

City of New Bern
Redevelopment Commission Meeting
September 9, 2020
303 First Street- Development Services

Members Present: Chair Tharesa Lee, Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley, Leander ‘Robbie’ Morgan, Beth Walker, Maria Cho, Steve Strickland, John Young

Ex-Officio Members Present: Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel

Members Excused (E)/Absent (A): Kip Peregoy (E), Tabari Wallace (A)

Staff Present: Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services; Alice Wilson, GIS Manager; Amanda Ohlensehler, Community and Economic Development Manager; D’Aja Fulmore, Community Development Coordinator

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley called this meeting to order at 6:03PM and opened with a reading of the Commission’s Guiding Principles.

2. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

3. Approval of Minutes: Approval of Minutes from May 13, 2020 meeting

Commissioner John Young made a motion to adopt the minutes. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Leander Morgan.

4. Subcommittee Updates

Commissioner Maria Cho opened this part of the discussion by providing an update on the Health and Wellness Committee. Commissioner Cho stated that Reggie Jones, community liaison, has been working on developing a COVID informational session that will incorporate the mental health effects COVID has on vulnerable populations. Commissioner Cho stated that the next virtual session will be held in October. Commissioner Cho also discussed the potential for a lecture series on Cultural Awareness.

Jeff Ruggieri, director of Development Services, provided the Neighborhood Committee update. Mr. Ruggieri stated that the next neighborhood clean-up would take place on Friday, September 25th and would include Cedar, Bern, and Queen streets. Mr. Ruggieri stated that the clean-up would likely be quicker, as vegetation overgrowth was more of the issue for these streets.

Mr. Ruggieri and Commissioner Steve Strickland provided the Housing Committee update. Mr. Ruggieri stated that the committee is recommending that the Commission not move forward with

35 the purchase of the property located at 1023 Pollock Street. Mr. Ruggieri expressed concerns
36 around the cost of materials. Commissioner Strickland stated that the process was good and very
37 much needed. Commissioner Strickland thanked all commissioners for being willing to go
38 through the process and stated that the Commission would be able to find better projects.

39 Co-Chair Bullock made a motion for the Commission not to move forward in the attempt to
40 acquire the property. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Strickland. The Commission
41 unanimously voted in favor of not moving forward on purchasing the property. Chair Lee told
42 the Commission to report any houses they see that may be useful for future projects.

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44 **5. Update on Residential Inspection and Registration Programs**

45 Mr. Ruggieri opened up the discussion of introducing a residential inspection program and
46 presented the following PowerPoint Presentation slides for the Commission:

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New Bern Redevelopment Commission

Residential Inspection and Registration Program –
NEXT STEPS

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Residential Inspection Program

General Authority under G.S. 160A-424 (2017 Update)

Requires Reasonable Cause unless in a “Targeted Area”

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Residential Inspection Program –Targeted Area

A local government may designate a “targeted area” in which reasonable cause is not required for periodic inspections. The targeted area may not exceed one square mile or five percent of the area in the jurisdiction, whichever is greater.

In order to establish a targeted area, the jurisdiction must do all of the following:

- 1) Ensure the targeted area reflects the jurisdiction’s “stated revitalization strategy.”
- 2) Determine that the targeted area is “blighted” as that term is defined in Urban Redevelopment Law.
- 3) Hold a properly-noticed public hearing about the proposed periodic inspections plan.
- 4) Develop a plan to address the ability of low-income residential property owners to comply with minimum housing code standards.

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Residential Inspection Program –Targeted Area

- 1) Ensure the targeted area reflects the jurisdiction’s “stated revitalization strategy.” - DONE
- 2) Determine that the targeted area is “blighted” as that term is defined in Urban Redevelopment Law. –DONE (mostly)
Extra Step: Board of Alderman must designate area as “blighted” for purpose of registration Program.
- 3) Hold a properly-noticed public hearing about the proposed periodic inspections plan and provide notice of the hearing to all owners and residents of properties in the targeted area
- 4) Develop a plan to address the ability of low-income residential property owners to comply with minimum housing code standards.

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56 The overall presentation gave an introduction to the City of New Bern introducing a residential
57 inspections program. Mr. Ruggieri explained how the Redevelopment Area qualifies as being a
58 targeted area and how the program would support improving the quality of housing stock in the
59 community.

60 Co-Chair Bullock explained that she had a concern about residents feeling that the City of New
61 Bern will be coming into their homes at any given time. Co-Chair Bullock expressed that it is
62 very important to be careful how this information is presented and to ensure that the community
63 fully understands what the program is. Commissioners also discussed potential need for
64 relocation and Mr. Ruggieri explained how the Community Development Block Grant (CBDG)
65 program addresses relocation needs through its housing rehab program.

66 Mr. Ruggieri explained that letters would be sent out ahead of time to inform citizens of
67 inspection dates. Commissioner Morgan and Mr. Ruggieri both brought clarification to the true
68 intent of the program, explaining the value it would bring to the community in provide safe
69 housing for citizens. Commissioners continued their discussion around this topic and Mr.
70 Ruggieri told the Commission he would have D’Aja Fulmore, Community Development
71 Coordinator, to conduct more research on these types of programs and how they can be
72 successfully implemented.

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74 This meeting adjourned at 6:33PM.

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Date approved: 11-18-2020


Theresa Lee, Chairman

Attest: 
D'Aja Fulmore, Recording Secretary