

GREENVILLE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

March 2, 2010
Greenville, NC

The Greenville Redevelopment Commission met on the above date for a meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the City Hall Building located at 200 West Fifth Street.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Evan Lewis	Don Mills	Robert Thompson, Chair
Chris Mansfield	Dennis Mitchell	Terri Williams, Vice-Chair

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Melissa Hill

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner; David Brown, City Engineer; Sandy Gale Edmundson, Secretary; Jonathan Edwards, Audio; Niki Jones, Planner I; and Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Albi McLawhorn

AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

The Commission agreed to amend the agenda to add a public comment period and a change order request. There will be no Closed Session for the Commission tonight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 2, 2010

Motion was made by Mr. Dennis Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Don Mills to approve the February 2, 2010 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PRESENTATION OF CDBG AND HOME PROGRAM ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

Mr. Rees introduced Ms. Sandra Anderson, Senior Planner/Housing Administrator. Commission members have asked that they receive more information on housing activities and federal grant activities in West Greenville, so quarterly reports will be given.

Ms. Anderson: The annual action plan details how funding will be spent. The Housing

Division is in the process of identifying activities for the upcoming 2010 - 2011 fiscal year in accordance with the City of Greenville Consolidated Plan which covers the years of 2008 - 2013. The top priorities and goals are to provide owner occupied rehabilitation, to offer homeownership, to acquire and demolish substandard units, begin new construction, convert of rental units to home ownership, develop commercial corridor, build streetscapes, support nonprofits, and eliminate lead-based paint hazards. Schedule/citizen participation for a public hearing, nonprofit funding approval process, Redevelopment Commission review, Affordable Housing Loan Committee review, citizen comment period, final public hearing/City Council approval, send to HUD for approval and implementation. Program activities include:

Activity	HOME Investment Partnership	CDBG
Planning & Administration	75,000	162,000
Housing Rehabilitation	250,000	360,000
Relocation	0	10,000
Acquisition	0	60,000
New Construction	175,000	0
Down payment Assistance	135,000	0
Clearance/Demolition	0	30,000
Community Housing Development Corporation	115,000	0
Public Facilities Improvement	0	70,000
Public Service	0	122,000
Program Income	11,000	5,000
Total	761,000	819,000

Program Administration

Description: A maximum of 20% of CDBG and 10% of HOME funds are allocated to cover program management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation expenses, which will include salaries, wages, and related costs. Program administration includes providing local officials and citizens with information about the program; preparing program budgets and schedules; developing interagency agreements with sub recipients and contractors; monitoring program activities for compliance; preparing reports and other documents related to the program for submission to HUD; coordinating resolution of audit and monitoring findings; evaluating program performance; managing and supervising program staff; and travel and training.

Down payment assistance: Funds allocated to assist low income residents with “gap financing” in the form of down payment and closing costs assistance in the purchase of newly constructed homes in the West Greenville 45-block revitalization area or existing homes citywide.

Housing rehabilitation: Funds allocated to assist low income homeowners with rehabilitating existing single-family units citywide. The primary intent of this activity is to bring units up to building code and provide decent, safe and sanitary living environments.

New Construction: Funds allocated to construct new single-family units in the West Greenville 45-block revitalization area for low-income first time homebuyers.

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO): As per HOME requirements, 15% of HOME funds are allocated for certified CHDO's to develop, own or sponsor affordable housing in the West Greenville 45-block revitalization area.

Public Service: A maximum 15% of CDBG funds will be allocated to assist nonprofit organizations with funding for programs. Those target homeless and special needs persons, youth development, victims of domestic/family violence, job training, and housing counseling.

Public Facilities Improvement: Funds allocated to assist nonprofits with minor repairs to improve facilities that serve low to moderate income citizens.

Acquisition: Funds allocated to acquire substandard and dilapidated properties in the West Greenville 45-block revitalization area for future development of affordable housing.

Relocation/Displacement: Funds allocated to assist tenants that may be displaced per Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance Regulations as a result of acquisition.

Mr. Mitchell: Are there particular areas within the City of Greenville where these funds can be used?

Ms. Anderson: For new construction, it is strictly the West Greenville area in accordance with the Consolidated Plan. Housing Rehabilitation is scattered. Relocation is strictly West Greenville. Acquisition is strictly West Greenville. Down payment assistance at this time is strictly West Greenville. Clearance/Demolition is strictly West Greenville. Community Housing Development Corporation is strictly West Greenville.

