

MINUTES

COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 19, 2021 – 3:30 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Maureen Copelof, Chair, Council Member
Gary Daniel, Vice Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
Paul Ray, Planning Director
Dee Dee Perkins, Citizen Member
Billy Parrish, Heart of Brevard Representative (Arrived at 4:06 pm)

Absent: Nicole Bentley, Heart of Brevard Executive Director
Susan Threlkel, Council Appointed At-Large Member

Staff Present: Aaron Bland, Planner
Leigh Huffman, Planner
David Lutz, Public Works Director
Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Bill Ester, Trustee, First United Methodist Church
Mary Arnaudin, First United Methodist Church Creative Care Team

Media: Jeremiah Reed, *The Transylvania Times*

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Maureen Copelof welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:37 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Ms. Bentley, Mr. Parrish and Ms. Threlkel had planned to join the meeting virtually. However, due to a storm and loss of internet service, they were unable to join via Zoom. There was a quorum present as certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

C. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Daniel felt that it was important for representatives from Heart of Brevard to take part in discussion of Item F-Continued Discussion re Plan for Annual Recurring Maintenance, and Item H-City's Public Communications re City Programs & Initiatives and because they were unable to join virtually, he suggested postponing these two items until the next meeting. Motion by Mr. Daniel, seconded by Ms. Perkins to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes of August 5, 2021 Meeting

Motion by Mr. Daniel, seconded by Ms. Perkins to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Discussion re Church-Owned Downtown Greenspaces – Mary Arnaudin & Bill Ester of First United Methodist Church

Mary Arnaudin, a member of First United Methodist Church's Creation Care Team introduced herself and Church Trustee Bill Ester. She explained that the Creation Care Team is focusing on taking care of the plants on the Church's property, including the trees in the triangle at the intersection of Broad and Caldwell Streets. She said they are interested in finding out what the relationship is with their property in the new master plan and the entrance to Brevard, and how they can help the City work toward that, as well as how to enhance and protect their trees.

She said as they started their initiative they found out that the Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church, Unitarian Church and Presbyterian Church all have some form of a creation care effort. She said these churches have come together and noted that it is exciting to think that the stewardship of our greenspace in downtown is on church property and that there is some energy around that. She pointed out that Brevard is one of the oldest Tree Cities in the state and there are some incentives for enhancing that designation.

Ms. Copelof agreed that we definitely need to collaborate on the triangle parcel as the City has our welcome sign and the Blue Star marker on that property. She thought it was good to start looking at it now and we will provide them with more information on what the plan includes for that triangle.

Mr. Ray noted that it would make sense to coordinate any improvements to that parcel with the NCDOT's R-5800 project, which is slated for 2024, and we could include that parcel in our design for betterments to the roundabouts. He asked if the church would consider dedicating that corner to the City. Mr. Ester said that would be a decision of the main council, but we could propose that. He asked if there is a lease or easement currently. Mr. Fatland thought it was probably just a verbal agreement now, but suggested that we should formalize it by either a lease or easement. Mr. Ester said he will talk with the Trustees about either a lease or easement or deeding the parcel to the City.

Aaron Bland noted that beyond that one entranceway, there are a lot of trees and greenery owned by churches downtown. He explained that this coalition of churches wanted to start this dialogue more broadly to see how they can work with the City to help them maintain and enhance these trees and the City's Tree City designation so he thought it would be best to start this conversation with this committee. Ms. Perkins said Susan Threlkel was involved in the history of the City's Tree City designation and has a lot of knowledge about it. She suggested that we include this on the agenda for the next meeting to continue discussion.

F. Continued Discussion re Plan for Annual Recurring Maintenance

Mr. Parrish arrived in person at 4:06 pm. Because there was a Heart of Brevard representative present, Mr. Daniel moved, seconded by Mr. Ray, to add Item F and Item H back to the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Works Director David Lutz informed the committee that he needs clarification and further information as to what they want to see in the plan. Ms. Copelof said she would like to use the Heart of Brevard's list of priorities as the starting point with a recommendation from Public Works as to how often those things are needed. She asked that staff put together a feasible plan with those recommendations and bring back to the committee for review and discussion. Mr. Lutz said he would also include the projected costs because some of the work will have to be done in overtime hours. He will talk with his staff and get a timeline for completing the plan.

G. Proposed Donation of a Pet Waste Station for Clemson Plaza

Mr. Ray informed the committee that First Victory has offered to donate and install a pet waste station in Clemson Plaza. The committee reviewed the proposed options and there was consensus to accept the gift and go with the black version with the condition that we can choose where it goes and add our own custom sign to it.

H. City's Public Communications re City Programs & Initiatives

Ms. Perkins said she noticed a recent post on Facebook that a downtown merchant was working on a mural project and it did not go through the Public Art Policy process. She wondered how we are communicating to the business/property owners to make them aware that we have this process and other policies/processes that they need to go through to do various things. Mr. Ray noted that the Public Art Policy and all the tools to go through that process are available on our website. Ms. Huffman said Heart of Brevard did put out some notifications in their newsletter about the policy being adopted and the City is planning to put out notification as well, but was focusing on the Sidewalk Ordinance first. She said notification regarding the Sidewalk Ordinance was sent to Heart of Brevard and the Chamber of Commerce as well. Ms. Huffman has spoken with the merchant working on the mural project and they have stopped work on it and will be completing the application to bring to the committee for review and recommendation to City Council.

I. Discussion re Covid Action Plan

Mr. Fatland reported that the City has imposed an indoor face mask mandate for all city employees and visitors to city-owned buildings. At its August 16th meeting City Council voted to develop a procedure to get more employees vaccinated and put measures in place to protect as many employees as possible. At the same meeting City Council unanimously passed a resolution encouraging everyone in Brevard to work together by following CDC, NCDHHS and TC Health guidelines, wear face masks and consider getting vaccinated in order to get through this next round of COVID. The City will be getting out communication via our website, social media and press releases to let the community

know what the City is doing. Mr. Parrish said the Heart of Brevard will help with getting the word out and City Staff will share the communication with the Chamber of Commerce and ask for their help as well. Mr. Fatland will also check with the County to see if they are planning on doing any messaging.

J. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council Downtown Master Plan Committee will be on Thursday, September 2, 2021 at 9:00 AM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

K. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:11 PM.

Minutes Approved - September 15, 2021

X Maureen Copelof
Maureen Copelof
Chair, Council Member

X Denise Hodsdon
Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant