

PUBLIC NOTICE

Aiken Municipal Development Commission Meeting

The Aiken Municipal Development Commission will meet on Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 3:30 P.M. The meeting will be held at the Lessie B. Price Senior & Youth Center at 841 Edgefield Avenue NW.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NOTICE

The Aiken Municipal Development Commission will meet in Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(2) of the South Carolina Code to discuss matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.

Specifically, the Aiken Municipal Development Commission will discuss matters regarding property in the downtown area.

Aiken Municipal Development Commission

Agenda

Lessie B. Price Senior & Youth Center
841 Edgefield Avenue NW

August 4, 2020

3:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

1. Approval of Agenda for August 4, 2020.
2. Approval of Minutes for the July 7, 2020, meeting.
3. Overview of Commercial Property Code for Commission by Ryan Bland, Planning Director.
4. Comments by Commission Members
5. Information and Updates from Staff.
6. Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Aiken Municipal Development Commission Minutes

Lessie B. Price Senior & Youth Center
July 7, 2020

Present: Tim Dangerfield, Ed Girardeau, Stuart MacVean, Lessie Price, Chris Verenes, Tom Williams, Ed Woltz, and Keith Wood.

Absent: Marty Gillam

Others Present: Stuart Bedenbaugh, Tim O'Briant, Sabina Craig, David Jameson, and Sara Ridout.

Mr. Dangerfield called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. He said he would like for the Commission to consider adding to the agenda the appointment of David Jameson as an Ex-Officio member of the Aiken Municipal Development Commission. A motion was made by Mr. Verenes and seconded by Mr. Wood that David Jameson be appointed as an Ex-Officio member of the Municipal Development Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Dangerfield asked the Commission to consider approval of the June 16, 2020, minutes. A motion was made and seconded that the minutes of June 16, 2020, be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ONE

Laurens Street

Chesterfield Street

Richland Avenue

Park Avenue

Arnett Muldrow & Associates

Mr. Dangerfield stated the next item of business was consideration of the Redevelopment Plan One by Arnett Muldrow & Associates which was distributed at the last meeting.

Mr. O'Briant stated as discussed at the last meeting, the Redevelopment Plan One was a very basic plan which follows to the letter the requirements in the state statute that governs redevelopment commissions and what has to be in place to take any action. Such a plan upon recommendation by the Development Commission would go before City Council for adoption. If approved by Council, it would then return to the Development Commission to take any action the Commission would deem necessary to improve the redevelopment district contained in the plan. The plan has some general ideas of a government building, a hotel and apartments in the area. After approval by City Council the Commission would more thoroughly plan out specific projects or actions that might be taken to develop and improve the area.

It was noted that there had been several previous plans with one being in 2010 and 2016. Mr. O'Briant pointed out there had been various plans that had incorporated portions of the area in the Redevelopment Plan One, but none met the threshold of being a redevelopment plan as required. There was concern about what the Commission members were being asked to do as they have not seen details of the elements in the plan as pointed out in item 7. Estimated Cost

and Method of Financing Redevelopment. Mr. O'Briant responded that the redevelopment plan for the Development Commission is a provision under State law. The Commission can do nothing until there is a redevelopment plan. The Redevelopment Plan One that was presented to the Commission is the basic version of a redevelopment plan. The AECOM plan will be more of a master plan for the community. The statute requires bulleted items and estimated cost and method of financing. It does not require the Commission to use any or all of the figures. We have to address that there has been thought given to possible forms of financing; we are not locked into using them. The site plan does not lock us into doing anything in the site plan. The plan gives the Commission the ability to study and make recommendations and embark on projects within the area. It was pointed out that at the last meeting it was noted that the Redevelopment Plan One is a requirement of the state statute, and the Commission can amend the plan. However, a plan has to be adopted and then it can be amended. If the Commission desires to make changes to the plan before recommending it to Council, we could have Arnett Muldrow & Associates draw in other properties to be included in the plan.

There was also discussion on the height of buildings, especially in the downtown area. Mr. Verenes moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, that in Item 7 bullet 3 that reference to a height limit of 55 feet high be deleted from the document. The motion was unanimously approved.

There was a question as to how long it might take City Council to take action on the plan. Mr. O'Briant stated the plan would have to be advertised for 15 days with a public hearing and approved by a resolution. If the plan is recommended to Council at this meeting, Council could consider the plan at their August 10, 2020, meeting.

There was a question as to how we would be addressing the method of financing. It was pointed out there is a listing in the plan that has many possible methods of financing.

Mr. Dangerfield stated he would like to ask Mr. Wood, Mr. Verenes and Mr. Williams to serve as a sub-committee to look at the financing side and bring some ideas back to the Commission to review.

Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Mr. MacVean, that the Commission adopt the Redevelopment Plan One as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

WOODFORD TRACE DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development Incentive Application

Dougherty Road

Mr. Dangerfield asked Mr. O'Briant to explain the Economic Development Incentive Application from Woodford Trace Development.

