

## Asheville Area Riverfront Redevelopment Commission Meeting

August 8, 2013

Location: Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Board Room

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**Member Attendees:** Chair Pattiy Torno; Vice Chair Joe Ferikes; Woodfin Mayor Jerry Vehaun; Peter Sprague; Asheville City Councilman Jan Davis; Ricky Silver; George Morosani; Karl Koon; Stephanie Brown; Dan Hitchcock; Pam Turner; Cindy Weeks; Buncombe County Commissioner David King

**Staff:** Stephanie Monson; Alesha Reardon; Sam Powers; Jeff Staudinger; Cathy Ball; Judy Daniel

**Other attendees:** Tom Gallaher; Wayne Wheeler; Steven-Lee Johnson (Site Works Studios); Kate O'Hara (Land of Sky Regional Council); Jay Curwen (NOC); Terry Atwood (NOC); Chuck Pickering

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### Chair Pattiy Torno opened the meeting at 4:04 pm.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE:

- ? The meeting has a quorum.
- ? A motion was made by Koon to adopt the July minutes. Seconded by Hitchcock. The motion passed unanimously after two corrections:
  - o Dan Hitchcock and David King were present at July's meeting.

#### UPDATES:

- ? Ad Hoc Committee Reports—None specifically
  - o Clean up crew is still working.
  - o Expect to hear an update from Shannon Tuch next month.
  - o Internal networking has done some work since last meeting, but we need to set up a database matrix for getting in touch with people. Continuing to refine this.
- ? ADC Bridge Project
  - o Asheville Design Center says DOT has signed off on footers verbally, but waiting on papers in next few business days; huge number of partners have come together to make this project possible; \$122,000 total cash and in-kind donations; ci ty has around \$20,000 towards the project.
- ? Riverside Drive Redevelopment Plan Updates—Tom Gallaher
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> public meeting will be on Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-7pm at Pink Dog Creative.
    - ✍ Will show same slideshow; the goal is to get more input, give public a chance to react to what we've already seen last month.
    - ✍ Stephanie will send an email to the AARRC team to see who can attend.
    - ✍ Would like AARRC to play a concierge role at event; nametags can be made for those attending.
    - ✍ Tom has already done a tremendous amount of outreach, over 250 contacts as of yesterday.
  - o Pattiy commented that the success of the development plan might suggest that we need to do the same outreach process for the entire RADTIP; having plans with community buy-in would help facilitate redevelopment of other parcels.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

*Greenway Connections to Asheville's Urban Riverfront*-Steven Lee Johnson, Site Works Studios

- ? Clingman Forest and Town Branch Greenways

- Site Works is doing construction documents so this project will be shovel-ready. City has been working a long time to acquire this property, so there are few issues with the land. Site Works is currently engaged in the public input process, one on one right now and reaching out to specific groups. There have been over 20 meetings so far and community meetings will be in September. Site Works will also be integrating sustainable storm water wetlands into the plans.
  - ✍ Town Branch Greenway—looking to tell the history/story of the Southside area—“Southside Heritage Trail”.
  - ✍ Clingman Forest Greenway—urban forest, comprised of over 10 acres. There is great rare and native plant variety in the forest here, so care will need to be taken with the topography and plants.
  - ✍ Trails will be asphalt, handicapped accessible, and 10 feet wide (City of Asheville standards). Each greenway will have a different feel to represent the different neighborhoods.
  - ✍ Brown asked how wayfinding will be coordinated, if there will be a standard graphic and if there will be coordination with current wayfinding. Site Works replied that they will need to consider all of this. No motorized vehicles will be allowed.
  - ✍ Weeks asked Site Works to describe where storm water systems might be located. Site Works explained one possibility is the open field where the tennis courts used to be. These systems could help capture and hold water coming off streets and surrounding development.

#### *RiverWay and East of the RiverWay (EoR) presentation-Staudinger and Monson*

- ? Staudinger provided an overview of the EoR area and explained the National Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which initiates funding programs to help communities move towards more sustainable practices.
- ? Staudinger explained that the EoR community is very diverse and there is a large effort to keep and strengthen existing neighborhood ties. The area was ravaged by urban renewal and it changed the complexion of the neighborhood. Today there are 1000 fewer households than in the 1970s. The goal is to strengthen the community while also rebuilding faith in local government. Staudinger also explained that the EoR study is about giving the people in this community the ability to initiate things that result in positive momentum for community. Currently, many city and private projects are already underway. Staudinger relayed that we can do things in the next 4-5 years that will make a difference in the community, but we also need to prioritize concrete transportation projects and leverage multimodal improvements. There must be a strategy for making targeted investments and creating economic development.
  - ✍ Monson shared real-life examples of what the community might be able to see or experience in the EoR in the next 5 years.

#### *City of Asheville 5-year funding plan for Riverfront Projects-Monson*

- ? Monson introduced City of Asheville senior staff Sam Powers, Gary Jackson and Cathy Ball to the Commission.
- ? Monson addressed the question of whether the RADTIP is funded. She explained that what is funded is the remaining design work, land use planning, some right-of-way acquisition, and other small items that make the project shovel-ready. In terms of construction funding, the city expects to rely on partnerships, including potential federal

- partners (e.g. apply for TIGER funds) as well as local partners such as those represented on this commission. Monson reiterated that the city is committed to completing the RADTIP as the signature, catalytic project for Asheville's urban riverfront. The Riverside Drive Redevelopment Plan will set the stage for developing city owned properties such as 14 Riverside and the former Ice House. The next stage of the plan will create construction documents for the rehabilitation of 14 Riverside aka the PSNC building.
- ? Monson pointed out other components of Asheville's 5 year Economic Development (ED) CIP plan, which includes investments in the I-26 partnership, street infrastructure development and multimodal improvements.
  - ? Monson pointed out that only the currently adopted fiscal year of the 5 year ED CIP is guaranteed (adopted) funding, and that Council will affirm or change the 5 year plan each year as part of the annual budget process. The commission's advisory role can include recommendations to council on riverfront funding.
  - ? The following discussion and questions resulted from the presentation:
    - o Morosani pointed out that 1.5 million is dedicated to the next stage of the RADTIP, but wondered if this money will help with purchasing rights-of-way and easements, and other types of infrastructure improvements. Staff confirmed that while the intention is for the project to get to shovel ready with that amount, that additional monies may have to be identified if needed for ancillary projects that help insure the success of the RADTIP.
    - o Ball noted that some money in the multimodal and infrastructure line items will be used for downtown and South Slope improvements like Patton Avenue and Coxe Avenue in partnership with private development.
    - o Morosani commented that the 3 million allocated for infrastructure development and place making will help create places where businesses want to be. For example by creating infill housing, businesses will want to relocate, which grows the tax base. The city will have to give a little to get a good economic return.
    - o Weeks asked whether the commission will evolve to look at design and density. Monson replied that the existing Riverside Drive Design Review Committee may be merged with this one. This commission could even become similar to the downtown commission.
    - o Weeks commented that the EoR is trying to get a grocery store, perhaps on the first floor of the Glenrock Hotel. Weeks asked staff what the city is doing to support this effort. Weeks also commented that residents do want this, but part of the process is determining where there is available space. Staff replied that the city wants to support the community in what they are trying to do to address access to fresh food. The new Reid Center is an example, especially the Kitchen Ready Program. Other private or non profit efforts to fill the gap are underway, entrepreneurs from Hillcrest host a farm truck each week in the Glen Rock parking lot. The commission discussed reasons why a typical grocery store may not want to relocate here.
    - o Silver pointed out that one role of the commission is to connect to the community. In the future the AARRC should consider meeting within the community so folks can connect with the commission more easily. Commission members suggested the Wesley Grant Southside Center, new Reid Center or somewhere in the river district other than the RAD.

- A consensus of the Commission was to meet with the community a few times a year in the same location to create consistency.
- Parks Board Liaison Wheeler commented that there are no people of color on the commission and perhaps this is something that should be considered in the future.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- ? Haywood Road Form Based Code—kick off meeting, 6:30pm at Hall Fletcher Elementary school next Tuesday. Consultants will be in town. The project could serve as a template for future form-based code projects in the city.
- ? Kate O'Hara announced that Land of Sky recently won an innovation award.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- ? None.

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 PM. The next meeting of the AARRC will be **September 12th, 2013** at 4:00 pm in the Chamber of Commerce Board Room.