

City of New Bern
Redevelopment Commission Meeting
September 8, 2021
303 First Street- Development Services

Members Present: Co-Chair Kip Peregoy, Maria Cho, Steve Strickland, Beth Walker, John Young, Tabari Wallace

Ex-Officio Members Present: Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel

Members Excused (E)/Absent (A): Chair Lee (E), Julian Tripp (E), Leander Morgan (E)

Staff Present: Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services; Amanda Ohlensehlen, Community and Economic Development Manager; Alice Wilson, GIS Manager

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Co-Chair Kip Peregoy called this meeting to order at 6:00 PM and began with a reading of the Commission's guiding principles.

2. Public Comment

Mike Williams of Habitat for Humanity stood to address the Commission. Mr. Williams stated that he would like for the Commission to consider adopting a resolution to adopt Habitat for Humanity's Plan as part of the Redevelopment Commission's Redevelopment Plan.

Additionally, Mr. Williams asked that the Commission consider funding Habitat for Humanity projects that are currently underway in the Commission's Focus Area, with an estimate of five projects of approximately \$40,000.

Reverend Holmes stood to state that he knew a few senior citizens who currently need rehabilitation work done on their homes. Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel asked Jeff Ruggieri of Development Services to explain the current CDBG housing rehab program. Mr. Ruggieri explained that the program currently has a pre-vetting process to find eligible applicants before allocating money towards the program. Mr. Ruggieri explained that citizens can always apply and using the pre-vetting process enables the City to expend funding much faster.

3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the June 9, 2021, meeting were presented. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner John Young and seconded by Commissioner Beth Walker.

Minutes from the August 11, 2021, meeting were presented. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Steve Strickland and seconded by Commissioner Maria Cho.

4. Possible Demolition of Structure of 203 Jones Street

Mr. Ruggieri began to address the Commission concerning the demolition of the property at 203 Jones Street, stating that it is a single-family residential house, and the rehabilitation work would be too expensive. Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that 203 and 207 Jones Street could potentially yield 4-5 individual lots for 4-5 units. The Commission agreed that it would be best to begin demolition and utilize the property to increase the community's housing stock. Commissioner Young made a motion to direct staff to pursue and explore demolition costs to later present to the Commission. Commissioner Steve Strickland seconded this motion. The motion carried unanimously (6-0). Alderwoman Sabrina Bengel stated it would best to make sure the house is documented by taking pictures because of its historical significance.

5. Consider Amendment to Offer to Purchase Contract with Kenneth and Mary Allen

Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that there have been tenants who Mr. Kenneth Allen has not been able to move at 612/614 First Avenue, and they will not be ready to move until October. Mr. Ruggieri stated that Mr. Allen is okay with the current proposal to amend the purchase contract and Attorney Jaimee Bullock-Mosley stated that Mr. Allen is motivated to continue this partnership with the Redevelopment Commission. A motion to remove 612/614 First Avenue from the purchase contract and reduce the offer price by \$10,000 was made by Commissioner Steve Strickland and seconded by Commissioner Tabari Wallace.

6. Committee Updates

Commissioner Maria Cho gave an update on the Health and Wellness working group. Commissioner Cho stated that the working group has been attending resident training classes hosted by Habitat for Humanity. Commissioner Cho explained that these classes are training residents in Duffyfield to be leaders and assist the Commission with meeting its goals. Commissioner Cho discussed short-term goals of data collection and long-term goals of establishing a community health center for Duffyfield.

Jeff Ruggieri told the Commission that movers are ready to go, and staff is currently exploring the bid process for the rehabilitation work that must be completed on the property at 602 Gaston Boulevard. Regarding neighborhood cleanup efforts, Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that neighborhood cleanup efforts continue to move forward with Dr. Holmes now on staff as a new nuisance abatement officer.

7. Old Business

No old business was presented.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Walker and seconded by Commissioner Wallace. The motion carried unanimously (6-0)

Date approved: 10/13/21


Theresa Lee, Chairman

Attest: 
D'Aja Fulmore, Recording Secretary