Mr. O'Briant pointed out that in 2018 after a lot of discussion by City Council, Council approved an Economic Incentive ordinance. The ordinance allows for new projects to apply for a rebate on fees paid to the City for water and sewer taps, impact fees, business licenses, building inspection fees, etc. that go with projects. There have been several small incentive agreements approved by City Council. To avoid clawback and the City giving money to anybody who does not become successful and doing what they promised they would do, the incentive is based on a rebate. Each project sponsor must agree that they are going to create X number of jobs and build X square feet. A list of things would be formalized in the agreement. Council can rebate a year

after the Certificate of Occupancy is issued on the project. Staff evaluates whether the terms of the agreement for the project have been met. If the terms have been met, then Council has the discretion to rebate up to 50% of the project's City related expenses for up to 5 years. He pointed out that Betsy's Around the Corner has a 5 year 50% rebate agreement. That was a small project. He pointed out that for construction projects Council has issued one year agreements because the bulk of the expense for a construction project is in the first year after the Certificate of Occupancy is issued. It is usually recommended that construction projects be incentivized for one year. The Woodford Trace Development would be the largest project the City has engaged in for an incentive with the project being about a \$10 million project. As part of the process we would like for the Commission to review the staff recommendations and make a recommendation to City Council. It would be up to Council to decide the details of the incentive as to the percentage and the length of time.

The Commission members discussed at length the project and the Incentive Application. In response to the Commission members asking the difference between affordable housing and low income housing, Mr. O'Briant explained the difference. There was also a question as to whether there was a difference in zoning for low income housing and affordable housing. It was noted that zoning just designates whether property is residential use, business, or professional use, etc. Mr. Jameson pointed out that in the Chamber's housing market study, it was noted that there is a dire need for affordable housing which is working class housing. The Commission discussed the various fees that would be involved in the project. Mr. Bedenbaugh pointed out that in 2007 the City ran a sewer line under Whiskey Road for Walgreen's. As part of that, developers are paying the City back for the cost of running that sewer line which serves Walgreen's and other areas as they are developed in that area based on the impact of that development. It was pointed out that Taco Bell paid \$9,600 for the impact fee because of the size of the improvements. However, the Woodford Trace development is a 48 unit apartment complex which will have a larger impact on the sewer line. Woodford Trace development will be addressing some of the pedestrian safety and transportation issues in the area by their agreeing, at their expense, to construct the first phase of what will be the Pawnee-Neilson connector road which will open a path from Owens and Whiskey all the way through to Pawnee.

Mr. O'Briant stated this was the first application that Woodford Trace had submitted. He said the City had been working with the developer on the project for about a year. He said he envisioned the role of the Commission to be to review the application and make a recommendation to Council unless it was a project which the Commission felt was not suitable for the area and the incentive. After the Commission recommendation, then Council would determine the specifics of the incentive.

Mr. Verenes moved, seconded by Mr. Williams that the Commission recommend the application of Woodford Trace to City Council as a project worthy of City Council's consideration for an incentive under the Incentive Program. The motion was unanimously approved.

INFORMATION AND UPDATES FROM STAFF

Infrastructure Bank

University Parkway

Powderhouse Connector

Mr. Bedenbaugh informed the Commission regarding the status of the City's applications to the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank (STIB). He noted that the application in 2010 to STIB

was to four-lane University Parkway from Richland Avenue to Robert M. Bell Parkway. Since that time the cost for the project has gone up and the project has been on hold. The City met with STIB on Monday and presented a request that the scope of the University Parkway project be reduced. The road expansion project will now run from Richland Avenue W. to Medical Park Drive at a cost of \$10.6 million for a distance of 0.55 miles. Funding will include \$3 million from the City's CPST III funds, \$3 million from the County's CPST III funds, and \$4.6 million from STIB. The initial application in 2010 was for \$10.6 million to run from Richland Avenue W. to Robert M. Bell Parkway, a distance of 0.90 mile. The project is proposed to start by March 31, 2021 and be completed by October 2023.

Mr. Bedenbaugh pointed out, however, that STIB did not approve the Powderhouse Connector project. STIB considered 10 projects around the state and approved 6. Due to decreased revenue attributed to COVID-19, STIB's revenue available for projects decreased from an expected \$660 million to \$490 million. The project will be considered again in the fall.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also reported that the bid for the water and sewer project to extend water and sewer beyond I-20 to Piper Road had come in under budget. He said the City was applying to the County for the extension of our water and sewer district boundaries so we can expand our services northward beyond I-20.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Dangerfield stated the Commission needed to go into Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(2) of the South Carolina Code to discuss negotiations incident to a proposed contractual arrangement. Specifically, the Aiken Municipal Development Commission will discuss negotiations incident to a potential purchase of property downtown.

Mr. MacVean moved, seconded by Mr. Williams that the Commission go into executive session to discuss the matter noted by Mr. Dangerfield. The motion was unanimously approved. The Commission went into Executive Session at 4:35 P.M.

After discussion, Mr. McVean moved, seconded by Mr. Verenes, that the Commission come out of executive session. The motion was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. McVean moved, seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Municipal Development Commission adjourn. Mr. Dangerfield stated staff would get an agenda out for the July 21, 2020, meeting to be held at the Lessie B. Price Senior & Youth Center at 3:30 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 P.M.

Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk