

Minutes of the Downtown Development Authority Work Session
Wednesday, August 14, 2013
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
City Hall – Room 220

Members Present: Chairperson Monica Hagewood; Charles McMillan; Dave Schmit; Richard Hessler; Ralph Mills; Lonnie Mimms; and David Lyons via telephone conference call. Also present were Councilmembers Betty Price and Nancy Diamond.

Topic of Work Session: Discussion of the RFQ criteria, process, and scope of work.

Members present discussed the context of the Downtown Development Plan and specifically the City green which is proposed to be located in front of City Hall. The discussion included the parameters of an RFQ for proposed design of the area, procurement guidelines and processes for the City, creativity of the proposal, relation to surrounding and adjacent development including City Hall, the Smith Plantation, existing parking at City Hall, and better access to Canton Street and the Square. A specific definition of the plan is needed and an action plan. Detail is important in order to get the support of Mayor and Council with specific deliverables. Time is also an important consideration to continue moving forward. The feasibility of relocating the existing War Memorial was addressed and working in conjunction with existing plans.

Also discussed was the possibility of beginning the design phase and including additional costs in another bond referendum. The parameters of the development area need to be clearly defined as well as including Transportation and Recreation and Parks Departments in discussions and planning. There was also discussion of a parking deck or decks and the most appropriate locations to better serve the needs of the downtown area. Existing parking at City Hall is currently underutilized and could be made more attractive to the public with landscaping and safety improvements. The totality of the project should be considered in phases for planning and funding purposes.

The Smith Plantation is an asset to the City; however, is not totally visible from public rights of way. This could also be addressed in the plan to better promote this historic home and encourage visitors to the site.

A motion was made by Dave Schmit, seconded by Richard Hessler to adjourn at 10:24 a.m. Approved unanimously.