

City of New Bern

Redevelopment Commission Meeting

October 17, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.

Development Services Conference Room

303 First Street

Members Present: David Herndon, Kip Peregoy, Beth Walker, Jaimee Bullock, Leander “Robbie” Morgan, Jr., Steve Strickland, John Young, Tabari Wallace, Tharesa Lee

Ex-Officio Members Present: Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris, Alderman Barbara Best

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jeff Ruggieri, Development Services Director; Amanda Ohlensehlen, Community and Economic Development Director; and Bradleigh Sceviour, Planner II

Others Present: None

Agenda

1. Call to Order

Jeff Ruggieri, Development Services Director and Interim Executive Director of the Redevelopment Commission of the City of New Bern called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. As the first meeting of the commission, there were no minutes to approve. It was discussed that the Commission would follow Robert’s Rules of Order parliamentary procedure for conducting meetings.

2. Roll Call

All members of the commission present at the meeting.

3. Election of Chair and Co-Chair

Commissioner Leander Morgan made a **motion to nominate Commissioner Tharesa Lee as the Chair**. Commissioner Steve Strickland seconded the motion. Discussion regarding the roles of ex-officio members of the Commission commenced. It was determined that ex-officio members did not have a voting role in the Commission, but comments and feedback from all members would be welcomed. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Tabari Wallace made a **motion to nominate Jaimee Bullock as Co-Chair.**
Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion. After little discussion the motion passed
unanimously.

Alderman Sabrina Bengel suggested capturing a digital recording the meetings in the future
with an audio device for purposes of taking minutes. Staff agreed to secure a recorder for
future meetings.

4. Meeting Calendar

Mr. Ruggieri opened discussion for the adoption of an official meeting calendar for the
Commission. It was agreed that Wednesday evenings work best for the group and consensus
suggested the meetings occur on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:00p.m.
The calendar will be posted to meet public meetings law requirements. Any cancellations or
specially-called meetings will need to be posted as well. No meeting will be held on
Wednesday, October 31, 2018, due to conflicts with member attendance. The next meeting will
be held on Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

5. Redevelopment Area Boundary

Staff from the University Of North Carolina School Of Government (UNC SOG) provided an
introduction of Redevelopment Commission powers to the members on October 9, 2018.
During the brief, staff members, Tyler Mulligan and Marcia Perritt, provided an overview of the
statute, procedures and legal aspects of forming a redevelopment commission. The first step
outlined was establishing the redevelopment area boundary. The area must be determined to
be blighted or in danger of becoming blighted. Discussion stated the areas that should be
recommended for adoption. The area outlined in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Plan, The
Greater 5 Points Transformation Plan (CNI Plan) was mentioned, along with whether any areas
of the Pembroke neighborhood should be considered. Alderwoman Harris stated that the
Pembroke Community holds a community town hall meeting on the third Monday of the month
and items are added for consideration by invitation. Chairman Theresa Lee queried the group
to consider what blighted means. Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock wanted to ensure that data could be
provided for the areas to indicate substantial blight per the statutory requirements.
Commissioner Kip Perego stated that the SOG staff mentioned that a smaller area may be
preferred and that it could possibly stimulate more investment. Commissioner Morgan stated
that the area chosen needs to ensure buy-in from the community served. Commissioner
Strickland questioned whether there is a parcel by parcel plan to indicate statistics.
Commissioner Perego needed clarification that the CNI Plan and Gateway Renaissance Plan are
separate processes and documents, but each work together. These plans can provide the basis
for future redevelopment plans. Commissioner Beth Walker clarified with staff that the next
step would be for the redevelopment commission's recommendation for the boundary would
go before the Planning and Zoning Board. The Planning and Zoning Board would certify the area

