. She said we also have a proposal to put lighted globes in the trees, which will add to the festive look. Mr. Ray reported that he has ordered the new signage for the public dining areas and curbside pickup areas. The signs will have wheels so will be easily movable and he anticipates that they will be delivered within the next three weeks.

Mr. Ray distributed a map of the proposed areas for the expanded dining/retail zone, the new pedestrian zone and public parking areas (copy attached). He explained that the green area is the dining/retail zone; the purple area is the new pedestrian zone; the blue areas are public parking areas and the blue cars indicate curbside pickup or 30-minute parking spaces. This map will be on the website and published in the newspaper.

Ms. Bentley asked for clarity about who is really in charge of managing that project in terms of beautifying the space. She said obviously it is going to take a lot of partners and collaboration to figure out who is going to be spearheading that. She said I think it is important that we consider making all of downtown look stable and inviting and open. While we've got some folks who are opting out of this, there is a perception that these two blocks get everything all the time. If we're going to consider lights, that's something that is easy to do in all of downtown and maybe this is a good time to revisit pole banners or something that makes us look connected. She has been working on some things for the test block but she wants some clarity on who is in charge of that or leading that effort.

Ms. Copelof said she would love for the Heart of Brevard to work with our artists and businesses to come up with something that works that meets safety requirements. She said she views it as a partnership between the City and Heart of Brevard, but she sees Heart of Brevard taking the lead on working with the businesses and the artists and developing a plan and running it by the City for concurrence. She stressed that this is a test site and we will see what works and doesn't work and the process will be refined.

Ms. Perkins asked, should restaurants not along the purple pathway find value to using parking spaces for at least pickup or block those spaces so that they can have some extensions, do they just need to contact the Planning Department to get on the list to get permission for that? Mr. Daniel suggested it would be a good idea to reach out to other businesses and restaurants that are not located within downtown to let them know that they can contact the Planning Department if they are interested in expanding and using their outside space. Ms. Spreen suggested that we reach out the owners of the various strip malls to see if there is a way we can work together to help the businesses located in those areas.

Ms. Perkins said there are some businesses on Jordan Street that are struggling and may be interested in expanding outside. She asked if there would be a way to temporarily block off Jordan Street near Broad Street to the alleyway. However, she said pickup will still be really important to Jordan Street businesses. There was discussion about possibly making Jordan Street a 2-way street from Caldwell to the parking lot. Mr.

Fatland said we would need to get City Council approval for that to happen. Following discussion Mr. Fatland moved and Mr. Daniel seconded to direct City Staff to work with Heart of Brevard and Jordan Street businesses to look at a closure plan for City Council consideration at their June meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council Downtown Master Plan Committee will be on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 4:00 PM.

G. Adjourn

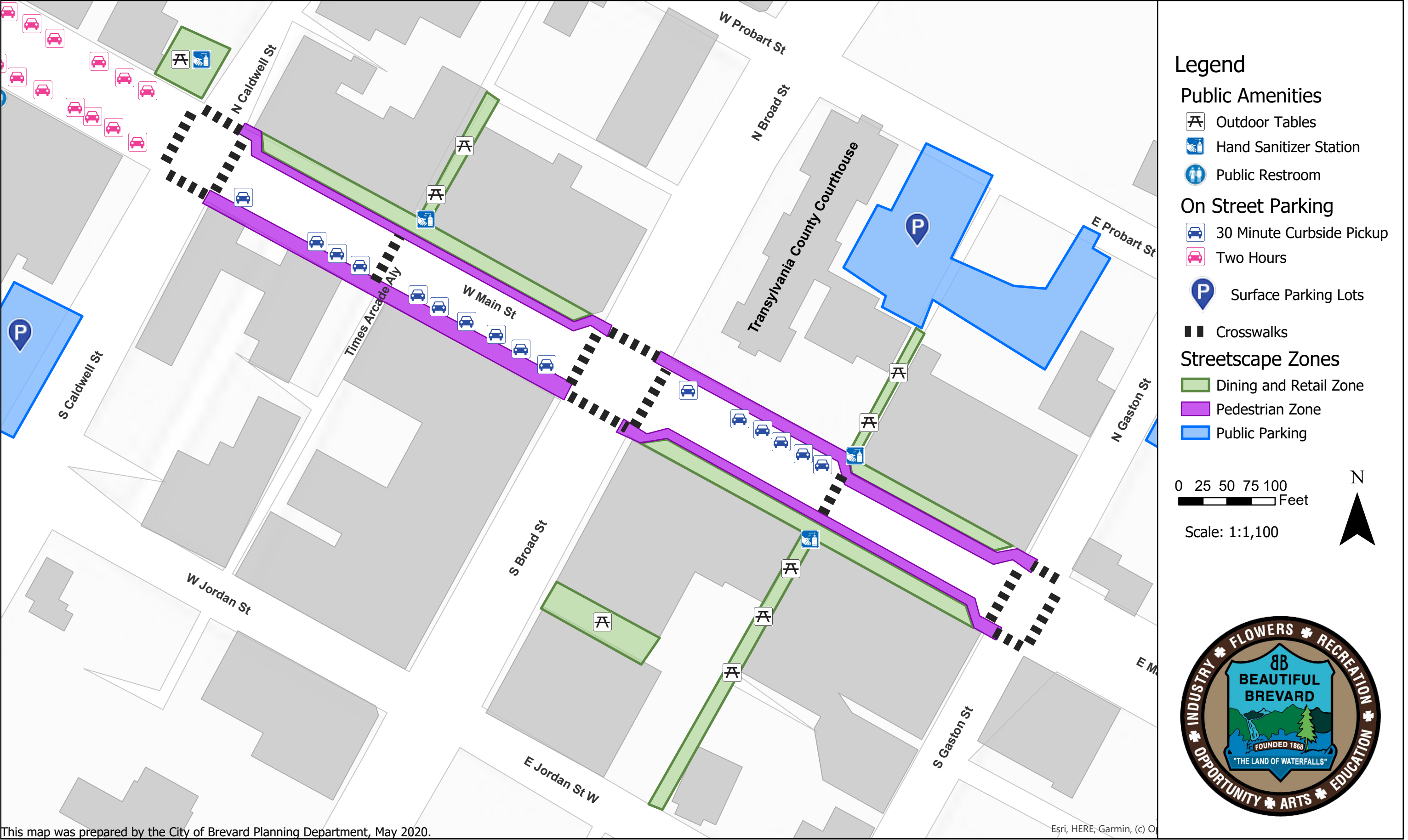
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.

X Maureen Copelof
Maureen Copelof
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved - June 24, 2020

X Denise Hodsdon
Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant

City of Brevard: Streetscape Pilot Program



This map was prepared by the City of Brevard Planning Department, May 2020.