

SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2010 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum. COUNCILPERSONS: Bo Griffin, Ella Bamberg, Janeth Walker, Teresa Hannibal, and Nancy Foster. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Gene Searson and Bruce Ellis.

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Councilperson Griffin gave the invocation.

While Council was waiting for Mr. Harry Crissy to arrive, Councilperson Foster told Council she noticed the Revitalization Plan pointed out that the main employers for the area were the hospital, the schools and public owned facilities.

Mr. Harry Crissy arrived and presented the proposed Bamberg Revitalization Plan to Council. He said the main points of the plan pointed out the need for parking to be placed back on Main Street and the need for a truck route to get the trucks off Main Street in the Core Commercial District. Mr. Crissy told Council the Shift Share Analysis sounded discouraging but explained that all rural areas were experiencing the same economy. Mr. Crissy said the Plan showed the economic pursuits for the Bamberg area should be towards transportation and warehousing industries. Mr. Crissy, saying the retail analysis figures were typical, told Council everyone must be cautious in relying on the figures if they planned to open a business.

Mr. Crissy said the Plan called for removing the rails downtown and possibly selling them or using them for bicycle racks. He said the parking on Main Street should be put back as soon as possible and told Council the COG and engineers were ready to work with them.

Councilperson Foster asked if a charrette would be in the future?

Mr. Crissy said they would need to get the businesses to agree to have an architect to come in and do a charrette when dealing with the storefronts. Mr. Crissy told Council that engineering students could be used to help with the Plan and told Council a charrette would make them eligible for grant funding.

Councilperson Hannibal asked when the rails were removed would the sidewalks remain as they are?

Mr. Crissy said he was not sure the sidewalks were handicapped accessible and said the engineers and the SCDOT would have to make that call. He said they needed to do whatever was the simplest fix.

Councilperson Hannibal asked how many parking places could be replaced on Main Street?

Mr. Crissy said he had figured 42 parking spaces could be put back on Main Street.

Councilman Griffin asked if someone would help with the truck route?

Mr. Crissy told Council that once traffic counts were taken that the engineers who were eager to help could then make recommendations.

Mayor McCollum told Council they had asked SCDOT about the condition of the sidewalks who said they were ok and then left town.

Mr. Crissy assured Council that the COG wanted to work with them on the Plan.

Councilperson Foster asked about the one million dollars that was suppose to be leftover from the 301/601 Widening Project.

Mayor McCollum said he had talked to someone at SCDOT yesterday who advised him to contact Jennifer Tinsley at the COG. Mayor McCollum told Council that Mike Sullivan of the SCDOT could not get involved with trying to find the money. Mayor McCollum said he had been told that a letter from the SCDOT was written explaining the one million dollars but that no one could find the letter now.

Mayor McCollum said he talked to Jennifer Tinsley at the COG who was saying the stoplight at the intersection in front of Piggly Wiggly was now out of the project. Mayor McCollum said he would be talking to SCDOT officials about the stoplight at the meeting next week to announce the 78 Widening Project.

Mr. Crissy told Council they would need a stoplight at Elm and Highway 301/601 for the proposed truck route.

Mayor McCollum informed Council about the accident he nearly had at the intersection due to the stoplight not being there.

Mr. Crissy told Council with their permission he would like to send the Revitalization Plan to Jennifer Tinsley at the COG in order to move the Plan forward.

Mayor McCollum voiced that he felt they had been shunned.

Councilperson Walker voiced that she felt the stoplight at Piggly Wiggly and Highway 78 was a done deal.

Mayor McCollum said he was concerned that they had taken their one million dollars.

Councilperson Hannibal told Council she liked the idea of a bicycle shop and café on the birm and asked if they would be put in during phases of the project?

Mr. Crissy said they would do the project in phases. He explained that the first priority would be the core area so they could generate activity in the downtown area.

Mr. Crissy asked Mayor McCollum if Mrs. Tinsley was adamant about the stoplight?

Mayor McCollum said he was told at first there was two million dollars left in the project but then it went to one million dollars. He said they were getting a lot of talk but nothing in writing.

Mr. Crissy said they needed to see the financials on the previous project.

Councilperson Walker said they were told two million dollars and then it was lowered to a half million dollars.

Mr. Crissy said he would send the plan to Mrs. Trinsley at the COG. He voiced that they had the consensus of the citizens, engineers and the university students involved in the plan.

Councilperson Walker asked if the truck route would come first before dealing with the railing and parking spaces?

Mr. Crissy said they needed to take the railing down, put in the parking spaces and then work on the charrette and do it fast to save the retail businesses.

Councilperson Walker asked about the time frame.

Mr. Crissy said he would know tomorrow but felt it would be around three months at the most.

Councilperson Hannibal asked if the railing could be used at Foster Park and Frog Park?

Councilperson Foster said she agreed that would be a good idea.

Councilperson Hannibal asked if there was any effort to get the businesses downtown involved?

Mayor McCollum explained that there was no downtown association at this time representing the businesses.

Councilperson Foster told Council that people wanted to locate downtown. She said a poolhall was coming and that they wanted apartments over the businesses but had been told they needed sprinkler systems which were costly.

Councilperson Walker told Council that Mr. Ellis may be able to help with the sprinkler systems.

Manager Bruce Ellis informed Council it would only cost \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 for a sprinkler system for a residence.

Councilperson Hannibal told Council that Williston had apartments above their stores at this time.

Councilperson Foster said she wished Manager Ellis would talk to building Inspector Bill Johnson about the requirements for the sprinklers.

Manager Ellis said he would contact Mr. Johnson and questioned if there would be enough clearance for people to open the car doors if some of the railing was left.

Councilperson Walker said she did not want to see any railing next to the parking spaces but maybe some at the street corners.

Manager Ellis questioned the height of the curb when you stepped down into the street which he said could be a hazard.

Mr. Crissy said the curbing would have to meet the legal requirements.

Manager Ellis informed Council that the City of Walterboro helped the businesses purchase awnings for their stores letting the owners repay the city over time.

Councilperson Bamberg told Council that Councilperson Foster had mentioned that idea before.

Councilperson Foster said she agreed that a charrette was needed to give the downtown a uniform look.

Councilman Griffin asked if Bridge Street would remain the same. He told Council that the shopping center parking lot off Bridge Street was never meant to be thoroughfare which had become a highway. He explained that people were now cutting through the parking lot of Home Federal Savings and Loan which had become very dangerous

Mr. Crissy told him he did not look at that area but could get the engineers to look at the problem when they come to look at the truck route.

Mayor McCollum told Council the SCDOT was saying a Bridge Street entrance into Highway 78 would be to close to the 78/301 intersection. Mayor McCollum asked why the entrance could not veer into Highway 78 in one direction only.

Councilman Griffin said he was concerned that Rockland was so close to the right of way of the proposed truck route that you would not be able to see vehicles coming as you pulled into Calhoun Street.

Councilperson Foster said the corners of the intersection would have to be softened by purchasing the property near the intersection.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the Bamberg Revitalization Plan and to move forward with the plan. Councilperson Walker made the necessary second. All approved. The motion carried.

During the announcements, Councilperson Hannibal reminded Council that the Relay For Life Event would begin next Friday at 7:00 a.m. She told them luminary bags could be purchased and urged everyone to come out and support the event.

With no further business, Councilman Griffin made the motion to adjourn. Councilperson Hannibal made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk

Mayor