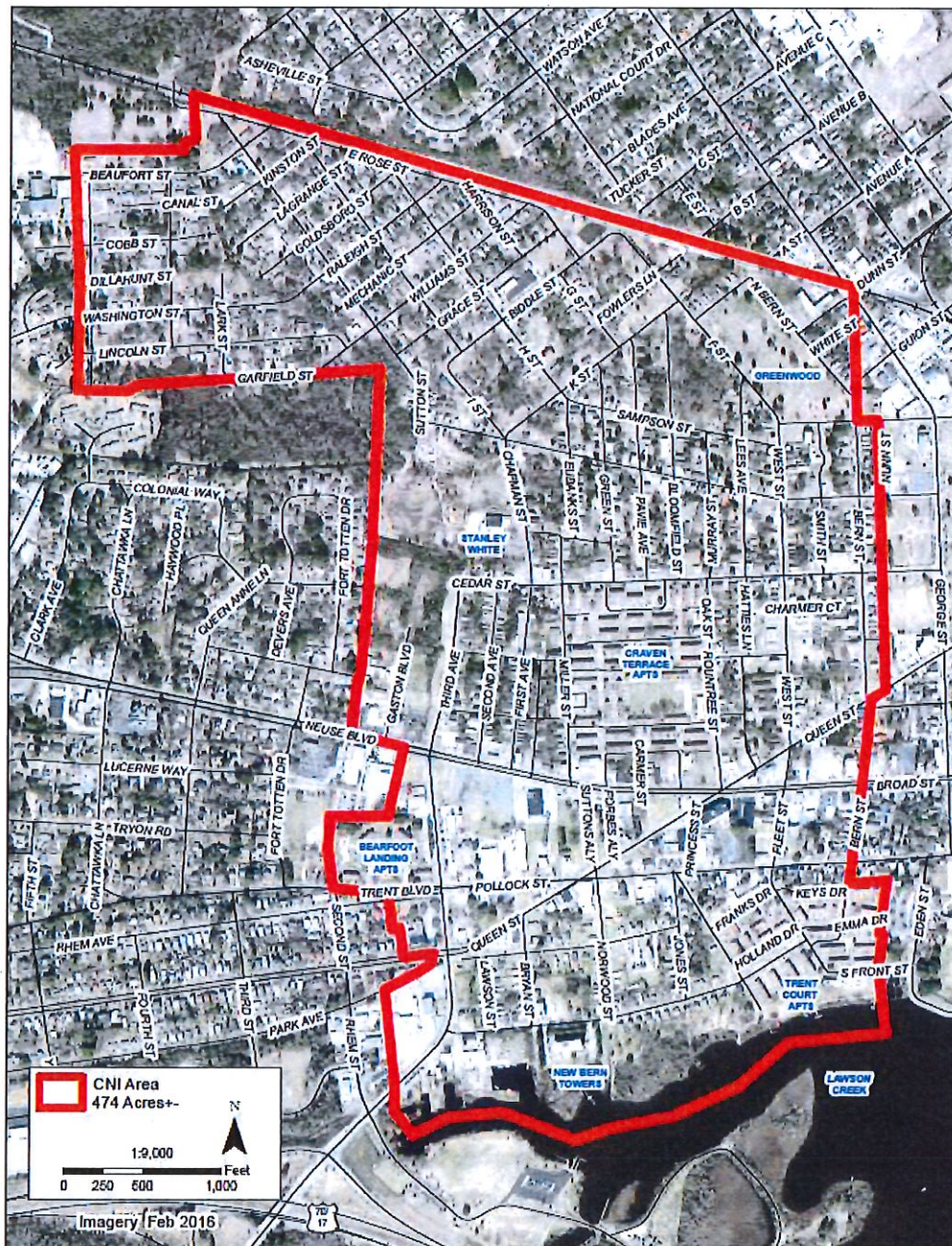
and make a determination whether to accept the area as proposed. If approved, a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board would go before the Board of Aldermen for adoption.

Alderwoman Best asked about the example of a grocery store locating in the redevelopment area. Chairman Lee provided an explanation of past grocery store planning efforts conducted during the CNI planning process and the conclusion of the studies indicated that a "Mom and Pop" style grocery store would be the only viable option for that particular area. Other larger-scale or chain-type stores were ruled out during the market study. Commissioner Morgan questioned outside of a grocery store, would there be any other items that would require rezoning. Additionally, Commissioner Morgan mentioned the area North and South of Broad Street. Chairman Lee stated that the CNI Area does encompass some commercially-zoned areas. Alderman Bengel mentioned healthcare as a possible consideration for the redevelopment area, with examples of setting up satellite offices in existing buildings. Commissioner Morgan asked if there were any statistics to indicate previous uses of the types of establishments in structures within the CNI area. Chairman Lee instructed staff to supply GIS data at a future meeting that may list previous uses of buildings. It was discussed that entrepreneurship is a way to build wealth in the community. The plan should encompass more than just residential redevelopment, but also attract entrepreneurs and stimulate economic development. Chairman Lee suggested that this relates to work completed by the eight task forces during the CNI plan and also to information provided by staff from the SOG to attract commercial and residential redevelopment. Alderwoman Harris mentioned the Broad Street corridor. Co-Chair Bullock questioned whether the 50% blighted requirement would be met depending on the commercial area included. Chairman Lee stated that a holistic approach should be taken for the redevelopment area.

Further discussion of identifying areas of Pembroke that may be considered as part of a redevelopment area. Alderwoman Harris stated that if considered, perhaps a smaller area of Pembroke. Co-Chair Bullock stated that a phased approach could be taken for the redevelopment area. Commissioner David Herndon stated that a town hall meeting should be considered for the Pembroke community before adopting the Pembroke area. Alderwoman Harris, along with the sentiments of other members, stated that the community should be included. Co-Chair Bullock stated that public trust and public confidence will be important throughout this process. Community buy-in will be necessary before any powers are exercised. Discussion that a portion of the Pembroke area could be considered in the future, especially if there is a perceived stigma with the term blighted.

Commissioner Perego stated that the current boundaries of the CNI plan have been studied extensively and it may be best to move forward with that boundary as the redevelopment area. He stated that small victories may make an impact as plans perform as defined.

Commissioner Peregoy made a motion to adopt the CNI Plan boundary as the redevelopment area boundary. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.



Co-Chair Bullock asked if a portion of Pembroke could be added later if desired and it made sense to the overall planning effort of the Commission. After much discussion, it was determined that the voices in the Pembroke community need to be heard and feedback needs to be updated before moving forward with including any of the area in the redevelopment plan at this time, but it may be something to be considered in the future. Alderwoman Harris stated

that the community did want curb and gutters to be provided. This is also a need identified by Commissioner Morgan in the Duffyfield area.

Further discussion initiated by Commissioner Wallace, indicated apartments near Hazel and Center Streets and the need for higher standards to be placed on landlords. Co-Chair Bullock asked for the reason that JT Barber School was not included in the CNI area. Commissioner Wallace stated that it may be a protected landmark. Staff was directed to supply a reason at a future meeting.

Following this discussion, a vote was called for the motion on the floor made by Commissioner Peregoy and seconded by Commissioner Morgan. The motion to adopt the CNI Plan boundary as the redevelopment area boundary passed unanimously through a roll call vote.

6. CNI Plan Discussion

Director Jeff Ruggieri provided highlights of data and statistics provided in the CNI Plan. The plan states that 23% of people in the CNI area make less than \$10,000 per year. The area includes 3,300 households. At the time of the plan, three years ago, there was a 19% unemployment rate. 1,100 people lived in public housing at that time. The biggest issue identified by those surveyed during the planning process was that 42% wanted to stop the decline in the area. Residents wanted to stop the decline while maintaining affordability. Throughout the redevelopment planning process the commission must be careful to avoid issues brought about by change to avoid gentrification. There was a need for pre-k programming. 77% of those surveyed wanted to improve what the housing looked like in the area.

The commission needs to keep these policies and procedures in mind and the data provided by the CNI Plan paints a picture of what is needed in the area and what is most important to residents. There are several actionable items that can come out of the plans.

7. Commissioner Comments

Chairman Lee added that there is a 23.5% homeownership rate in the CNI Area. Most of the residents get information word-of-mouth and may feel like they have already been surveyed a lot.

Commissioner Wallace reiterated the need to maintain affordability. He also stressed the importance of Pre-K programs as they help satisfy goals and fill gaps in the community. The lack of Pre-K education creates a gap and the introduction can fix many problems to include increasing parental income.

Alderman Bengel stated that there is a connection with education. The school system may have opportunities, plus grants or funding sources at the federal or state levels. There may be a need in the future for the local governing bodies to lobby legislatures and partners to support these types of programs.

Commissioner Wallace affirmed that Pre-K goals can be supported through the school system or through local churches. At the state-level there has been a larger push for Pre-K programs and school board members are aware. Chairman Lee stated that several people associated with the school system sat on task forces for the CNI planning process. Commissioner Wallace identified the Roger Bell re-start model as an example of setting up partnerships and having success creating new Pre-K programs for a population that needed it. It requires paperwork at the state-level but is attainable and shown to benefit the community.

Commissioner Young asserted that the strength of the community should not be underestimated. The bedrock toward future planning is to continue to communicate with them.

Commissioner Herndon stated that further review of the CNI boundary and the document, along with an inventory of all properties would provide a good baseline for planning purposes.

