

**MINUTES
BREVARD CITY COUNCIL
March 23, 2015 – 5:30 PM**

Caldwell Street Corridor Work Session

The City Council of the City of Brevard met on Monday, March 23, 2015, starting at 5:00 P.M. with a light dinner, followed by the scheduled Caldwell Street Corridor work session starting at 5:30 P.M. in City Council Chambers with Mayor Jimmy Harris presiding.

The following were present: Mayor Jimmy Harris, Mayor Pro Tem Mac Morrow, Council Members Ann Hollingsworth, Wes Dickson and Maurice Jones. Council Member Charlie Landreth joined the meeting in progress at 6:00 P.M.

Staff: City Manager Joe Moore, Planning Director Josh Freeman, Assistant to City Manager LeAnn McCraw, Utility Director and City Engineer Jay Johnston, P.E., Assistant Planning Director Daniel Cobb, Fire Chief Craig Budzinski, Deputy Clerk Jill Murray and City Clerk Desiree Perry.

Press: Derek McKissock, Transylvania Times

A. Welcome and Call to Order - Mayor Harris called the meeting to order, welcomed those present and explained the properly noticed regular scheduled Work Session is open to the public and will be held in a “round table” workshop setting.

B. Quorum – City Clerk certified a quorum present.

C. Agenda – Ms. Hollingsworth moved, seconded by Mr. Jones, the Work Session Agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

D. New Business

D-1. Resolution Supporting North Carolina Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program. Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Ms. Hollingsworth, the drafted Resolution closing paragraph be amended to read, “re-establishing the State’s Historic *Preservation* Tax Credits as a tool....”, and be approved as amended.

Discussion: Mr. Morrow asked, and Council briefly discussed, if the drafted Resolution should also include the City’s residential structures that have been designated. Following discussion it was decided the focus of the Bill is to restore tax credits for commercial structures and therefore additional changes to the drafted Resolution are not needed.

Vote on Motion: Motion carried unanimously.

E. Work Session Discussion Topic – Clemson Corridor Project

Mr. Moore offered information from his staff report (on file) and explained the purpose of the work session is to provide Council with an update on the work completed to date and will provide feedback on the project’s design elements and priorities for implementation.

Mr. Freeman introduced the project consultants: Mr. Eric Woolridge, Ms. Teresa Buckwalter, and Mr. Alex Gotherman of Destination by Design; Mr. Dave Loftis, P.E., of S&ME Environmental; and, Mr. J. T. Barnes of Urban 3.

Mr. Freeman shared Destination by Design, a Planning and Design, Economic Development, Place Branding and Landscape Architect is the primary firm leading in the process and whose role is to deliver Master Plan Drawings, not construction

drawings. Environmental assessments have been done by S&ME Environmental, and, Urban 3 will speak to the role of density.

Mr. Eric Woolridge, Destination by Design, offered the project name itself has been debated with the most recent suggestion being, "Clemson Plaza at Caldwell and Main". Presentation will include three parts: (a) Environmental, (b) Public Visioning, and, (c) Refined Design Concepts.

At 5:50 P.M., Mayor Harris called for a brief recess in order to allow him and the Manager to leave Council Chambers that he might ask the Manager a question in private. They returned at 5:52 P.M., and the work session resumed.

Environmental - Mr. Dave Loftis, SM&E Environmental, offered that based upon the Phase 1 Environmental Study and provisions within the Brownfields Reuse Act, development of the Williams property would be possible as the Act allows properties to be cleaned up or remediation based upon the intended use. Prior uses of the Williams property include a gas station and dry cleaner business. No soil contamination was discovered; however, the water table is only about three feet deep, which helps explains why. Ground water remediation can be quite difficult. If a structure is planned for the site, most likely the State will require a vapor barrier under the foundation to prevent vapor intrusion. With the low water table, the State may also have concerns over potential contamination moving off the site and flowing to the east and, if so, the impact upon adjoining property. Should any cut take place on the back bank, the State will require additional soil testing. State writes an agreement based upon the intended use and once done, and provided you keep within the agreement, the State cannot sue you. In conclusion, environmental concerns can be addressed to allow development of the land.

6:00 P.M. – Council Member Charlie Landreth joined the meeting in progress.

Mr. Freeman offered the property owner, Mr. Williams, although not present, was invited to attend tonight's meeting. He shared if the City were to choose to not purchase the property, that the Agreement can become a piece of marketing leverage for a future purchaser. The Brownfields Agreement that Staff has worked on provides the property owner (Mr. Williams) to be in a better position than before the assessment was done.

Public Visioning and Refined Design Concepts – Mr. Woolridge shared two-days of public input sessions were held on December 10th and 11th, 2014, at the historic Transylvania Trust Company building located on the corner of South Caldwell and West Main Streets, in which 83 people attended and provided their input. Overview of the study area were three sites, the Clemson Park area (S. Caldwell & W. Main), William tract (S. Caldwell & Probart St.), the Rice Furniture property (S. Caldwell & Probart St.) and the adjoining alleyway (Probart St. to W. Main). Using power-point, Destination by Design's Clemson Plaza @ Caldwell & Main Preliminary Recommendations report slides were projected for Council and the audience. (Copy on file.) Recommendations are a combination of the public input comments coupled with the design teams professional expertise resulting in the various concept options.

Williams Property

- Become an open space, especially if tied or connected to the Clemson Park and Austin properties for a more cohesive plan.
- For property to be open space or a park, City would need to purchase the property.
- In light of it being a heavily traffic area, noise, and a relatively small tract of land, a berm area to help mitigate the concerns is included in the draft recommendations.
- Open space with mixed use that could provide business/art/dining space and produce tax revenue. Designers estimate an approximate 17,000 square feet building with two levels of parking (not a parking deck) including open space, perhaps a water feature, etc., could be considered for the tract,

- As the street intersection (Probart & Caldwell) at the property serves as one of the gateways to the Brevard Music Center, it may be worthwhile to consider making that portion of Probart Street one-way for vehicular traffic.
- Mr. Barnes provided information on future tax value potentials if developed as a mixed use, business, dining, etc. Public amenities do not increase adjacent tax values.

Rice Property and Alleyway

- Property not large enough to provide much parking.
- Property on the North side which remains shaded almost all day and therefore not a good option for a dog park.
- Could connect design with the Williams property as a potential.
- Alleyway – Could accommodate a 10x10 gathering place; grass and brick walkway improvements along with an archway or similar architectural improvement at Main Street would encourage more use of the alleyway.

Clemson Plaza and Extension

- Open space designed to incorporate some of the property history of previous use; previous theatre use shown in design of light fixtures and “theatre style” framed mural/art boxes mounted on the wall that would accommodate changeable art, along with marque style awning that perhaps historical information could be provided upon the wall below the awning.

Austin Property

- A design concept using the Clemson, Austin, Williams and Rice properties, if having opportunity to consider the area “as a whole” was included and briefly discussed.

Council Discussion:

- Pg. 15 (spiral bound document) indicates public input on the Clemson Park included water feature, wall mural, bicycle parking, and yet, none of those features appear to have been considered in the design concept;
- Interest in have a small water feature along the wall or within the property was discussed. A water feature that would encourage children to play in was discouraged due to the small size of the property and its close proximity to the heavily trafficked Caldwell Street.
- Discussion of a mixed use on the Williams property was discussed and is incorporated in some of the design concepts; however, not so with the Rice property. Why not? Seems the flow would be as good or better to do so, especially with the alleyway connection.
- Clemson property is the only one that the City owns and therefore perhaps more consideration should be given to that parcel at this time. Development of it is not contingent upon the other described neighboring properties.
- Ms. Hollingsworth complimented them on the work done and added she would be interested in ways to combine a little of both - concept of park at Clemson property and mixed use development on the other properties; utilizing the flow as is shown on Clemson Plaza. Would also provide a nice entrance at Probart Street and for the Music Center.
- Mixed Use – Do not see the City as the developer, but, City could be a partner in such a development. (Brownfields Agreement)
- Alleyway – Grade improvements would help; current grade makes it difficult, or appears to be difficult, for walking.
- Clemson Plaza – Suggested seating wall improvements to reduce look/feel that it leads one to the street; like concept of the interchangeable artwork.
- Mayor expressed disappointment in the design concept for Clemson property as it offers only sidewalk and some wall art, he expected more. Suggested a decorative wrought iron fence could be considered to enhance the park property while providing a pedestrian safety buffer between the property and Caldwell & Main Streets.

- Important the history of the Clemson property be considered within the design concept. Panels are reminiscent to movie poster box while allowing art work to be changed.
- West Loop – Future west loop may provide another, perhaps even a better aligned, entrance way to the Music Center. If so, that would add support to encouraging a mixed use at the Williams's property rather than open space only.

Current Financial Situation – Approximately \$230,000 to \$250,000 dollars remain. Staff needs to know what Council wants the focus to be on as there are not enough funds for all.

- Ms. Hollingsworth expressed importance of implementation needed in order for people to see something done which will excite interest to see what will follow. Based upon tonight's discussion, she would like to see the Williams property go to the private sector; put financial resources we have into the Clemson property.
- Mr. Morrow offered learning the Williams property can be cleaned up and developed, and that a Brownfield Agreement is possible and could be leverage for private development, equals success in his opinion.
- Mr. Dickson offered he's been taking in tonight's presentation as information; interested in seeing the differing concepts and how we can look to apply them; interested in getting more information on the P3 and would want to better understand before venturing down that road; interested in private development; and he keeps coming back to the Clemson property as the one to implement as it is the only space the City owns. Suggested the questions of asking, "What is the City's intent as a whole?" and, "Where do we want to put our effort?" should be explored. Would hate to put funds towards Clemson property only to later decide they really should have been put on the Williams property. Would rather exhaust all of our ideas before we spend the money to find we need it someplace else.
- Mr. Morrow shared the Clemson Plaza concept would take a piece of property that is not being used to be developed and better used.
- Mayor Harris shared the Clemson property is one sure thing.
- Mr. Landreth shared construction drawings on Clemson park is obtainable and a productive goal. A first step in creating public space at Main Street and would have a good impact. Marketing a mixed use opportunity on Williams property would have a good impact too.

Mr. Weinstein, Brevard Music Center, was present in the audience and he expressed interest in having opportunity to provide some more specific input whenever the City considers any improvements and/or changes to Probart Street.

Mr. and Mrs. Patton were present and shared they desire the entire project to make a statement, to be positive for the City and the Music Center. Mrs. Patton shared she feels Clemson "plaza" seems a bit too fancy for a 5,000 square feet of area.

Mayor Harris shared the professional design team has presented their Report and have heard lots of ideas, suggestions, concerns from Council members – enough for them to take these ideas and come back to Council with additional renderings for Council.

Ms. Hollingsworth asked if the City is now going forward with construction drawings on the Clemson park?

Staff suggested one more workshop to incorporate comments from tonight's work session to finalize design concept on Clemson site, bring back to Council for approval to then go to construction documents. And perhaps continue on with the two scenarios on the Williams site and come back with more information and financial options on P3.

Adjourn - There being no further business, Mr. Landreth moved, seconded by Ms. Hollingsworth, the work session be adjourned. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:51 P.M.

s/_____
Jimmy Harris
Mayor

s/_____
Desiree D. Perry, CMC, NCCMC
City Clerk

Minutes Approved: May 18, 2015