



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
 P.O. Box 192 • Columbia, SC 29202
 (803) 576-2083

**Minutes
 June 15, 2020**

Attendance

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
Tim McSwain	2	No
Sam Holland	3	Yes
Vacant	4	--
Buddy Atkins	5	Yes
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Carol Kososki	8	Yes
Jim Thomas	9	On leave
Vacant	10	--
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Nancy Stone-Collum	Conservation Division
Charlie Fisher	Conservation Division
Clayton Voignier	Community Planning & Dev.
Meg Southern	Garvin Design
Synithia Williams	RC Public Works

Call to Order

Chair Carol Kososki called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:34pm. All members, staff, and guest participated by video conference due to the closure of county offices and the shelter in place order as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approval of Agenda

John Grego moved and Charles Weber seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Gail Rodriguez made a motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2020 and was seconded by John. Motion carried with an abstention from Buddy Atkins who was not present at the May meeting. Charles moved to approve the minutes from the special called meeting of June 1. John seconded the motion which was approved.

Treasurer’s Report

Robert Squirewell reported the financial statement shows no significant change. Buddy inquired about remaining funds in Acquisition and Nancy Stone-Collum clarified all of the half-mill line items not expended roll over into the Conservation Fund.

Report of the Community Planning & Development Director

Clayton Voignier responded to a question from Carol on the status of budget cuts Council is considering. He explained no specific budget cuts have been voted on; rather Council is holding allocations at the FY20 amounts. Projected revenues are unknown due to COVID-19 but sales tax revenue has decreased. Council expects to have a clearer picture in September. Administrator Brown has indicated departments should be prepared for up to a 10% cut. John asked how long the hiring freeze would be in effect. Clayton responded the policy is to hire public safety personnel but there are exceptions and hiring is done on a case by case basis. Carol pointed out the need to hire the Land Program Planner so that person would be trained when Pinewood Lake Park reopens. When asked about when county government might reopen, Clayton explained an internal committee provided a phased-reopening plan but Council wanted more recommendations as it relates to the community as a whole so Prisma was hired to assist in developing a plan. Robert inquired about the status of the legal services contract which has not been filled. Clayton said if items were being held up due to lack of an attorney, he would bring that to Administration's attention.

Report of the Chair

Carol thanked John and Buddy for their extensive and excellent work on developing comments on the Land Development Code and CDBG-MIT Action Plan respectively.

Historic Committee Report

Sam Holland, chair of the Historic Committee, reported the committee had met the previous week to consider a request from the owners of 1215 Shop Road to designate the building as historic in order for them to apply for the Bailey Bill. The Bailey Bill is an ordinance that provides a 20-year property tax abatement such that qualified expenses to rehabilitate a historic building do not increase the pre-rehabilitation tax value. This property is not yet on the National Register of Historic Places so the owners must receive historic building designation from RCCC and then Council to apply for preliminary certification for the Bailey Bill. The two other properties in the county that have received the special assessment were on the National Register and did not need to come before RCCC or Council.

Meg Southern of Garvin Design has written a nomination for the National Register that is undergoing review by the State Historic Preservation Office of SC Department of Archives and History. She gave a presentation on the building based on its period of significance from 1950-1972. In summary, the structure was built at no charge to Citadel Shirt Corp. to bring apparel manufacturing to the county, a growing subsector of textile manufacturing. It is significant in the area of Military for its role in the evolving structure of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), an organization with close ties to Fort Jackson. The building is the only extant resource in Columbia associated with AAFES' Carolina Area Support Center (CASC), one of only 15 Area Support Centers in the world. The building maintains a high degree of architectural integrity, retaining the stepped parapet façade, barrel vaulted ceilings, bowstring trusses, steel casement windows, and open floor plan original to its use as a garment manufacturing facility.

John asked about signage on the building and was assured it would look like Femware which was painted on the building in the 1960s. Charles asked about historical interpretation and was told that had not been discussed other than making the text of the nomination available. Plans are to begin in August with completion by April for use as office and warehouse space for Hood Construction. Sam made a committee recommendation to designate 1215 Shop Road as a Richland County Historic Building. The motion was approved unanimously.

Conservation Committee Report

CDBG-MIT Action Plan

A response to RCCC comments on the Action Plan for the CDBG-Mitigation funds was included in the Blue Ribbon Committee agenda packet on May 26. Carol requested a teleconference to discuss the response. Commissioners felt the response misrepresented the RCCC level of involvement and the participation of the Blue Ribbon Committee in developing the plan, no list of projects, and the lack of response to several questions. At the June 1 special called meeting, it was decided to send another response. Buddy developed a second set of comments which were approved by RCCC electronically on June 4 and sent to Lauren Hunter the following day. A list of stormwater infrastructure projects was provided before the public hearing on June 5. Carol attended the virtual public hearing and asked how the budget was developed and allocated among the categories. Assistant County Administrator Ashley Powell asked Synithia Williams, Stormwater Manager to meet with RCCC to resolve some of the questions.

Synithia provided the Stormwater Management Plan 25-Year Roadmap (finalized in 2015) referenced in the plan and requested by RCCC. She addressed the infrastructure portion of the plan, explaining that Public Works developed a list of projects under the assumption other departments would propose their own projects. \$7 million was the amount estimated to fund the projects Public Works developed. Specific road names were not listed in the plan because staff wanted the flexibility to add more roads/projects if some projects came in under budget without having to amend the plan. Visual assessment of high-risk infrastructure was an important priority because the criticality analysis was only a desk-top analysis and staff needs to be able to investigate with cameras for precise determination of problems. Goals were to alleviate localized flooding, consider low-to-moderate income areas and high risks tied to transportation, and make more strategic decisions about maintaining drainage infrastructure. Synithia explained the confusion about the amount for design/planning vs. construction should have been alleviated in the final spreadsheet.

John asked about the non-specific projects listed in the 25-year roadmap. Synithia said many of those projects were on private property and with the Action Plan, the goal was to spend funds on county-owned infrastructure. New projects continue to be added to the 25-year roadmap, especially after the 2015 flood. The Spears Creek project came to Public Works through citizen complaints and not through RCCC. The Forest Acres project in Gills Creek was not something Synithia was aware of until the Blue Ribbon Committee meeting. Buddy encouraged a more cooperative arrangement between Stormwater and Conservation. Synithia stated her focus is on maintaining compliance with the county's NPDES permit and improving drainage infrastructure. Carol asked about the status of the Forest Acres project which Synithia said would not fall under the infrastructure category. Clayton said Pat Beekman with Tetra Tech is investigating whether Forest Acres can be a subrecipient of grant funds. The project sounds viable and Clayton was hopeful mitigation funds could be reallocated if other projects don't materialize.

Buddy asked how the evaluation weighting criteria was developed for the 25-year roadmap. Synithia replied it was a combined recommendation from the internal steering committee and the consultants Brown and Caldwell. Buddy reemphasized his concern about the weighting criteria and recommended revisiting the weights and conducting a sensitivity analysis to determine the degree and extent various weights impact the final infrastructure project scores and rankings. John suggested a working group session although Synithia reminded RCCC the 25-year roadmap is a departmental document, however she will be glad to reach out to Conservation when they consider updates. Nancy asked for a status of the Land Development Manual and was told it had been sent to Woolpert, the consultants who are reformatting it and addressing some of the comments raised by stakeholders. The final document should be available soon.

John moved seconded by Buddy to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Motion carried.

Charles said Richland County does not have a good track record in correctly estimating project costs (Penny Transportation) and is concerned about the lack of specific cost information for the projects in this plan. He also expressed concern about the camera infrastructure investigation because it creates cardinal knowledge about what problems exist. Synithia responded this is why development of an asset management plan is so important, allowing them to determine what needs to be addressed immediately, what can be scheduled for later. Buddy encouraged members to look at the project lists in the 25-year plan. Robert Squirewell asked if there is any overlap with the city of Columbia and was assured all of the projects are in the unincorporated areas.

Land Development Code

Tommy DeLage with Planning Services requested a work session with RCCC which is being scheduled; therefore, sending the nine-page comments on the Land Development Code to Council has been deferred.

Conservation Division Manager's Report

Quinton received three bids for tree trimming at Pinewood Lake Park. He recommended accepting the lowest bid of \$5,250, having had experience with this company before. Work will to be completed by the end of the year. Charles moved to accept the lowest bid, seconded by John; motion carried unanimously.

Clayton has approved the request to purchase a tractor but the deadline to transfer funds to establish a purchase order has been missed and must now receive Administrator approval. Approval is needed by June 30 in order to use this year's funds. Quinton has sent an issue briefing to Clayton for the RFQ for engineering work on the bridge and road at Mill Creek.

Conservation Coordinator's Report

Nancy reported Council gave third reading to the FY21 budget on June 11 for the Historic and Conservation grants and approved the request to extend six FY20 grants. There are several remaining FY20 grants that will be completed by June 30. Carol thanked Councilwoman Terracio for her help in getting the grant extension motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Stone-Collum