

MINUTES

COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 4, 2021 – 9:00 AM

City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Maureen Copelof, Chair, Council Member
Gary Daniel, Vice Chair, Council Member (arrived at 9:11 am)
Jim Fatland, City Manager (left at 10:00 am)
Paul Ray, Planning Director
Nicole Bentley, Heart of Brevard Executive Director (via Zoom)
Dee Dee Perkins, Citizen Member
Billy Parrish, Heart of Brevard Representative
Susan Threlkel, Council Appointed At-Large Member (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Leigh Huffman, Planner
Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Jim Koffman, First Victory (via Zoom)
Mark Burrows, Blue Zones Project
Paul Cooper, Resident

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Maureen Copelof welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

C. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Perkins asked to add an item regarding real estate magazine boxes on sidewalks and Mr. Fatland asked to add an item regarding pressure washing of downtown sidewalks. Motion by Ms. Perkins, seconded by Mr. Fatland to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2021 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Perkins, seconded by Mr. Ray to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Clemson Plaza Project

Mr. Ray reported that bids for the Clemson Plaza project were opened on December 9, 2020 and the lowest bid was for \$550,942. After reviewing actual construction costs, it was evident that the approved budget for Clemson Plaza would be insufficient to build the plaza. Since that time, Staff has been working with Jim Koffman of First Victory, Inc. and Alex Gotherman of Destination by Design to explore ways of lowering the cost of construction without incurring additional engineering expense.

Cost savings for Clemson Plaza was achieved by shopping different suppliers and pressing vendors for better pricing, but that was not enough. For additional savings, Staff is requesting the flexibility to approve other modifications, with the biggest of these changes being as follows:

- Remove the water fountain for now, returning at a later time with a separate budget for this feature. The plumbing and heavy-duty foundation can be installed in preparation for a future water feature, but would be covered with landscaping or something easily removed. This would allow Staff time to consult with local artists and suppliers for a better priced waterfall.
- Substitute expensive granite for pervious paver stones with contrasting grout. The pavers are attractive and manageable from a maintenance standpoint, and they allow water to pass through reducing the amount of drain pipes needed.
- Substitute special order cedar for exterior oiled fir for the seating areas along the serpentine wall and near the building.

Mr. Ray said that not all pricing for the substitution materials and related subcontractor labor has come in, but Staff believes that we can build an attractive and functional plaza for \$350,000 if the DTMP Committee is willing to accept the proposed modifications. Ms. Copelof noted that if we can stay within the budget, we can go forward with the project and do not need to go back to City Council. Ms. Perkins suggested that if we can create a comprehensive look at projects that the City wants to do in the 2021/2022 fiscal year, there may be opportunities for some grant funding from Tourism that could perhaps include a water feature for Clemson Plaza.

Motion by Ms. Perkins, seconded by Mr. Fatland to approve the changes as proposed. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ray informed the Committee that Leigh Huffman was successful in getting a \$20,000 grant for electric vehicle charging stations that we plan on putting in the parking lot adjacent to Clemson Plaza.

F. Pressure Washing of Sidewalks on Main Street and South Broad Street

Mr. Fatland reported that we have received a quote in the amount of \$18,900 for pressure washing the sidewalks on Main Street from England Street to Rice Street and on South Broad Street from Probart Street to Morgan Street. He said he would like to

proceed and get it scheduled as soon as possible. Motion by Mr. Fatland, seconded by Ms. Bentley to approve the expenditure of \$18,900 from the Downtown Master Plan Committee budget for pressure washing. The motion carried unanimously.

There was discussion about the need to have a process in place for our maintenance crews doing work downtown to deal with merchants when they complain about the work being done. Mr. Daniel pointed out that our maintenance crews should not have to deal with the merchants when they are doing essential work and they need to know what to do rather than packing up and leaving the area. It was noted that it is very important to communicate with merchants and notify them in advance of any planned work. It was also suggested that we look into the possibility of instituting some sort of email and/or text alert system.

G. Update re Picnic Area on Caldwell & Main Streets

Mr. Daniel reported that he met Charlie Landreth of 35° North Landscape Services at the site to assess ways to reduce noise with chalkboard panels or some other method to make the area more interesting. He said as they were standing there, it became obvious that the noise issue is not something we can solve. Mr. Daniel said they talked about the chalkboard panels and Mr. Landreth advised that it would be very expensive to put in panels that would last. His suggestion was to put in three good size trees that would provide shade and do more in keeping with our Tree City designation, pull the forest into downtown, and provide continuity with Clemson Plaza. Following discussion, the committee agreed that was a good solution and Mr. Daniel will get a cost estimate from Mr. Landreth.

H. Bike Racks

Mr. Ray informed the committee that there will be an area for bike racks in the parking lot beside Clemson Plaza. He said the exact design has not yet been selected, but suggested that we look at the tower type racks that accommodate several bikes. Ms. Perkins said the Tourism Board's Destination Infrastructure Committee has discussed partnering with the City and providing funding for bike racks. She believes that there is funding available for two or three bike racks. Mr. Ray and Ms. Perkins will work together on bike racks for downtown.

I. Jordan Street Wayfinding/Signage

Ms. Bentley said she did not have anything to report at this time, other than that it is a priority and something that the Jordan Street merchants need and want. She suggested that she, Mr. Ray and Mr. Fatland schedule a time to meet and bring this back to the first committee meeting in April.

Mr. Ray said in an effort to make the traffic light switch box on the corner of Clemson Plaza more attractive, he has talked with Signs and More about covering it with vinyl wayfinding signs.

J. Real Estate Magazine Racks

Ms. Perkins noted that when doing the walkabout downtown, one of the things that jumped out to her was that the magazine and newspaper racks are unkempt and unsightly. She said we are allowing them to be put out there, but they are not required to keep them in a reasonable way. She said there is no uniformity to them and the only attention they ever get is when somebody comes to restock them. She asked if it was possible to not allow them.

Ms. Huffman noted that the previous sidewalk ordinance specifically called out these racks and that they were allowed to be put out by the businesses without any oversight. Under the new ordinance, anything on the sidewalk that is not put out by the City in the future, will require a permit. She said any that were put out under the previous ordinance would still be allowed, but any new ones would not. She is currently working on an inventory of grandfathered items.

There was discussion that these racks are not always associated with the business they are in front of and the business owner has not necessarily given permission for them to be there. Mr. Ray noted that the City has not given permission either. It was decided that Ms. Bentley and Ms. Huffman will work together on a strategy on how to address these racks.

K. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council Downtown Master Plan Committee will be on Thursday, March 18, 2021 at 3:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. This meeting will be a work session for the updated Downtown Master Plan & Streetscape project.

L. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 AM.

Minutes Approved – March 18, 2021

X Maureen Copelof
Maureen Copelof
Chair, Council Member

X Denise Hodsdon
Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant