



**PED  
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, April 21 2015**

**Board Members in Attendance: Vice Mayor Marc Hunt, Council Member Jan Davis, Council Member Gwen Wisler**

**Staff in Attendance: Gary Jackson, Sam Powers, Stephanie Monson Dahl, Harry Brown, Joey Robison**

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Davis moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Wisler. Minutes approved unanimously.
2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
  - a. **Riverfront Update.** Stephanie Monson Dahl was available for questions on the staff report and updates provided. Hunt expressed appreciation for Monson's attendance at each meeting. Wisler would like to find a way for more people to see Monson's map, perhaps through video, because communication at the HUD meeting was very helpful in increasing understanding. Monson is happy to work on that. Gary Jackson said that we are working on a next-level communication effort.
  - b. **Haywood Street.** Sam Powers explained that we did not find a perfect fit during consultant interviews. An updated marketing analysis is expected to show the same results as it did a few years ago, and that analysis would have been expensive and needed prior to developing an RFQ. Powers suggested listing the 68-76 Haywood site with EDC and NC Department of Commerce as part of its profile for a corporate related use, and sought direction from PED to see if this is within Council's interests because the last direction given was to put out an RFQ. Gary Jackson said that the EDC/Chamber consultant recommended that there should be a focus on downtown tech-related industry at higher wage. This is an excellent partnership opportunity with EDC.

Wisler was fine with looking at that opportunity. Powers assured that Council always has the discretion to accept or reject any offers. He stated that if our first choice at this time is not a hotel, we need to notify EDC, write a letter of intent to be clear about what the requirements are, and be clear about the type of project we are seeking for the site at this time. This would be something for their portfolio they don't already have – publicly owned office space in downtown. There were mixed feelings on the need for a plaza, and members thought street level vibrancy was important and onsite parking worth considering. However members felt the 7 principles were recommendations and not binding. There was concern with extending the timeline with this process. Powers expects in the next 12 months there would be some sense of if they are having interest.

Chris Joyel, Asheville Design Center Director, asked if the property could be divided into separate civic space and business space, stating that an inviting space may help market the

business side. Asheville Design Center is fully committed to seeing this space add to the urban fabric. Hunt thought searching for companies that share a vision that is compatible with ours was worth it, but shouldn't be a deal breaker, and that a subdivision would increase expectation that the City will build a plaza there, which the City is not going to do. Davis moved that Powers draft an MOU and bring to full Council in early June. Wisler second. Approved.

### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Parking Study Update.** Harry Brown gave an update on the parking studies which give a one-time snapshot. Helps us know where we started, and gives steps so we can see what we need to do in the future. Looking to update CBD this year (last update was in 2008). This will help us know how hotel development will affect our parking. Transportation Department recommends going forward every 2 years with review. The department has been receiving requests to help with parking in various areas of town. Phase 1 of the Haywood Study (inventory of available parking, met with some businesses) is complete, and phase 2 will consist of community involvement. Brown requested Council direction on where to focus. Davis supports keeping studies current. Wisler if parking requirements would be reviewed for the expected traffic increase in innovation districts. Jackson mentioned there are models for alternative parking options for employees. Parking structures are debt financed, and cash flow is negative for 20 years before turning positive. There are many options, but we will likely need to address the issue in the next few years. Hunt said it is helpful to look at the parking enterprise fund to figure out timeline for next parking structure(s).

Jackson introduced Jason Nortz, Assistant Development Services Director.

- b. **Report on LUIG.** Jeff Staudinger spoke on this issue. He said the legal department thought waiving the minimum requirements is not fair, and likely not meeting our goals. Staff would like to make sure we are being clear in the policy. Staudinger recommended that if Council wants discretion around the criteria, create more discretion to meet goals but don't create hard and fast requirements. He also encouraged Council to make sure your point system reflects your goals – for example, points for energy efficiency aren't increasing efficiency because builders are already building to efficient standards. Staudinger felt that he could bring a revised policy back to PED and HCD in a month for input, with a goal to bring something to Council in the following month. There is only one application that will likely come up prior to that Council meeting, but it would not be denied conditional use if they are turned down for any reason.

Suggestions from the chair included significantly reducing the weight of energy efficiency, eliminating equity requirement, integrating density, simplify naming streets by saying transit line, increasing ¼ mile requirement or phrasing more ambiguously, redrafting point assignments and then modeling what a development translates to in property tax so we can compare to how we do industrial incentives, and giving the City the authority to audit books rather than requiring a report on affordability. Staudinger added that we need to clarify the policy to read that we have to lease to people who qualify). HCD requested occupancy requirement.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** None.

5. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.** None.

6. **ADJOURN.** The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. without objection.