Mr. Mitchell: When considering the breakdowns for these programs, is there an automatic amount of what the City of Greenville gets or does the City plan to ask for these numbers?

Ms. Anderson: Congress determines the amount for each community.

Mr. Thompson: How does one determine how to ask for this particular amount?

Ms. Anderson: The City does not ask. The amounts are allocated by Congress. It is formula driven.

Mr. Mitchell: Do the amounts have to be broken down into certain line items or could we use the entire amount for new construction.

Ms. Anderson: Not the entire \$750,000.00 a certain amount has to be allocated for planning and administration. For the HOME program, 15% of the total home allocation has to be set aside for Community Housing Development Corporation.

Mr. Mitchell: So theoretically the rest of the money could be set aside for new construction.

Ms. Anderson: Yes. In CDBG, new construction is not allowed.

Ms. Williams: Under program administration, it says 10% of the HOME funds are allocated to cover management. Is that not a requirement?

Ms. Anderson: That is the maximum and CDBG is 20%.

Mr. Mitchell: Did the City use all of the money for down payment assistance?

Ms. Anderson: No, we still have those funds available.

Mr. Mitchell: Can you remember how much of down payment assistance was used last year?

Ms. Anderson: I believe it was approximately \$0 of the 2009 allocations.

Mr. Mitchell: If that money was not able to be used last year was it able to be pushed to another line item.

Ms. Anderson: It remains in the same line item, because it is reserved there. Once it is approved by HUD that is where the money stays. It can be moved around, but it requires City Council approval.

Mr. Thompson: What fiscal year do these funds follow?

Ms. Anderson: These funds follow the City's fiscal year of July 1, 2010.

Mr. Mansfield: Do funds not used stay in Greenville? They do not convert back to the federal government.

Ms. Anderson: There is a timeline.

Mr. Mansfield: Does the money roll over?

Ms. Anderson: There are certain eligibility requirements that must be met.

Mr. Mansfield: What is the maximum for down payment assistance?

Ms. Anderson: Twenty percent of sales...

Mr. Thompson: I do have a request of you and Mr. Rees. A map of the CDBG and HOME projects is needed, so the Commission can see where the efforts are working and the impacts of programs on the geographic area.

Ms. Anderson: There is a map that goes back to 2003. We will be happy to get a map out to you. We do produce an annual report.

Mr. Thompson: I think that was my oversight.

Mr. Mitchell: This is the only place where funds will help West Greenville unless City Council allocates some money. I think there needs to be a broader discussion as to how we move forward with the redevelopment of West Greenville. My personal viewpoint is that houses are not selling in West Greenville not because they are not being marketed, but because the houses are not in groups as they were on Fifth Street. There is a brand new house in the middle of dilapidated properties. Nobody in their right mind will buy a house in the middle of a ghetto. Demolition needs to occur.

Ms. Anderson: The economy had a lot to do with the downturn. Our focus is to move forward primarily with Douglas Avenue. I am sure you are familiar with all of the properties we have acquired on Vanderbilt and Fleming. We are waiting to find out what is going to happen with the Tenth Street Connector, because we may want to relocate misplaced homeowners. It takes a lot of minds to figure this out.

Mr. Rees: Staff will do a better job of bringing all of this information to the Commission. Staff will have some thoughts for the Commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Thompson: These are a proposed set of allocations up for discussion.

The Commission thanked Ms. Anderson for her presentation.

Mr. Mitchell: This is for Carl Rees. The information tonight was good information in the redevelopment area. The Commission needs to be kept informed about what is going on in the redevelopment areas.

Mr. Rees: Before we had a Redevelopment Commission, we were an entitlement city that is the formula allocation for federal funds for CDBG and HOME. The Affordable Housing Loan Committee (AHLC) was in place and they became oversight board for

many of our CDBG and HOME programs. That process has really stayed in place even though once we developed a Redevelopment Plan and incorporated these activities by reference into our redevelopment efforts the oversight was divided up among various programs and stayed the same. If that is something that this Commission feels strongly that needs to be changed that is certainly something that you can recommend to City Council; however, putting that aside what our sense is that we have not done as good a job as we should have in terms of just bringing this as information to you all. At the April meeting, Staff will come before the Commission with updates and will get information to you on a regular basis.

