

1 **City of New Bern**

2 **Redevelopment Commission Meeting**

3 **March 10, 2021**

4 **303 First Street- Development Services**

5 **Members Present:** Co-Chair Kip Peregoy, Maria Cho, Steve Strickland, Beth Walker, John
6 Young, Julian Tripp, Leander Morgan

7 **Ex-Officio Members Present:** Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel

8 **Members Excused (E)/Absent (A):** Chair Tharesa Lee (E), Tabari Wallace (E)

9 **Staff Present:** Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services; Amanda Ohlensehlen,
10 Community and Economic Development Manager; Alice Wilson, GIS Manager; D'Aja Fulmore,
11 Community Development Coordinator

12 **1. Welcome and Call to Order**

13 Co-Chair Kip Peregoy called this meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

14 **2. Public Comment**

15 No public comment was received. The following citizens attended this meeting:

- 16 • Mike Williams, Habitat for Humanity
17 • Antoinette Boskey, Habitat for Humanity

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19 **3. Approval of Minutes**

20 Commissioner John Young made a motion to approve minutes from the February 10, 2021
21 meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Beth Walker.

22 **4. 1213 Mechanic Street**

23 Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services, explained that resident, Torrance Chapman of
24 the Duffyfield Community approached the Commission regarding the purchase of 1213
25 Mechanic Street. Mr. Ruggieri explained that the property is in floodplain, with a tax value of
26 approximately \$4,000. Mr. Ruggieri told commissioners that it would go before the Board of
27 Aldermen if the Commission proceeds with selling. Mr. Ruggieri stated that Mr. Chapman has
28 intentions of using the property to create a bigger yard and the property has been cleared with no
29 overgrowth. Mr. Ruggieri stated that the Commission would have to decide about releasing the
30 property and what kind of conditions may be placed on the property. Commissioner Maria Cho
31 asked for an example of a condition that could be attached to the property. Mr. Ruggieri
32 explained that any reasonable condition could be placed on the property, including that nothing
33 be built on the property and for it to remain free of overgrowth. Commissioner Kip Peregoy
34 asked about the enforceability the Commission would have if placing a condition on the
35 property. Jaimee Bullock-Mosley, Attorney, explained that there could be a reversion back to the
36 Commission if the buyer is noncompliant with the conditions placed on the property.

37 Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel asked if there could be a condition to have nothing built on the
38 property. Commissioner Leander Morgan asked what the property currently looks like. Mr.
39 Ruggieri responded, telling the Commission that the property was junky and has now been
40 cleaned. Commissioner Morgan agreed that the property has been cleaned and the buyer has no
41 intentions to build on the property. Commissioner Morgan stated that the grocery store near the
42 property is active. Commissioner Steve Strickland stated that the property appears to be one that
43 the Commission could make available, as it is out of the Focus Area and does not seem like
44 something the Commission could use. Commissioner Morgan made a motion to dispose of the
45 property at 1213 Mechanic Street. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Steve Strickland.
46 Following this motion, Alderwoman Bengel stated that the motion should be to start the upset
47 bid process. Attorney Jamiee Bullock-Mosley stated that the Commission would need to form a
48 resolution to go before the Board of Aldermen to outline the property, the selling price, and how
49 the sell is consistent with the Redevelopment Plan. Commissioner Peregoy redirected the
50 Commission, stating that he wanted to discuss conditions. Commissioner Peregoy explained the
51 importance of the lot remaining clean. Mr. Ruggieri stated that outlining that condition in the
52 agreement with the buyer would be very easy. Mr. Ruggieri explained that a lot of concerns
53 related to property cleanliness is already addressed through City Ordinance. Commissioner Cho
54 stated that it would be good to have a conversation with the buyer to better understand his plans
55 for the property. Commissioner Beth Walker asked Alderwoman Bengel about the duration of
56 the upset bid process and Alderwoman Bengel responded, stating that it is 10 days. As part of the
57 process, Alderwoman Bengel stated that the buyer would come before the Board of Aldermen
58 with 5 percent of the sale price and would be expected to have the remaining amount within 10
59 days. Alderwoman Bengel explained that the Board of Aldermen has the right not to sell the
60 property. The Commission agreed to revisit this agenda item and to speak with the potential
61 buyer.

