

**City of New Bern
Board of Aldermen Work Session
March 19, 2018 – 1:00 p.m.
City Hall Courtroom
300 Pollock Street**

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw; Aldermen Sabrina Bengel, Jameesha Harris, Robert Aster, Johnnie Ray Kinsey (arrived at 1:44 p.m.), and Barbara Best. Absent: Jeffrey Odham. A quorum was present.

Also in Attendance: Mark Stephens, City Manager; Kristen Culler, Assistant City Manager; Michael Scott Davis, City Attorney; and Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

Mayor Outlaw opened the meeting with prayer. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

1. Discussion of Redevelopment:

- **Presentation by the UNC School of Government Development Finance Initiative on a Potential Urban Redevelopment Area and Commission; and**
- **Question and Answer Session with only the Governing Board**

Mr. Stephens introduced Marcia Perritt from the UNC School of Government Development Finance Initiative. Ms. Perritt shared a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of Urban Redevelopment Areas (“URA”), which is a geographic area targeted for redevelopment by local government as provided by NCGS Chapter 160A, Article 22. The basic steps of creating a URA were reviewed, as well as planning activities, roles and responsibilities, and tools available once the URA is developed. Notably, URAs must be contiguous, although more than one URA could be created if the areas of concern are not adjoining. Additionally, URAs can include residential or commercial properties, or both. Ms. Perritt reviewed case studies, noting Greenville, Rocky Mount, Wilson, and Kinston are all cities in Eastern North Carolina that have successfully utilized a URA.

Numerous questions were posed by the Board during Ms. Perritt’s presentation, and she addressed those. She noted the benefit and feasibility of working with the foundation of information already established through the Choice Neighborhood Initiative (“CNI”). She also endorsed the need to be thoughtful in establishing the boundaries of the URA, noting a smaller, more manageable area would help lend itself to more success. As pointed out by Mr. Stephens, if the City desired to convey property to a URA, many of the transfers would require Craven County’s consent as the parcels are jointly owned between the City and County. Ms. Perritt concluded her presentation by leaving the Board with a set of questions to consider with respect to the next steps in considering a URA. She suggested engaging Tyler Mulligan in a second work session to review the legal aspects of a URA. Mr. Stephens recommended that work session be followed by an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to be heard.

The Board noted it was not interested in acting as the Urban Redevelopment Commission (“URC”), but instead have representation on the Commission in the form of the Aldermen whose wards would fall within the URA.

Alderman Harris made a motion to allow the public to ask questions of Ms. Perritt about her presentation, without sharing opinions at this time, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. The motion carried unanimously. The following individuals posed questions:

- Dan Frey of 1414 Neuse Boulevard asked if the URA is a national program. Ms. Perritt responded it is a local designation enabled by state statute. Mr. Frey commented on how the Five Points area has stalled.
- Katherine Adolph of 210 Metcalf Street asked who would perform all of the work and pay for the plan. Ms. Perritt noted New Bern already has a good foundation to build on, as a lot of work has already been performed.
- Commissioner Johnnie Sampson commented on the previous thriving state of Five Points and the Duffyfield areas and expressed a desire to make sure those areas would get some attention.
- Amere Mack (Mack Investments) of 219 West Lane, Trenton, asked whether funding would be available only to redevelopment investors or if it would be available to current property owners. Ms. Perritt responded that would be determined by input from the public stakeholders.
- Ethel Sampson of 1036 Sampson Street asked what could be done about a historical building that is booming, but hit by a hurricane and then the door is flagged with a note from the Fire Department. It was pointed out to Mrs. Sampson that if the building was insured, the insurance company should cover the damages. Also, FEMA funds may be available if the damages occurred during a declared event. Ms. Perritt suggested Mrs. Sampson check to see if the structure is listed on the historical register.
- Clarence Monroe of the Five Points area noted he has lived in the area all of his life, and he felt all of the strategic planning meetings are the same. He suggested a community center be established to keep people off the streets and encourage them to be constructive and respectful citizens. Several members of the Board expressed a desire to educate the public on home ownership and budgeting, and Ms. Perritt pointed out the CNI plan covers the importance of home ownership.
- David (last name inaudible) of 227 East Front Street asked if the URC could put restrictive covenants on the whole site plan or just the acquired parcels. Ms. Perritt stated the covenants could only be placed on the parcels owned by the Commission. Mr. Stephens expanded upon her response to note the Commission could adjust the zonings, which may restrict other properties.