Commissioner Perego asserted that attractive and affordable housing would be important and will be attractive to private investment. Discussion related to the comments by Commissioners Herndon and Perego indicated that presentations related to the infrastructure in the area by Public Works Director Matt Montanye and City Engineer Jordan Hughes would help the commission's work. Staff will try to arrange for the November 14, 2018 meeting.

Alderman Harris acknowledged that she would support the commission and what can be done to make a plan for moving forward to help the community.

The Commission called for a fieldtrip through the neighborhood for the entire group. Staff will schedule it for a Saturday utilizing a city van from Parks and Recreation.

Commissioner Strickland specified that it is important to have the plan that is loved, but it takes money to make it all happen. The commission may be able to direct and pick and choose aspects that can happen soon. By being selective and intentional with sections of the plan could result in better success.

Co-Chair Bullock quoted a phrase, when you "strike a woman, you strike a rock." Here point being that many women are heads of the household in this community and one of the chief needs is transportation. Current wages are inadequate and these women are disconnected. If you find a way to broaden transportation in these areas you can connect them to better

opportunities. The group can focus on single women and their needs and concerns as it relates to the work of the commission.

Staff indicated that they would invite the Director of CARTS (Craven Area Rural Transit), Kelly Walker to review the consolidated transportation plan a future meeting.

Chairman Lee concluded that the Grassroots Leadership Academy is held and is a great way to connect people to opportunities.

Commissioner Walker stated that she had no new comments to add, but was excited that the group had agreed to meet more than once a month to get started on the work.

Commissioner Morgan was pleased to provide a first-hand tour of the neighborhood. HE also stated that the group need to be unified and agree to provide consistent information and give only the facts. He mentioned that there will be challenges in many areas of the Duffyfield area to update infrastructure, especially one-way streets causing problems. He also agreed that more educational buildings/programs are needed. There is a plethora of lifetime renters and landlords should be held accountable. He hopes to see Duffyfield remain single-family homes. He also reiterated that small victories will help the process, such as tearing down dangerous buildings and cleaning up vacant lots. The appearance will help when people wake up and see differences in the community.

Chairman Lee stressed the importance of utilizing social media sparingly as comments could be misconstrued. She asked the Commission to agree to discuss the topics in the meetings and be one unified body. This will help gain public trust.

Staff will provide a member contact list at the next meeting with everyone's contact information.

Alderwoman Harris stated that she is excited to see everyone participate and looking forward to going on the tour. She stated that if the Commission wants her present she will be there at meetings otherwise she will get out of the way and let everyone work. She has confidence in a great team and appreciates everyone stepping up to the plate to make a difference.

Alderman Best stated that financing will be a challenge and asked if the City would be writing any grants. She said she may disagree with other comments and would like to see multi-family dwellings. She acknowledged that there may be other suitable housing options to help with housing issues.

Commissioner Morgan added that they can cross that bridge when it comes and there to find viable options.

Staff updated that the boundary will be sent before the Planning and Zoning Board to vote on the item in December. There is an educational brief on Redevelopment Commissions planned for the November Planning and Zoning Board Meeting.

Alderwoman Bengel thanked everyone for serving. She mentioned that there may be additional funds appropriated from the State and Federal Government after Hurricane Florence for members of this community for items such as elevation.

The Commission is a stand-alone entity. City-owned properties in the redevelopment area will be designated to the commission. The Commission can be an applicant on grants as its own entity.

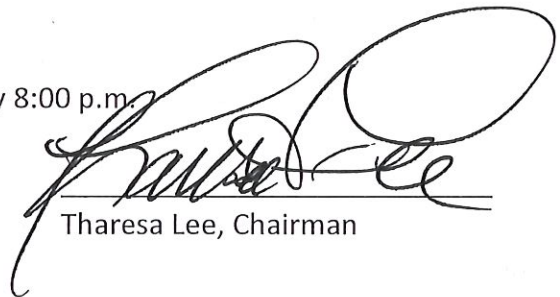
The State and FEMA will require more information on areas to receive funding in the future. The relationship between the Craven County Disaster Recovery Alliance and State/FEMA will help determine plans regarding Hurricane Recovery processes for the City of New Bern and other local entities.

8. Adjournment

Chairman Lee adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Date approved: _____

11/27/2018


Theresa Lee, Chairman

Attest: _____

Amanda Ohlensehlen

Amanda Ohlensehlen, Recording Secretary