62 **5. 602 Gaston Blvd: House Relocation**

63 Mr. Ruggieri showed the Commission a quote for \$27,000 to move the house located at 602
64 Gaston Boulevard. Commissioner Peregoy showed a lot near 1120 Church Street where the
65 home could potentially go. Commissioner Peregoy explained that the major problem is getting
66 the home to the proposed location. Commissioners assessed the potential site and Commissioner
67 Morgan stated that it may be worth checking to see if the property owner next door would be
68 willing to sell to the Commission. Commissioner Peregoy redirected the Commission, stating
69 that the property located at 911 Eubanks Street may be a better lot to place the home. Mr.
70 Ruggieri stated that the Commission has approximately \$100,000 to spend on rehab work.
71 Commissioner Peregoy added that the home is in pretty good condition. Amanda Ohlensehlen,
72 Community and Economic Development Manager explained the Environmental Review process-
73 telling Commissioners that photos of the home and lots will be required along with a detailed list
74 of rehab work to be completed and the associated costs. Commissioner Peregoy explained that
75 the Commission needs to assess if the home is worth the total cost picture and he wanted to be
76 sure that the Commission is in agreement that it is a good project to proceed with. Commissioner
77 John Young stated that he felt it was worth proceeding with. Commissioner Peregoy added that it
78 is the best house the Commission has assessed thus far. Commissioner Peregoy told

79 commissioners that City staff will move forward with providing more quotes on the move and
80 suggested that the Housing Subcommittee go visit the home.

81 **6. Committee Updates**

82 Mr. Ruggieri told commissioners that the recent strategic planning session provided a 12-month
83 plan for subcommittees to complete and work on fulfilling the plan will be starting soon. Mr.
84 Ruggieri stated that the Commission will be attempting to partner with Habitat for Humanity and
85 for their neighborhood clean-up, with dates to later be determined. Mr. Ruggieri went on to
86 stated that the Housing Subcommittee had a meeting with Leon Caldwell of Maryland who is a
87 developer. Mr. Ruggieri stated that he drove Leon throughout the Redevelopment Area and Mr.
88 Caldwell appeared to be very passionate about working with the Commission on the vision of the
89 First Avenue redesign. Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that Mr. Caldwell will be coming to
90 address the Commission and will also address Health Committee concerns. Commissioner
91 Young stated that Mr. Caldwell may possibly be able to build a health center for the
92 Redevelopment Area. Mr. Ruggieri stated that Mr. Caldwell appeared to be invested in ways to
93 improve healthcare resources within the community. Mr. Ruggieri stated that there has been
94 work geared towards changing the deed restrictions for the McCotter House and it is currently
95 not looking promising. Mr. Ruggieri stated that it is a goal to get Mr. Caldwell down to address
96 the Commission and discuss partnership. Alderwoman Bengel assured the Commission that the
97 partnership will be promising.

98 Commissioner Cho stated that Dr. Livingston of North Carolina Central University (NCCU)
99 wants to come speak to Commission directly and host a lecture series. Commissioner Cho
100 expressed the importance of getting feedback from the community about what their needs are
101 and that the lecture series hosted with NCCU could prove to be an effective way of bridging the
102 gap. Commissioner Cho stated that she and Mr. Ruggieri will sit down to further discuss the
103 idea of a mobile health clinic. Commissioner Cho asked the Commission how they felt about
104 NCCU coming to speak and everyone agreed that it would be good for the partnership.
105 Commissioner Cho also stated that conversations would continue with local pastor, Dr. Holmes
106 regarding various services and programs to offer the community.

107 **7. Old Business**

108 Commissioner Peregoy stated that he would like to know when certain properties would be
109 released from the County and transferred to the Commission. Attorney Jaimee Bullock-Mosley
110 responded that she did not know but will find out. Alderwoman Bengel stated that there is no
111 official date of transfer at this time.

112 **8. New Business**

113 Amanda Ohlensehlen, Community and Economic Development Manager, stated that plans for
114 Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation continue to move forward and that she recently had a call with
115 the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency and will be having more conversations to
116 discuss housing initiatives. Mrs. Ohlensehlen stated told the Commission that more initiatives
117 are outlined in the Office's action plan and she would provide an update at the next meeting.

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119 Commissioner Young made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Commissioner
120 Walker. This meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

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122 Date approved: 4/14/2021

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Theresa Lee, Chairman

Attest: 
D'Aja Fulmore, Recording Secretary