- Mike Duffy of 121 Mourning Dove Trail asked if the Paint Your Heart Out program could be considered a match for possible grants. Mr. Stephens noted it depends on the grant and pointed out most of the materials for Paint Your Heart Out are donated.
- Elijah Brown, Jr. of 916 Ft. Totten Drive expressed concern that the process could take months or years and stated the areas of blight need attention now. He felt all of his life promises have been made for certain areas of the City, but nothing is ever done. While the community gives input, often times their input is ignored. Ms. Perritt clarified that while redevelopment and revitalization of an area can take years, the time involved with starting the process would not.
- Dan Frey again approached and stated one of the best redevelopment programs in the country is when private developers have confidence in a project. He asked if private investors stepped up in the other areas of Eastern North Carolina that undertook a URA project. Ms. Perritt stated she was most involved with Kinston and developers did step up for that project.

Alderman Harris made a motion to close the question and answer session, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board expressed a need to quickly move forward with the next meeting. Mr. Davis asked about the Board's desires and how deep they wanted to dive in at the next meeting, which would determine whether Mr. Mulligan is needed or whether Mr. Davis could facilitate the meeting. The Mayor suggested the three aldermen whose wards would be involved should meet with Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services, to define the URA boundary and then expeditiously report back to the Board. Mr. Davis noted the Redevelopment Commission could be established after the boundary is identified. The City's desires can be communicated by Mr. Stephens to the County Manager with respect to plans for property within the boundaries that are owned jointly between the City and County. Mr. Stephens suggested Ms. Perritt attend the meeting between Development Services and Aldermen Bengel, Harris, and Best. He asked the Board to forward him any questions it may have prior to that meeting so he can relay them to Ms. Perritt and she be in a position to provide and discuss the answers at the time of the meeting.

(Note: Mr. Davis left at the conclusion of this discussion, time being 3:15 p.m. Alderman Harris momentarily left the meeting at 3:15 p.m., returning during the discussion of Martin Marietta Park as noted below.)

2. Discussion of Martin Marietta Park

Foster Hughes, Director of Parks and Recreation, introduced Mike Norris and Jim Bourey of McGill Associates. Mr. Morris shared a presentation on the conceptual plans for the Martin Marietta Park and details regarding the input obtained during the public meetings.

(Note: Alderman Bengel left the meeting at 3:26 p.m. Alderman Harris returned to the meeting at 3:30 p.m.)

The current concept has a price tag in excess of \$10 million, but a closer cost estimate can be derived once the plan is finalized. It is notable that grant funds will be sought as well as public-private partnerships, and the plan will be implemented in phases. Mr. Stephens asked for the Board's input on the conceptual plan and noted the deadline for this year's Parks and Recreation Trust Fund ("PARTF") grant is May 1st. In order to apply for funding, a master plan must be approved by the Board of Aldermen. Approval of such a plan does not mean the plan cannot be modified in the future, if needed. Mr. Bourey addressed the funding implementation and pointed out there are more than 10 federal funding sources that can be pursued.

Mr. Hughes noted the plan would formally be presented to the Board for approval at its first meeting in April. Today's presentation was for the purpose of obtaining the Board's thoughts on the proposed concept. Since Martin Marietta Park is close in proximity to Glenburnie Park, the question was posed as to what plans may exist for Glenburnie Park. Those plans include the addition of some walking trails, but any other expansion to Glenburnie Park would actually congest that park according to Mr. Hughes.

(Note: Ms. Culler left the meeting at 4:15 p.m.)

3. **Adjourn.**

Alderman Aster made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Harris. The motion carried, time being 4:16 p.m.

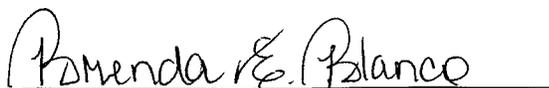
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

NOTE: For additional details and information on the Board of Aldermen meetings, please visit the City of New Bern's website at www.newbern-nc.org. Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: March 27, 2018



Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor



Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk