



## **AARRC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

*Thursday, April 14, 2016*

*Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, Second Floor Board Room*

**Board Members in Attendance:** Chair Carleton Collins, Esther Cartwright, Joe Ferikes, Karl Koon, Jane Mathews, George Morosani, Brownie Newman, Peter Sprague, Pam Turner, Kristie Quinn, Cindy Visnich Weeks, Jason Young

**Board Members Absent:** Vice Chair Stephanie Brown, Councilman Cecil Bothwell

**Staff in Attendance:** Sara Henry, Stephanie Monson Dahl, City Manager Gary Jackson, Sasha Vrtunski

**Guests:** Josh O'Conner, Jason Sanford

Chair Collins called the commission to order at 4:02 p.m.

### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Collins made a motion to approve the March minutes. Mr. Sprague seconded the motion to approve the March minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **2. ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

**a. None**

### **3. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

#### **a. Network Planning Committee Update**

Mr. Sprague recounted the meeting held at the offices of Explore Asheville. At the meeting, Ms. Vrtunski reviewed the Draft Form-Based Code and reviewed the schedule to show the level of engagement with various stakeholders. The review of the code showed the impact on the various stakeholders in the area. Mr. Sprague noted the importance of engaging with businesses in the area so they can communicate how the code changes will affect them.

Mr. Sprague made a motion to add an item to the agenda which will provide a brief history lesson on an area or issue in the Riverfront before moving into current updates. He would like to have a presenter at every meeting and possibly collaborate with other stakeholders, such as UNCA, to provide relevant historical information. Ms. Mathews added that her husband conducted an

historical property study on the river and that he may be able present. Mr. Morosani and Ms. Mathews highlighted the importance of understanding the history of the area and collaborating with various partners including Riverlink. The group approved of the idea as a whole.

Mr. Sprague noted that River Ruckus is on April 25-26th. This is an event hosted by CrossFit Pisgah and will on Campus Drive. The Networking Subcommittee also covered current events from the newspaper and newsletters. Some of the highlights were Riverlink's approval to become a land trust, water testing of Reed Creek, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Get In Gear Fest was held on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, the EcoDepo is a new business opening in the Glen Rock building. Chair Collins reviewed the RADTIP article in the Citizen Times and felt it was an accurate review of the project. He noted New Belgium is opening on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Turner asked where the restaurant 12 Bones is relocating. Ms. Monson Dahl explained that the City is working with 12 Bones, and it is important for them to tell their own story when they are ready. The Commissioners asked several questions about the property acquisition process. Ms. Monson Dahl explained the City is working closely with all property owners in the right of way and anticipates all right of way will be acquired by the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

#### **a. Planning Committee Update**

Ms. Mathews provided an update on the Planning Committee Subcommittee meeting. There were use categories and questions about District XII and XIII regarding Form-Based Code. Her committee was able to give some comments and see the code. They had a productive two hour meeting.

### **5. STAFF UPDATES**

#### **a. Staff Projects Calendar Update**

Ms. Monson Dahl shared the project matrix document. She reviewed a new project for the Commissioners. The Parks maintenance building is being relocated from its current location at the corner of Hilliard and Clingman. This property will be used for affordable housing and an RFP for a qualified builder will go out in May. The City has been working internally to relocate the Parks department. Mr. Jackson added that the city property housing RFP will either be for a request for qualifications or a request for land. The request for qualifications will to through the Committee and through Council in the next 30 days.

#### **b. Private Development Update**

Ms. Monson Dahl reported that the Phil Mechanics building has hired a local architect to work on specs and schematics including livable spaces for artists. The developer, James Lifshutz, created the Blue Star Arts Complex in San Antonio, Texas. He has a background in developing historical structures.

### **c. Buncombe County Parks and Recreation Update – Josh O’Conner**

Mr. O’Conner reported that there are no major updates since the last meeting. He updated the Commissioners on the last public meeting stating that there was a good turnout and they have received substantial public comments. They hope to have the feasibility study complete by June, and are also moving forward with the agreements with NCDOT.

Mr. Morosani asked about the Beaucatcher Greenway. Mr. Jackson explained this is a City project. The City has 95% engineering drawings and took the final design to Council before going to bid. The funding for this project is approachable and the next step is to get construction bids and bring them back to Council for approval. With the few modifications, there is an overwhelming support for the Beaucatcher Greenway. The greenway will take about two years to complete. Mr. Jackson recounted the greenway connections which are in the works. The City plans to have a significant urban loop by 2020.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **a. Distribution of Draft Form Based Code – Sasha Vrtunski**

Chair Collins opened by stating that the intent of this presentation is to review the draft Form-Based Code and give the Commission a detailed overview of it’s make up. From here, the Commission can decide how much more detail they want to explore.

Ms. Vrtunski explained that there will be a video of previous presentations and that an Open City Hall discussion will begin on Form-Based Code next week. She proceeded to go into the draft code within each district and address the known issues. Every district, save District I, currently allows for light industrial which means the work is contained within the building and has no outside impact. Currently, Old Wood and T-Fab are light industrial. District III is Lyman Hollow. This district is 4-6 stories above the surrounding area. District IV is a flood impact area. This is along Lyman and Riverside Dr. within the RADTIP area. This District has a maximum height of 5 stories and is a mixed use district. District V is across the tracks, mixed use, finer grain and closer to the neighborhoods and The Grey Eagle. The maximum height in this district is 3 stories. The feedback received to date is that people are not happy about this height limit, and the City is working to adjust this. On Robert St., in District V the front of the building will be 2 stories, but this back may be more stories as height allows.

Mr. Morosani asked about parking requirements. There is no restriction from the City for a company to build a privately owned parking lot. Ms. Vrtunski explained that the City does not want parking to be a barrier to development, but there has to be a balance so that parking is not taken over.

District VI has not gotten any negative feedback so far. District VII is zoned for light industrial and recreational entertainment area. One property owner stated they would like to see these uses expanded. Districts VII, VIII and IV will be looked at very hard to evaluate if they should all be one district. District VIII has been considered an industrial sanctuary. Staff would like to preserve this area for future job creation. Ms. Vrtunski reinforced that the draft code is going to change and there is a lot of technical tweaking that will happen over the summer to ensure that this code works for landowners and tenants. She expects the next draft in August or September. The Commissioners discussed their concerns with the code, including the industrial imitations. Ms. Turner expressed concerns about having RAD VIII as industrial only. Ms. Vrtunski agreed that this has been a concern that the City's consultants brought up. Ms. Cartwright, Ms. Turner, and Mr. Morosani discussed the area being limited to industrial would not be ideal. Mr. Morosani expressed that he wants the area to have an elevated plan. Ms. Monson Dahl pointed the Commissioners to page 41 and 45 of the code and the discussion of how certain uses are compatible with one another. For example, District IX is open space.

Further open discussion ensued. Ms. Vrtunski mentioned that hotels are limited to 50 rooms and they are not allowed in District VIII. Chair Collins recapped that there are 9 districts that are mixed use based on the needs of the area. Mr. Morosani would like the districts to blend with a conditional use so that things next to each other flow and are compatible. Ms. Turner asked if the zoning decisions can be reviewed in 15-20 years to see if it is working. Ms. Vrtunski stated that this is completely possible and this should be looked at to revisit market needs.

Ms. Vrtunski showed the Commission the timeline of events for the Draft Code. For the period of April 18- May 8 comments will be accepted on Open City Hall. From May through July there will be continued revisions of the code. In August through September the second draft will be released. In October and November a new draft code will be brought forward for endorsement by AARRC and then for adoption by Council.

Chair Collins asked how much more detail the Commission would like to cover in meetings. Ms. Turner would like an update on changes at every meeting. Mr. Koon would like to see a permitted use table. Ms. Mathews suggested that the design advisory committee could be an in the weeds conduit for the rest of the group. Mr. Newman would like short updates and then once the code starts to firm up, he would like to focus on the subject again. Ms. Vrtunski said she can briefly update the group at every meeting and then in July there will be a more official update with the second draft.

Chair Collins addressed the Mr. Sternberg's resolution now that the Commission has seen the code. He acknowledged that City Council may be looking to the Commission to make a recommendation. He would like the group to make a decision on this at the next meeting. Mr. Morosani concurred with his suggestion.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. PARFT Grant – Stephanie Monson Dahl**

Ms. Monson Dahl explained that City staff is always looking for ways to make projects more sustainable for the tax payer is therefore applying for the PARFT grant. Staff is applying for 350k for the French Broad River Eastbank Greenway and Recreational Area. The City is applying for park amenities and greenway construction. The City would like the support of the AARRC and would like to ask the Commission to allow the Chairman write a letter of support for the grant. The Commissioners unanimously support applying for the grant and the Chair signing a letter of support.

## **8. CITY/COUNTY LIAISON UPDATE**

### **a. City Council Update**

No City Council updates were provided.

### **b. County Commission Update**

Commissioner Newman reported the County will be voting on their budget in June. He anticipates the budget will be tight this year and they are working to make sure that all elements are covered.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **a. None**

## **10. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

April 21<sup>st</sup> – Riverfront Open Office Hours from 3-5PM at 6<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall

May 6<sup>th</sup> – River Music kicks off

May 20<sup>th</sup> – Wilma Dykeman Birthday Celebration from 4-6PM at Jean Webb Park and Riverside Dr.

May 20-21<sup>st</sup> – Studio Stroll from 10AM-6PM in the RAD

May 20-22<sup>nd</sup> – Burners & BBQ all day at Days Warehouse for Pubic Art Installation

May 21-22<sup>nd</sup> – Foundation Hellraiser all day behind 289 Lyman St. (Skate Park)

Chair Collins adjourned the meeting at 5:22pm.