Mr. Thompson: I look forward to that. I think as the Commission prepares our annual plan it is a very good time to think comprehensively in terms of the various activities. One of the things that set us apart from the Housing Division is the geographic distribution of our responsibilities. The Commission's charge is limited to two geographic areas: Center City and West Greenville. That restricts what the Commission has jurisdiction over. Housing has a broader geographic jurisdiction.

UPDATE ON TENTH STREET CONNECTOR PROJECT

Mr. Rees: An update by the Redevelopment Commission was requested two months ago. Mr. David Brown, City Engineer, will give that update.

Mr. Brown, who is also the Project Director, gave an update to the Commission on the Tenth Street Connector Project. The project description is to extend Tenth Street at Dickinson Avenue to connect with Stantonsburg Road at Memorial Drive; provide a grade separation at the CSX Rail Line (Dickinson Avenue); build a multi-lane facility on a new and existing location; and provide an east-west connection across Greenville. The project purpose and need is to:

Purpose 1: Increase connectivity between places to the east and places to the west via improved multimodal access. This includes connecting PCMH with areas to the east, the University and downtown Greenville with areas to the west, and ECU's main campus with the Health Science Center.

Purpose 2: Provide a grade-separated crossing with CSX Railroad from eastern North Carolina to PCMH/Health Science campus to improve emergency response time.

Purpose 3: Create a direct connection between Stantonsburg Road and Tenth Street to improve vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.

Purpose 4: Provide an opportunity to change West Fifth Street from a major thoroughfare to a neighborhood collector street.

Purpose 5: Sustain jobs and support opportunities for economic growth in Greenville, at ECU and PCMH.

Purpose 6: Construct a facility consistent with recommendations from local and regional plans.

Mr. Brown: Traffic volumes along the project corridor are expected to increase by approximately 2 percent per year ranging from 14,900 vehicles per day in 2005 to 22,400 vehicles per day in 2030.

Mr. Brown: What this project will do is it will widen the road with two lanes in each direction a bicycle lane in each direction and a sidewalk on both sides. There is an overhead crossing of the CSX railroad. As the project is developed, it will impact several properties. The rendering is of Alternative J Modified. The Steering Committee is made up of two representatives from the City (Merrill Flood and I), a representative from Pitt County Memorial Hospital, a representative from East Carolina University, and a representative from the North Carolina Division of Engineers. The Steering Committee is responsible for making the determination as to how to move forward with the project. Upon the completion of the design, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will be responsible for the design and vital acquisition and construction of the project. At the completion of that NCDOT will assume complete maintenance for this connector. The City is in the final phases of the environmental assessment documentation. The project is going to be federally funded. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled for 2011. Construction is expected to begin in 2013 and should be a three year project with a \$32 million right-of-way acquisition and construction cost.

Mr. Thompson: What is the projected end date?

Mr. Brown: Three years.....there will be trees and landscaping along the road, because this will be a gateway into the City.

Mr. Mitchell: Why does the landscaping get thinner in town?

Mr. Brown: There are two historic districts in this area the Dickinson Avenue and Tobacco Warehouse Historic Districts. Because this is federally funded and with this being an historic district the amount of impact has to be minimized on the historic district. There is also an existing rail spur.

Mr. Mansfield: Is the UNX Chemical Warehouse a historic property?

Mr. Brown: Carl, is shaking his head that it is an historic building, but we are not impacting it on the project.

Mr. Mitchell: Have the homeowners in this area been brought into the process?

Mr. Brown: Yes. Business owners, property owners have also been involved in the process.

Mr. Thompson: This is a draft. The next opportunity for residents to comment would be the public hearing to be held this summer.

Mr. Brown: The public can go to the City's website and send e-mails to the project team and the consultant. The public may also contact me.

Mr. Mansfield: There needs to be zoning to allow for services that would be accessible by the neighborhoods.

Mr. Rees: The Redevelopment Plan as adopted indicates what you are talking about closer to the area of Albemarle Avenue and the proposed Tenth Street Connector. Because of the need for this grade separation and the distance that it takes to build that up Albemarle Avenue would not be an appropriate location for that, so 14th Street is being looked at and the Comprehensive Plan is being looked at as well to make sure we can rezone it.

The Commission thanked Mr. Brown for the update.

Mr. Mitchell: This is a generalization. I am concerned about the Redevelopment Plan, and the reason I am getting concerned is that I am seeing Uptown flourish and I am seeing West Greenville get whatever. Community interest needs to take place in the beginning. This project has the potential to benefit the community.

