

# MINUTES

## COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 2, 2022 – 4:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Gary Daniel, Chair, Council Member  
Geraldine Dinkins, Vice Chair, Council Member  
Steve Harrell, Interim City Manager  
Paul Ray, Planning Director  
Billy Parrish, Heart of Brevard Representative  
Nicole Bentley, Heart of Brevard Executive Director  
Lee McMinn, Citizen Member  
Parker Platt, Council Appointed At-Large Member

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Dee Dee Perkins, Resident  
Linda Gallo, Resident

Media: Jonathan Rich, *The Transylvania Times*

### A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Gary Daniel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

### B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

### C. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Daniel asked to add Probart Street update to the agenda. Motion by Ms. Dinkins, seconded by Ms. Bentley to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

### D. Approval of Minutes of February 9, 2022 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Ray to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2022 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

### E. Proposal for Downtown Planters

Ms. Bentley updated the committee regarding the downtown planters. She noted that

35° North had serviced the planters last year, but they were not planning to continue this year. She sent a request for proposals to a number of other businesses and the only proposal she received back was from New Leaf Garden Market. The proposal to plant and maintain 30 planters in downtown from March 1 to December 31, 2022 is \$12,080 to be paid in 10 monthly installments. Ms. Bentley said New Leaf Garden Market has offered a 10% discount if they can display a small promotional logo sign in the planters. Following review and discussion of the proposal, motion by Mr. McMinn, seconded by Mr. Platt to approve the contract with the 10% discount to allow their logo with approval of the sign by Mr. Ray and Ms. Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.

## **F. Discussion re Year-round Downtown Tree Lights**

Ms. Bentley informed the committee that Mayor Copelof had shared with her that some residents have reached out to her and requested that the City leave the downtown tree lights on year-round. She noted that this is an initiative that has been largely paid for and organized by the Heart of Brevard. Last year the lighting was replaced with new LED lighting and the cost was split between Heart of Brevard, Downtown Master Plan Committee, and Transylvania County Tourism. These lights are designed to be more weather resistant and more energy efficient for downtown. The Heart of Brevard works with High Country Tree Service to put the lights up and take them down every year. Historically they go up the weekend before Thanksgiving and they stay up until daylight savings time begins in the spring.

Ms. Bentley said aesthetically it adds a lot of festive ambiance in downtown, but it comes with challenges we need to consider, including who manages those lights, what happens when there is an outage, and situations where some businesses actually pay for those lights as they are plugged directly into their power source while others are plugged directly into the poles downtown. She said we also need to consider wear and tear, and maintenance and upkeep of the lights.

Ms. Dinkins said she feels they look like Christmas lights and they signify that season. Mr. Platt and Mr. Parrish agreed that these are okay for the holidays. Mr. Parrish said the question is what kind of lighting do we want in the trees downtown and if this isn't it, then we need to have a different plan, which would require a bigger discussion. Ms. Bentley suggested that if some folks from this committee would like to explore some options outside of this meeting, then we could circle back with some recommendations at a later date. She said the lights are currently scheduled to come down the week after Arts in March which is the last weekend in March.

## **G. Discussion of Projects for Tourism Grant**

Ms. Bentley noted that in the past this committee has applied for grants through Transylvania County Tourism, including for the planters last year. TCT has asked that the City think about two or three large projects that we would like funding for and apply for those funds. Ms. Dinkins asked for clarification of "large".

Dee Dee Perkins, Chair of TCT's Destination & Infrastructure Committee, explained that

there are two funding opportunities for enhancements for visitors' experience when they come to Brevard and Transylvania County. The Destination & Infrastructure Committee has a budget specifically for destination and infrastructure projects that the committee can approve without it going to the Board. If it is a larger project, it would go to the full Board for approval. She said they don't have a number specific to what those grants can be in terms of the size. She said one idea for this committee to consider applying for is the water feature in Clemson Plaza as there is not funding for that in the budget. She said that as a Board, she thinks they would look to help fund it, probably not in full, but ask for a matching grant and to split the cost of a project like that. She said that is an example of where Tourism could be valuable as a grant source for this committee.

