

**City Council of the City of Greenville
Work Session**

**Monday, November 9, 2020
3:00 p.m.**

Greenville City Hall is currently closed to the public.

Virtual Meeting Viewing
<https://www.greenvillesc.gov/meeting>

**Telephone: 1-415-655-0002
WebEx Event Number: 173 299 6592**

**Remote Viewing Location:
Greenville Convention Center, 1 Exposition Drive**

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL: Mayor Knox White; Councilmember John M. DeWorken, Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, Councilmember Kenneth C. Gibson, Councilmember Wil Brasington; Councilmember Russell H. Stall; and Councilmember Dorothy H. Dowe

CITY STAFF: City Manager John F. McDonough; City Attorney Michael S. Pitts; City Clerk Camilla G. Pitman

Mayor White called the meeting to order for the purpose of discussing the following matters.

Greenville Drive – Field Street Improvements and Development Agreement

Assistant City Manager Shannon Lavrin provided a presentation update on the agenda item as located in Council's Agenda packet. Ms. Lavrin referred to the item scheduled on the Formal Meeting agenda this evening and stated the recommendation is to enter into a Development Agreement and to appropriate \$2.55 million for upgrades in the Field Street area. Ms. Lavrin also stated the project is a public/private investment allowing for the creation an event venue. Ms. Lavrin commented on outreach performed with surrounding properties, approval and compliance requirements for the project, and the addition of public restrooms that will be maintained long-term by the Greenville Drive. Along with the improvements, Ms. Lavrin recommended the City modify in the lease with the Greenville Drive the early optout clause from 2026 to 2032.

Mayor White asked where the appropriation will come from, and Real Estate Development Manager Mary Douglas Hirsch responded the funds will come from the former West End TIF fund. Greenville Drive President and Owner Craig Brown shared his excitement for the project and with the extension of the City's commitment. Councilmembers expressed their appreciation for staff's outreach to Allen Temple Church and for the Greenville Drive's investment in the project.

Unity Park Affordable Housing Property Transfers

City Manager John McDonough introduced the agenda item for presentation by Deputy City Manager Eden Freeman and Greenville Housing Fund President and CEO Bryan Brown. Before the presentation, Councilmember Gibson stated he plans to request postponement of the Formal Meeting agenda item this evening advising that he does not believe the project is ready to move forward. Councilmember Gibson also stated he has spoken with individuals involved with the

property transfer and while they may have initially been supportive, they are currently not and are requesting additional discussions with Council.

Mr. McDonough suggested working through the presentation to receive information on the timeliness of the project. Councilmember Gibson responded he has no problem with receiving the presentation, however, he does not want something to be presented that might be backtracked later. Councilmember Gibson stated it is his understanding there are disagreements involving the Southernside properties.

Ms. Freeman introduced a presentation for consideration in transferring ownership of certain city-owned parcels near Unity Park to the Greenville Housing Fund (GHF) for development of additional affordable housing. Mr. Brown stated prior to this meeting, he had a conversation with a member of the Southernside group and that it is his understanding we have a general agreement to move forward. Mr. Brown advised GHF is working on a loan application and tax credits and are attempting to submit applications before caps are met. Mr. Brown also advised if it is not submitted in a timely fashion, the projects could be delayed for another year. Mr. Brown referred to each property site and developments planned for those sites and stated they do not want to expend resources pursuing a development if they are unable to move forward.

Councilmember Dowe asked if middle income housing ever comes up as missing. Mr. Brown responded he anticipates Sites 3 and 6 will be more traditional multi-family housing for seniors and Site 4 will have more of a missing middle because of its size. Mr. Brown referred to the potential location of missing middle housing within the other sites.

Mayor White stated he did not anticipate Site 3 being ready for disposition, referring to the site as the former Southernside Center, and commented on an agreement involving the demolition which occurred on the property.

Councilmember Gibson stated that during the work session, he has clarified with the complaining party their concern with Site 3, which seems to be the issue, and they are fine with proceeding with the transfer of Sites 4, 5, 6, and 7. Councilmember Gibson advised he is waiting to hear back about their position on Site 3. Mr. Brown responded stating the community space on Site 6 is anticipated to assist with replacing the community center capacity for the neighborhood. Mr. Brown advised he is currently working with the development partner and the neighborhood to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding.

Mayor White advised Council made the commitment years ago that affordable housing would be included as a part of Unity Park and the aspiration is to have some of the units in place when the park opens in 2022.

Councilmember Gibson asked what the effect would be in transferring that property to Southernside. Mr. Brown commented on the complexity of the financial process and stated having a good structure in place that is clear to the investors is important. Mr. Brown also commented on the efforts to streamline the development approach while keeping good faith with the neighborhood group for services and mutual goals and objectives to support senior housing. Mr. Brown suggested forwarding a document to Councilmember Gibson for his review. Mr. Brown emphasized that there is a lot of work taking place with this matter.

Councilmember Gibson asked what the affect would be if Site 3 is not included at this time. Mr. Brown responded it would disrupt the development proposal and we would not be able to move

forward with the financial application. Mr. Brown stated the exercise is looking for a configuration to deliver a certain amount of units and Sites 3 and 6 are the best parcels to advance the right number of senior affordable housing units and to finance successfully. Mr. Brown added if we move forward, we want the support of the community and we will demonstrate our ability to earn that support. Councilmember Stall asked if there are other properties that could replace Site 3. Ms. Freeman responded they have held off in bringing other properties forward because they are not ready at this point.

Mayor White stated he was surprised by the issue and reminded Councilmember Gibson that Council can move forward with a first reading and discuss the matter further between readings.

Tree Planting Campaign – Plat GVL

Parks and Grounds Urban Designer Jeff Waters provided a presentation on the agenda item as located in Council's Agenda packet. Mr. Waters commented on the value of trees, current tree canopy, proposed tree ordinance updates, and development of the tree plotter software to allow for a database allowing for inventories and reports.

Councilmember Brasington asked if the software will allow for forecasting the future of the trees, Mr. Waters responded staff is still going through training, however, he believes they will be able to inventory trees using different factors.

Mr. Waters referred to the Plant GVL campaign where 200 trees were given away on December 5 and 200 trees will be given away on January 30. Mr. Waters provided updated information on the planting and location of trees in the City, communications with tree planting efforts, and grant applications available for planting.

Councilmember Brasington stated he has been pleasantly surprised with the number of trees the City plants on an annual basis and encouraged the City to promote the replenishment of trees in the municipality by the City and by residents. Mayor White referred to receiving the Tree City award on an annual basis and suggested setting a goal for the number of trees planted.

Boards and Commissions – Appointment Process

Councilmember DeWorken and Councilmember Dowe provided a recommendation to streamline the boards and commissions process into bi-annual reviews and appointments as presented and located in Council's agenda packet. Councilmember Dowe stated the proposal will assist with reducing the number of executive session discussions, will solidify on the calendar when interviews are taking place, will provide predictability to the applicants on when the appointments are made, and will provide more transparency to the timeline of the process. Councilmember Dowe discussed dividing Council into two groups and scheduling times twice a year for interviews and appointments, similar to the County process.

Councilmember Stall shared his concern with the panel aspect and attempting to schedule participation by all Councilmembers. Councilmember DeWorken responded the idea is to confirm dates for review and interviews to allow for better participation. Councilmember Stall also shared concerns with splitting Council into two panels and asked if there is a better way of assigning Council members in connection with their individual passions and knowledge. Councilmember Dowe responded the groups need to be balance and the objective is to rotate the assignment of panels.

Councilmember Dowe stated if we can reach consensus, then we can move forward with the process and tweak it as we go. Councilmember DeWorken stated he anticipates the need to address some issues as Council works through the first year. Mayor White stated attendance has been important, and he will be available to participate as needed. Mayor White encouraged everyone to review all applications for each group and provide insight and recommendations as necessary.

Councilmember Stall asked the City Manager to include the item on the retreat agenda for further discussion. Mr. McDonough suggested allowing Council members to make direct appointments to some of the boards and commissions, similar to the appointments recently made to the Citizen Advisory Committee. Councilmember Brasington agreed with the approach.

Councilmember Dowe and Councilmember DeWorken recommended moving forward with the group proposal in order to not delay the timeline. Councilmember DeWorken also recommended considering direct appointments as suggested by Mr. McDonough. Councilmember Stall responded he would not support that process. Councilmember Dowe recommended moving forward with the group proposal and hold up on direct appointments for now.

City Clerk Camilla Pitman shared her support in executing the proposal and stated her office would begin the process immediately. As to suggestions, Ms. Pitman recommended maintaining the two groups or panels for one year and rotate Council members at the beginning of each year.

After discussion, Council supported moving forward with the group proposal as presented.

Motion - Executive Session

During the open Work Session, Mayor White asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. City Attorney Mike Pitts recommended going into executive session under S.C. Code §30-4-70 (a)(1) to discuss appointments to the City's boards and commissions or employment related matters and

Councilmember Flemming moved, seconded by Councilmember Gibson, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

(Executive Session)

There being no further discussions, Councilmember Brasington moved, seconded by Councilmember Gibson, to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.

With no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Camilla G. Pitman, MMC, Certified PLS
City Clerk

Meeting notice posted on January 22, 2021