Mr. Thompson: Those kinds of issues need to be addressed towards the Commission instead of Staff. Since what you are asking for is what the Commission would recommend as a set of strategies.

Mr. Mitchell: I have been recommending it, since I have been on the Commission and especially for the last year as I have seen the funds for West Greenville going down the drain. Sometimes I do not feel that we are driving this effort, but the Commission reacts to what is being brought before us. In my opinion, West Greenville has been forgotten about in the redevelopment area. Everything has been happening in a very slow pace. I understand a budget is a budget, but everything else is moving full steam ahead. I hope we can eventually finish the West Fifth Street Gateway Project. I hope we can do something about the utilities. Every time we talk about that the project is getting scaled back. The park is being scaled back to what it was originally before. There is no genuine plan to begin new construction. I do not see the focus on the West Greenville portion. There is no plan in place to fund West Greenville.

Mr. Thompson: I agree there is no plan in place to fund West Greenville, but I do not believe there is a plan in place to fund redevelopment entirely. The Commission was given the budgets of the two bond referendums and both had limited amounts of money. Since the Commission is coming up on the annual work plan now is the opportunity for us to move forward some statements with regard to our priorities for the upcoming year. We did move ahead in terms of the West Greenville area and the money was expended

at a faster pace than the Commission has expended the Uptown area. Part of what you are seeing is a catch up part of the Uptown area. I agree we need additional funding to deal with the West Greenville area. Let's look at our work plan to see what the Commission can prioritize as projects.

Mr. Mitchell: I believe if it is prioritized we can find ways to continue the projects and not let it become dormant for another year.

Ms. Thompson: Ms. Anderson did ask for recommended allocations. This is an opportunity to make that kind of recommendation.

Mr. Mitchell: The Commission needs to decide how to move forward with the West Greenville portion of the plan. It needs to be put on the agenda for discussion. The plan the people approved versus what have we done and where we are at now. Everyone knew that the redevelopment in West Greenville was going to cost more than \$5,000,000.00. Now that the funding is gone there is still an approved plan and nobody is coming up with a way to fund that plan.

Mr. Rees: Staff shares your frustrations. It is a very expensive process to try to make up for many years of disinvestment in that area, so it is something that the Commission can certainly talk about and give direction. The Commission has a voice to City Council. As the Commission works through your work plan and associated budget that is the vehicle to let City Council know.

Mr. Thompson: Carl, is it feasible for you and I to get together and go back and look at the plan and take it through in terms of specific objectives and then bring back an overview to the Commission at our next meeting?

Mr. Rees: Yes.

PRESENTATION ON DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO GREENVILLE SIGN ORDINANCE

Mr. Jones: The Center City is very unique with parking, building lines and signage. Within the past year, a few businesses have expressed interest in projection signage. A projection sign is attached to an exterior wall of a building, and projects horizontally not more than 3 feet or 2/3 the distance from the building to the outside edge of the curb line at the time of permit approval; whichever is less. The projection must be at a 90 degree angle. Projecting signs include signs that are completely in the right-of-way, partially in the right-of-way or totally on private property. All signs that project into the right-of-way must first obtain an encroachment agreement for the city and/or State Department of Transportation. New Bern, Raleigh, Davidson, Wilmington, Asheville, Burlington and Asheboro allow projection signs. Charleston, SC, Charlottesville, VA, Savannah, GA, Portland, OR and Burlington, VT allow projection signs. Everyone in the

CD zoning district can benefit from these proposed standards. The proposed standards for projection signs are as follows:

shall be allowed only in the CD (downtown commercial) district;

shall not be attached to the outside edge of a canopy or extend beyond any outside edge of a canopy;

may project horizontally from the building wall not more than three (3) feet, or two-thirds (2/3) the distance from the building wall to the **inside** edge of the street curb line as located at the time of the sign permit approval whichever is less;

the sign display area (sign faces) of a projection wall sign shall be oriented perpendicular to the building wall;

there shall not be more than twelve (12) inches between the sign display areas (faces) of a double sided sign. Three-dimensional projection wall signs not composed of flat sign display surfaces shall not be permitted;

projection wall signs shall be located on private property, provided however, a projection wall sign may encroach into the street right-of-way in accordance with an encroachment approved by the City and/or State Department of Transportation;

buildings with two (2) or more stories shall not have projecting signs located higher than the top wall plate of the second story or twenty-four (24) feet whichever is less;

not more than one (1) projection wall sign shall be allowed per each individual establishment;

projection wall signs for individual establishments located in a common building shall not be located closer than eight (8) feet from any other projection wall sign;

projection wall signs shall be considered part of the total wall sign allowance, provided however, **no projecting wall sign shall exceed ten (10) total square feet in sign display surface area.** A single side of a double face sign shall be utilized for the sign surface area calculation; and

minimum height of a projection wall sign shall have an 8 ft. clearance, and when deemed necessary by engineering; a 10 ft. clearance.

Mr. Jones: The potential benefits for the use of projection signs would be economic, pedestrian friendly environment, and aesthetics. These changes would allow a new option for signs in the central business district that are not currently allowed under the existing City Code. These changes have been advocated by the Uptown Greenville Design Committee. Staff recommends that the Redevelopment Commission may

initiate a text amendment to the Greenville City Code and recommend amendments as drafted to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Chris Mansfield and seconded by Mr. Don Mills to initiate a text amendment to the Greenville City Code and recommend amendments as drafted to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Mr. Rees: Issues were identified by the Redevelopment Commission. Some business plans seem to be poorly prepared with lack of details and financial information missing or incomplete. Some applicants appear to be inexperienced or unprepared to enter business. Many applicants are under-funded or do not appear to have a financial stake in business. In first 18 months of program, there have been 67 referrals made to business counseling providers (Exceed, Pitt Community College (PCC) and Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC). The referrals have yielded 17 applications with two withdrawn. Seven (7) grants have been awarded totaling \$105,000.00 with four in West Greenville and three in Center City. Forty-seven percent of applications have been funded to date. Businesses awarded include marketing company, jewelry wholesaler, vending machine operator, translation service, restaurant, custom clothing retailer, and fitness trainer. Eighty-six percent of funded applications are operated by minority or women owned businesses. Businesses most frequently not funded include hair salons and restaurants. What does the Commission want to accomplish? A larger referral pool would require more advertisement of program. A larger number of applications would require more follow-up with referrals by telephone or constant contact. To have a higher quality of applications, staff could review applications with counseling providers and hold informal interview earlier in order to advise applicants. To have more experienced applicants, there could be required SBTDC or PCC training and added experience requirements. The greater applicant investment could require a minimum investment threshold.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SELECTION

- 5.1 It is strongly encouraged that those considering entering a submission in the competition enroll in the three-session small business seminar provided free of charge by the Greenville office of the North Carolina Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC). The SBTDC along with other local organizations offer free counseling to start up's and other small businesses and can assist with the preparation of a business plan that will meet the specifications of this program. A listing of organizations approved to provide such counseling is included in this application package as attachment "**D**".
- 5.2 Business plan submissions must be completed in accordance with the business plan outline provided in this package and listed as attachment "**B**".

- 5.3 Business plan submissions must be accompanied by the application included in this package listed as attachment “A”. Each individual owner of 20% or more of the business must sign the application.
- 5.4 Submitting entities will be required to provide profit/loss statements, federal income tax statements and other financial documents as necessary to demonstrate compliance with small business and other eligibility requirements.
- 5.5 Submissions will be reviewed by city staff to ensure completeness. Fully completed submissions turned in by the applicable deadline will be reviewed and scored by the Greenville Redevelopment Commission with funds awarded as available to the highest scoring applications.
- 5.6 All submitting entities will receive notification via U.S. Mail as to their status.

Mr. Mills: What is the cost of the training with the SBTDC and PCC?

Mr. Rees: They are both free.

Mr. Thompson: Do we know if the applicants who were awarded the money went through the training?

Mr. Rees: Staff has not officially tracked that information. It so happens that a number of them took a course at PCC or worked with SBTDC.

Mr. Thompson: On a personal level, I like the idea of getting feedback during the review process.

Mr. Mills: Could staff do a dry run?

Mr. Rees: I am not a business counselor. I think it would be important to have the business counselors do that kind of work. In talking with the business counselor providers, they feel like they walk a fine line with these applicants. What they do not want to do is do the work for them. They want to be an advisor.

Ms. Williams: How long are the counseling sessions?

Mr. Rees: It is a three part series over a six to eight week session.

