

# MINUTES

## COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

May 23, 2018 - 4:00 PM

Administrative Conference Room at City Hall

Members Present: Charlie Landreth, Chair, Council Member  
Jim Fatland, City Manager  
Daniel Cobb, Planning Director  
Melanie Spreen, Heart of Brevard Representative  
Susan Threlkel, Council Appointed At-Large Member  
Dee Dee Perkins, Council Appointed Citizen Member

Members Absent: Mac Morrow, Vice Chair, Council Member  
Heath Seymour, Heart of Brevard Executive Director

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Special Guest: Eric Caldwell, Transylvania Economic Alliance

### A. Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:14 PM.

### B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

### C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Ms. Spreen, seconded by Mr. Fatland to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

### D. Approval of Minutes from April 25, 2018 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Perkins, seconded by Ms. Spreen to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2017 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### E. Update on BUILD Grant

Mr. Fatland reported that Planning Staff sent a Request for Proposal to six consulting firms to assist the City of Brevard with the BUILD Grant application. Mr. Cobb reported that five of the six firms responded and after reviewing all of the proposals and

contacting the firms with follow-up questions, it was staff's recommendation that the City Council hire Prichett Steinbeck Group, Inc. to assist with preparing and submitting a BUILD grant for the implementation of the Brevard Streetscape Plan. The Council approved the recommendation as part of its Consent Calendar at its meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The contract has been signed and Alan Steinbeck will serve as the point contact.

Mr. Cobb said that there will be a lot of work for staff on the front end and we will be calling on Committee members for assistance at some point. Mr. Cobb noted that things such as neglected and under-utilized buildings; mobility and accessibility; and safety issues are the kind of things that will carry a lot of weight in the application and that is the kind of data staff is working on gathering now. Mr. Landreth added that one of our limitations is the amount of public land and we could include the move of the courthouse functions out of downtown as a detriment. He would also like to hear from the Transylvania Economic Alliance, to the extent that the TEA is looking at downtown as a job generator, what does the TEA see as the limitations of downtown as an economic asset for the County?

Mr. Cobb informed the Committee that representatives from Prichett Steinbeck Group will be here for a coordination meeting and field visit on Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. and he encouraged Committee members to attend that meeting.

#### **F. Wayfinding Sign Content and Inclusion Policy**

Mr. Cobb explained that conversation began a couple of months ago about a wayfinding policy that would help staff determine which destinations would qualify to go on a sign and which ones would not. We have had a number of requests over the last couple of years and staff felt it was time to bring this conversation back up. He said there is really no rhyme or reason to who the City decides to place on these signs other than it is an attraction and it is guiding people from out of town to a destination. Mr. Cobb provided copies of a proposed "City of Brevard Policy on Wayfinding and Graphic Communication Criteria for Inclusion" for the Committee's review and discussion. He noted that the policy includes criteria which places emphasis on things such as adequate public facilities like parking, adequate access, if the business is open 7 days a week year-round, and if it has been in operation for a few years. The applicant would be responsible for paying for the sign, but they would have to meet the criteria. The Council would have discretion to put up signs wherever they want after a public hearing, and most of the destinations that are up right now are either public or non-profit. Mr. Cobb said the point is that these are public signs and if a private entity is going to be advertised on them, there should be a pretty high bar to get on to that system.

Ms. Threlkel said when the system was set up, it had three purposes: 1) directional; 2) informational; and 3) to define the community as culturally active, etc. Ms. Spreen felt that cultural significance should be given equal weight to economic impact in the criteria for inclusion.

Ms. Perkins said the initial stage when the wayfinding system was implemented identified three levels and the first one was a gateway entry sign into our downtown to be placed in Pisgah Forest. She feels we need to figure out how to fund that and push for it. The directional wayfinding signs were the secondary part; and the third part is that the County sees the merits of it so it goes beyond the City limits and will look like a unified system overall. It was noted that when the intersection in Pisgah Forest is rebuilt, that would be a good time to place the gateway entry sign.

Mr. Cobb said there is currently no policy in place and if the Committee makes a recommendation to City Council, it would go to Council in June and become effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Landreth said the way this policy is drafted, it does not exclude independent businesses. Mr. Cobb said in fact this is tailored to accommodate independent businesses and to disqualify them where it makes sense to do that. Ms. Perkins felt it should not include for profit businesses because they can pay for it. She said there are mechanisms for that such as outdoor billboards and advertising in trade publications. She said our signs look official and endorsed and to have a for profit business on there and for us to be deciding who can and who can't because they're the big boys doesn't seem a real fair issue to her.

Following further discussion, Mr. Landreth said it appeared there was no consensus at this point and he felt the Committee needed more time to review and consider the proposed policy. He added that the discussion about economic development is completely different now than it was when the sign effort was underway. We have a much different framework and players in the community and we haven't thought about how signage should contribute to economic development. Is our wayfinding system a function of economic development?

No action was taken and the Committee decided to hold a special meeting prior to the June 18<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. A special meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm.

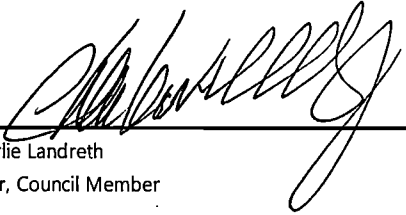
#### **G. Oskar Blues Sign**

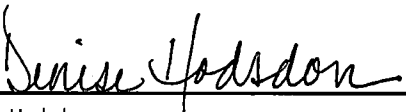
Mr. Fatland reported that the Economic Alliance had met with staff about a request by Oskar Blues as to how to direct folks off DOT highways to Oskar Blues. Mr. Caldwell informed the Committee that they have put Oskar Blues in contact with the NCDOT but added that NCDOT has concerns about having a lot of sign clutter. If the City is signing certain things, they would rather not sign certain things. The idea is you can have too much of a good thing and people either don't pay attention to any of the signs or they're so busy reading signs that they run off the road. He said the Economic Alliance wants to work with our local businesses to make sure that they are successful and getting people to their door is part of that.

Because this is a wayfinding request and discussion of the policy was tabled until the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, this item was also continued to that meeting.

**H. Adjourn**

Motion by Mr. Fatland, seconded by Ms. Threlkel to adjourn the meeting at 5:16 PM.  
Motion carried unanimously.

X   
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Charlie Landreth  
Chair, Council Member

X   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Denise Hodsdon  
Executive Assistant

Minutes Approved - June 27, 2018