Mr. Daniel asked when they would need an application. Ms. Perkins said they run on a July to June fiscal year and they are currently in the process of writing the grant guidelines and application. She said TCTDA Executive Director Clark Lovelace has indicated that he would like to see a year-long plan of projects that the Downtown Master Plan Committee has identified for 2022-2023 that you would like to have some partnership on. She suggested putting some thought into what you might want to accomplish in the coming year and bring those proposals to Tourism, both to the Destination & Infrastructure Committee as well as to the Board as a whole.

Mr. Harrell said that from the City's budget standpoint, it's better for us to know what we're going to be spending money on in the fiscal year, so it is better to do it at budget time, not something that pops in the middle of the year that we weren't aware of and don't have the funds to do it. It would be better for us to do it as part of the budget process.

Mr. Daniel said it doesn't sound like we need to make a decision right now, but we do need to give it some thought. Ms. Bentley suggested that we move forward now with the planter request to the Destination & Infrastructure Committee versus a larger project like the water feature or any other big improvements as that's a grant that we did receive from that committee last year. Ms. Perkins said she is only speaking as one member of the Destination & Infrastructure Committee, but she doesn't know that they would be looking at this as an ongoing grant funding to maintain those planters year after year. She said they want to see where their money will have an impact and help for a significant project that they see as sustainable.

Mr. Platt asked if there is some reason other than money why all the planters haven't been standardized; why do we still have these 35 year-old lion planters? Ms. Bentley explained that we just collected and reused what we had. Mr. Platt said it seems if we're going after a grant, we could add the cost of new planters to it if they want to fund things that aren't just maintenance. There was discussion that it would be nice to have all the planters be of uniform design, but that we go with the planters that we have for now, and then next year look at all new planters. Motion by Ms. Dinkins, seconded by Mr. McMinn to contact New Leaf Garden Market to work up a proposal to support a grant request to Tourism next year to replace the 30 planters and standardize their appearance and to fill the pots with dirt and appropriate plants. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Bentley said it seems that we're having all these conversations about plans and making sure they're in line with the city budget cycle. It seems that this committee needs to spend a meeting dedicated on strategic planning for projects that we want to accomplish. Mr. Harrell noted that the budget is going to City Council on April 14<sup>th</sup>, so we will work on that at the next meeting as well as the financial update.

#### H. Update on Probart Street

Mr. Ray reported that we are still waiting for the surveyor to finish the survey of that section of Probart Street between Caldwell and Broad Streets where we're looking to find a spot for a loading zone. He said Transylvania County GIS currently shows that section of Probart Street as being 40 feet wide and the current road is paved to around 17 or 18 feet with limited on-street parking on one side. However, the surveyor has not found anything to support a 40-foot right-of-way. All of the documents he is finding show a city right-of-way ranging from 20 feet to 24 feet so it doesn't look like we're going to be able to find that extra room within the right-of-way. He hopes to have the survey in a couple of weeks.

Mr. Harrell said we are resurfacing the street right now. We had to move ahead because the contractor could not guarantee us the price that he gave us in May.

Mr. Daniel said we're talking about Papa John's, El-Ranchero, and Sycamore Cycles who are going to be bringing delivery trucks on a regular basis and we've got to figure that out. He said we need to be more proactive and we may need to reconsider whether or not it is appropriate for that to be a one-way street to enable us to get a loading zone. He asked Staff to figure out how to get those trucks off of our major thoroughfares.

#### I. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council Downtown Master Plan Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

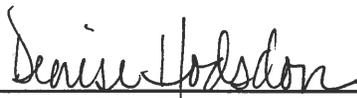
#### J. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:13 PM.

X 

Gary Daniel  
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved - April 6, 2022

X 

Denise Hodsdon  
Executive Assistant