Ms. Williams: Do those business sessions help the applicants prepare this package to present to you or is it various topics on how to run a business?

Mr. Rees: It is general information about issues that come up with running a business.

Ms. Williams: There is a learning process, but some of those should probably not have been there yet. That does not mean they could not be there eventually. I do believe that something needs to be required.

Mr. Rees: The way we are set up now someone calls in after seeing an advertisement and Staff talks to them and we offer a referral and they work with folks. Of the seven awards made so far there are three of those people who turned in their business plans and applications without ever making contact with our department. Several days before the due date they turned it in. At least two of those people have advanced business degrees.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Jim Ensor gives the truths of having your own business without sugar coating it. They are really strict about not doing the work for you but will help you refine it. The person has to invest something into it. Sitting through this training is very important. A Redevelopment Commission member or Staff could sit through one of the sessions to make sure it is what is needed. We could work with Jim Ensor to come up with a standard template that we use, because to me that will eliminate what is not in it or what is in it.

Mr. Rees: That was the standard template developed as part of a senior project by a MBA student at East Carolina University who was interning at the SBTDC. Where people were really falling short was in their financials.

Ms. Williams: It is the most important, because maybe 75% did not have any type of minimum investment. They do not understand that the money granted by the Commission is not going to go very far. It is all about funding. You got to know how to run the business, and you have got to have some money.

Mr. Thompson: Does the Commission want to require a minimum investment threshold?

Mr. Mansfield: I would agree that a minimum stake in it is absolutely necessary.

Mr. Mitchell: My main problem with the minimum investment is by looking at these business plans and these people is that some of them do not understand that they have made a minimum investment. Part of the program was to be to help people who could not go and get the conventional loan.

Mr. Rees: It is a question that is asked on the application where are sources of funds coming from? I think it is a failure of some to think through what they have already put in.

Mr. Mitchell: Some of our applicants cannot follow simple instructions which is a red flag.

Mr. Thompson: I am not sure I have heard any proposed amendments as opposed to advice with the screening process.

Mr. Rees: I wrote down two areas that there seems to be some agreement on an earlier review with staff talking with the business counselor providers and then the possibility of moving up that interview date to a month prior to the deadline. I think some of these things could really help with the quality control issues. At the end of the day, the responsibility still lies with the applicant to do the work. The other thing is to perhaps require that the applicant attend a session at PCC or SBTDC. There was discussion of requiring a minimum investment.

Ms. Williams: I really feel like there should be a percentage of what they are asking for and that they should have as an investment. If they can't save just a little bit of money, they are going to have difficult time paying the bills.

Mr. Mansfield: I would vote for a minimum investment, and I am not sure I would vote for a required attendance to a training, because there may be someone who has already been through school.

Mr. Mills: The wording states recommended.

Mr. Thompson: There can be requirements with exceptions if individuals can demonstrate by other means that they have acquired the experience.

Mr. Mansfield: You can tie that into the earlier submission. If somebody turns in a plan and it looks like it is done by Ted Turner then you don't require them, but if someone turns in an application that is not understandable you ask them to attend training.

Ms. Williams: That could be done.

Mr. Rees: It could be a recommendation that the subcommittee makes, because that was true in some cases. My recollection was afterwards there were comments from the subcommittee saying that they did not know if the person was ready to go into business, because they do not seem to have a good grasp of that environment. The subcommittee could recommend to the applicant to take a business course.

Ms. Williams: We could say after initial review of your application, you may be required to take a business course.

Mr. Mitchell: Spending an hour on the ins and outs of running a small business should be required. This will keep the Commission from having to play the role of a teacher. If you want something bad enough, you will put forth the effort. If you cannot do a business plan, utilize the resources to do a business plan.

Mr. Thompson: My only concern would be that the session they might be required to attend will deal with the subject that is appropriate to what the Commission wants.

Mr. Mitchell: We should probably look at limiting even further who we allow to do the training and talk about improved curriculum for them to use.

Mr. Rees: I will check on what is offered and come back to the Commission with that information.

Mr. Thompson: I am not sure the Commission can agree upon what a minimum investment ought to be, but there is an agreement from all of us that the Commission expects that.

Mr. Mansfield: I think it would be a part of the score.

Mr. Lewis: We may want to include as a prompt in the instructions as to what the sources of funding will be for this project from the person proposing the project.

Mr. Rees: Staff will put forth a draft with the changes to the guidelines and put it in the Commission's packet for April for more discussion.

