



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
P.O. Box 192 • Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 576-2083

Minutes June 25, 2012

Attendance:

Members present: John Grego, Glenice Pearson, Ann Furr, Jim Lawracy, Becky Bailey, Mildred Myers

Absent: Margaret DuBard, Sam Holland, Gary Atkinson, Virginia Sanders, Carol Kososki

Others present:

James B. Atkins (Buddy), Environmental Planning Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Environmental Planning Division
Chanda Cooper, Environmental Planning Division
Charlie Fisher, Environmental Planning Division
Ken Driggers, Legal
Thom Bristol, Fuss & O'Neil
Davina Broughton, student intern

Acting Chair, John Grego called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm without a quorum and requested those present to review the minutes and agenda while waiting for additional members to arrive.

Report of the Chair

John reported the Development Roundtable met recently to address some of the problems in the Green Code. The problems were highlighted when a development planned in the Long Creek subdivision wanted to utilize the Green Code density bonus, resulting in an outcry from the neighboring community. Consensus was reached on how to correct some of the fundamental problems with the Green Code but more discussions are needed.

New Business

Conservation Department Ordinance

Buddy referred everyone to their draft copy of the ordinance creating the Conservation Department which was modeled on the ordinances creating the Public Works and Planning Departments. Jim Lawracy moved to accept the language of the ordinance. Glenice Pearson seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. Staff will email a copy of the ordinance being presented to County Council.

With the arrival of Mildred Myers, a quorum was obtained.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jim to accept the minutes as presented. Glenice seconded the motion which was unanimous.

Cook's Mountain

Ken Driggers explained RCCC has been trying to help find a way for the County to acquire Cook's Mountain since early May. Ken and Buddy met with Administration earlier today to discuss the available financing options.

Caughman Pond Feasibility Study

Buddy reported Tony McDonald, Interim County Administrator, has directed the Procurement Department to develop a Request for Qualifications to conduct a feasibility study for Caughman Pond. Council approved \$50,000 in the FY13 budget for the study. Although RCCC contributed \$100,000 dollars toward the County's purchase of the property, our involvement will be limited.

Owens Field Trail Project

During the last grant cycle the Rosewood Community Council submitted a grant application to RCCC for \$13,500 to hire a landscape architect to create a hiking trail concept plan and develop erosion control and drainage solutions. Although the project was deemed worthy, the grant was not approved due to ownership and maintenance issues. In the FY13 county budget, Councilman Seth Rose succeeded in gaining Council approval to allocate \$50,000 from Neighborhood Improvement Program to RCCC to help fund trail construction. A carry forward of unexpended funds of \$15,354 from the cancelled Green Development grant will also go toward the project. Buddy visited the property last week after recent rains and concluded the stormwater problems from Richland School District 1's property are larger than expected. Jim Lawracy reviewed the history of the city park. Nancy and Buddy will continue to meet with other County staff and will develop a Request for Qualifications for trail design and construction and engineering design including strategies to minimize stormwater runoff impacts to the proposed trail. John questioned if it was wise to move forward without an agreement with the school district. Buddy assured him the school district would be involved at the appropriate time.

Penny Sales Tax

Nancy reported 4% of the proposed penny sales tax has been set aside for biking and greenways during second reading of the sales tax ordinance. The high priority list of projects developed in 2010 includes greenways and bike and pedestrian improvements built over a 20-year time period. Third reading will be on July 18 and amendments may be offered. A Director of Transportation will be hired to manage all projects. If the referendum passes in the fall, it will be essential for Conservation Dept. staff to work with Administration and the new Transportation Director on future greenway planning. John questioned if a greenway master plan is necessary to help establish priorities.

Utility Conservation Easement Ordinance

A copy of Councilman Malinowski's motion concerning underground utilities on conservation easements was reviewed. The ordinance prohibits an underground utility from crossing a conservation easement, with some exceptions. Developers could run their utility lines prior to deciding if they want to place an easement on the land. The ordinance has received second reading.

Tree Canopy Study

Councilman Malinowski is interested in preserving and protecting large trees from development and this concern will be addressed by the Development Roundtable. Meanwhile, Tracy Hegler, Planning Director, is developing various tree canopy study alternatives (simple to complex analysis) to present to Council.

Committee Reports

Conservation Committee

John reported a grant proposal for the Nature Classroom at USC Children's Center has been submitted. Nancy visited the site where the classroom is being created. This type of project fits well with the Community Grant program and the applicants were advised to apply next January.

The grand opening of the Neal Ecological and Heritage Preserve was held Saturday, June 23. RCCC has been involved with this project through a conservation easement, two community conservation grants, and most recently a historic preservation research grant for a cemetery on the site. Both John and Nancy attended and were impressed with the site improvements, workshop, and cemetery preservation.

Historic Committee

Jim reported the committee met two weeks ago, and on behalf of the committee, he contacted Coal Powered Filmworks and requested they edit the eleven-minute Saluda Canal documentary to focus more on the project scope in the application. A better description and map of where the canal is located is needed and historical distortions removed. Buddy expressed the need to fine tune grants management to ensure the described scope of work has been accomplished before making final payments. More commission oversight is needed. Perhaps an additional interim report would help. Glenice wants to be sure RCCC is not caught off-guard with a product vastly different from what was expected.

Time Extension

John made a motion to extend the meeting an additional 10 minutes. The motion was seconded by Glenice. Motion carried.

Finance Committee

Nancy stated staff will present a FY13 budget next month for consideration.

Outreach Committee

No Report given

Adjournment: A motion was made by Jim and seconded by Glenice to adjourn the meeting at 5:45pm.

Next meeting date is July 23.

Submitted by
Charlie Fisher
Administrative Assistant