Ms. Williams: The seven grants that you gave the update on is there any way to find out exactly where they are in their business now. That would give the Commission a really good idea.

Mr. Rees: As a matter of fact, the applicants are required by the Commission to come on their anniversary of the grant date to report back to the Commission. In April, an applicant is due to give an update.

DISCUSSION OF 2010 – 2011 ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Mr. Rees: The work plan timeline is to identify projects and programs in March, to present draft work plan and budget in April, to adopt work plan and budget in May, and to present work plan and budget to City Council in June. Work Plan Items are: Center City Design Standards, Historic Adaptive Reuse, Building Blocks Grant (Dickinson Avenue Corridor), Business Plan Competition, Streetscape Projects (Reade and Cotanche, West Fifth Street Gateway, Evans Street (5th to 10th) and West Fifth Street Phase II), Wayfinding, Five Points Plaza, Tax Increment Financing, Mixed Use Development, Small Business Incubator, Civic Art Initiative, Revitalization Area Marketing, Town Common Master Plan, Go-Science, and Uptown Historic Theatre. Potential new items are Eco Tourism Initiative, Small Projects (bike racks, alleys, trash receptacles).

Center City Design Standards have been completed by the volunteer committee and Staff.

Historic Adaptive Reuse is desirable. There are several projects on a smaller scale that have occurred but we are always looking at bigger projects that may include the historic warehouses.

West Greenville Building Block Grants are ongoing with two rounds per year in the fall and spring. The Commission has also added the Dickinson Avenue Corridor properties as possible grant recipients.

Small Business Plan Competition has already been discussed.

Streetscape Pilot Projects: Reade and Cotanche Streetscape are almost complete. West Fifth Street Gateway should be going to bid in the next 45-60 days. Staff still anticipates have a ceremony for the Eppes art and for the project on July 4th. The next two streetscape projects are Evans Street from Fifth to Tenth that ties in with the Tenth Street Connector project and with that project, and West Fifth Street, Phase II which has no funds. It would be something that could be done if the City is looking to issue additional bond funds and something that City Council will be discussing over the next two months.

Comprehensive Wayfinding Project is undergoing final review. Construction of the project should take place over the summer.

Five Points Plaza Project is about 75% complete on design. We are looking at getting the project bid in the next 60 – 90 days, so it can be completed by September 1, 2010 in advance of Freeboot Friday or to hold off to bid until November, so there is no interference with Freeboot Friday.

Tax Increment Financing: The Commission did draft and adopt a policy for Tax Increment Financing to use as a tool to try to get large scale projects. We are talking to two developers to get to do projects here in the Center City.

Residential and Mixed Use Project Development remains open. Staff continues to push for this type of development.

West Greenville Business Incubator: Staff is at the 75% mark on that particular document, but we are holding, because we need to find an entity to drive this and a location. This will continue to be worked on during the next fiscal year.

Civic Art Initiative: The Eppes civic art piece is well underway in being created by the artist in the studio in Reidsville, NC. The piece of Earth Fire Wind by Hanna Jubran has been selected to go on the civic art pad at Reade and Cotanche. The Commission entered into an agreement with the Pitt County Arts Council will guide the future civic art.

Revitalization Area Marketing Program is always kept in the work plan to try to do different things with the internet and working the business expo. Staff looks at inexpensive ways to get the word out about what is being done.

Town Common Master Plan is well underway. The Commission has been getting updates on that.

The Go-Science Center project continues with the need for location and funding. City Council will be considering that at their April meeting.

State Theatre Restoration Project is being worked and updates will be given in the upcoming months about how that will proceed.

New Projects:

Eco Tourism Initiative has been added by the City Council and the Town Common is being looked at under this initiative with trails and kayaking.

Small Projects that have come up particularly through Uptown Greenville the desire to have bike racks scattered around the Center City and West Greenville. Alleys is another one with New Bern doing a wonderful job improving the alleyways. Trash receptacles are also needed. There is a shortage of these in West Greenville and the Center City.

Mr. Rees: What the Commission heard earlier from Ms. Anderson is the housing information that is also incorporated each year into the work plan.

Mr. Thompson: There is still a lot of money in the Development Financing section of the budget. Is it feasible for the Commission to shift some funding out of that to where we might address some of the acquisition issues.

Mr. Rees: The Commission can certainly shift some of that money for acquisition, but as you know acquisition is very expensive.

Mr. Mitchell: The properties that the City owns do we have to wait to tear the homes down when we have money. If we get rid of the dilapidated homes, the property will be more appealing to investors. I know there is not an Uptown group for West Greenville, so maybe a group needs to look at a way to show the potential in that area. There needs to be office space available in West Greenville.

Mr. Rees: It is hard to find business plan applicants in West Greenville. The City can get a list of what the City owns that has structures on it that need to be torn down. Some of the properties may be Code Enforcement cases.

Mr. Mitchell: Listening to City Council meetings, Code Enforcement has been doing an excellent job addressing those issues. The car wash is an eyesore.

Mr. Rees: The car wash owner has been reluctant to sell, because he has some environmental issues. The next leg of Fifth Street is going to require acquisition of the property regardless, because part of that plan is to realign Tyson and 14th Streets.

Mr. Mitchell: Can design standards be set up for West Greenville?

Mr. Rees: The only caution I would add to that is that the Center City design standards were wanted by the area and was a voluntary thing, so we need to make sure that is what the people want and potential investors want in that area.

Mr. Mansfield: I would like the Commission to consider raising the stakes in the Development Finance arena for a larger scale business plan competition and to identify some properties that the Commission would be willing to work with a developer on. We need a stronger base for businesses to reside.

Mr. Rees: Staff is trying to get this giant plan completed.

Mr. Mitchell: We might want to spark a minority business roundtable. In the West Greenville area, I have seen the new additions to Carver Library and the new houses. There needs to be more development.

Mr. Mansfield: A grocery store that you could walk to would be nice.

Mr. Thompson: That was one of the things that we talked about seeing near 14th Street.

Mr. Rees: There could be more detailed planning and putting that on the work plan as an investigative item would be very timely.

Mr. Thompson: What was the general timeframe for revisiting the Redevelopment Plan?

Mr. Rees: Twenty years....fifteen years for Manteo and twenty years for New Bern....we are still pretty early in our plan. I think that we continue to need to tweak things. Money is an issue from the private side and certainly from the City's ability to fund these things.

Mr. Thompson: The Commission should direct concerns

Mr. Rees: Staff will add these concerns and issues and bring them back for review in April. A solid draft will be brought back before the Commission in May to adopt.

Mr. Thompson: Will that indicate the budget as well and the obligations of any money?

Mr. Rees: Yes.

UPDATE ON PETITION FOR REZONING IN REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Mr. Rees: The rezoning request from R-6 (multi-family) and CDF (Downtown commercial fringe) to OR (Office-Residential) will be brought before the Planning and Zoning Commission for action at their March 16, 2010. Due to changes in state law, two properties that were initially listed will not be on the request.

CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL FEE REQUEST FOR WEST FIFTH STREET GATEWAY PROJECT DESIGN

Mr. Rees: Rivers and Associates, Inc. has a proposed change order.

Civic Art – Coordination and Design of Engraved Brick Pavers at Art Gateway

Design brick paver layout at Art Gateway to incorporate 140+/- 8" x 8" and 126+/- 4" x 8" donor bricks.

Provide a blank template of paver layout to Eppes Alumni. Eppes Alumni to provide Rivers and Associates, Inc. with a numbered and typed list of donors and designated brick paver location numerically keyed to the template.

Rivers and Associates, Inc. will update plans and specifications to accordingly.

Meetings – assumes one (1) at Rivers and Associates, Inc. with representative of Eppes Alumni for coordination and review purposes.

Civic Art – Structural Engineering Redesign of Civic Art Retaining Wall

Structural Engineer's redesign of Civic Art Retaining Wall due to relocation of proposed bus shelter

Mr. Rees: The increase of this change order is \$3,620.00.

Motion was made by Mr. Dennis Mitchell and seconded by Ms. Terri Williams to approve the change order for \$3,620.00. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT FROM SECRETARY

Financial Report

Mr. Rees: The expenditure reports for West Greenville and the Center City have been submitted for review by the Commission.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mr. Mills: I am looking forward to seeing more progress in West Greenville.

Mr. Mitchell: I am happy to report that I now also have a son.

The Commission congratulated Mr. Mitchell on the most recent addition to his family.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Ms. Terri Williams and seconded by Mr. Chris Mansfield to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Rees, Urban Development Planner
The City of Greenville Community Development Department