

**MINUTES**  
**Central City Revitalization and Housing Committee Meeting**  
**March 12, 2014, 3:30 p.m.**  
**Council Conference Room – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor City Hall**

The Central City Revitalization and Housing Committee met on Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at 3:30 p.m., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Council Conference Room, City Hall.

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Chairman Todd Pierceall  
Mayor Pro Tem Brenda Craig

**Guests:** Mr. Brad Parkes  
Mr. Gerald Sosebee, Gastonia Building & Development Task Force

**Staff in Attendance:** Mr. Ed Munn, City Manager  
Ms. Melissa Magee, Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. Jason Thompson, Planning Director  
Ms. Rachel Bagley, Managing Executive  
Mr. Flip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager  
Mr. Rusty Bost, City Engineer  
Mr. Tucker Johnson, Civil Engineer  
Police Captain Rodney Aldridge

Chairman Todd Pierceall welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Chairman Pierceall advised that Councilman Walt Kimble was out of town and is excused from the meeting. Mr. Skip McPhail addressed Chairman Pierceall to address a point of order. Mr. McPhail requested that Agenda Item 2 be presented first due to time constraints. Chairman Pierceall stated that Agenda Item 1 would be brief, so the request was denied.

**ITEM 1: IDEAL Application: Mr. Brad Parkes, State Farm Insurance:**

Chairman Pierceall recognized Ms. Rachel Bagley for staff's presentation. Ms. Bagley advised the Committee that Mr. Brad Parkes is leasing space at 330 S. York Street to open a State Farm Insurance office. The building is located on the corner of South York and Third Avenue in the York Chester Historic District. Mr. Parkes has requested up-fit and façade grants for interior up-fit and exterior signage. Per the IDEAL guidelines, Mr. Parkes is eligible for up to \$4,488 in an up-fit grant which includes both interior and exterior improvements.

The Committee discussed Mr. Parkes' application for an IDEAL grant for up-fit and façade improvements to the office at 330 S. York Street. The Committee discussed the grant options that were presented and asked about any other pending IDEAL grant applications. Additionally, Mr. Parkes answered questions presented by the Committee.

**Committee Recommendation:** The Committee voted unanimously (2-0) to recommend that full Council approve an IDEAL grant of \$4,488 for assistance with the interior and exterior up-fit improvements as described.

**Necessary Council Action:** Approve or reject the Committee's recommendation.

**ITEM 2: Artspace Proposal: Downtown Parking Considerations:**

Chairman Pierceall recognized Mr. Tucker Johnson for staff's presentation. Mr. Johnson provided updates to the Committee with regard to the possible use of the lot at the corner of S. South Street and Franklin Boulevard for Artspace development. Mr. Johnson presented updates to three options based on public comments received the last Committee meeting on February 19, 2014.

- Option A involved reassigning City vehicles currently parking in the lot on S. South Street and Franklin Boulevard and moving them to other City lots. With input from Support, Inc., staff has developed a layout that relocates and creates additional handicapped parking.
- Option D has been modified to convert the surface lot at the Conference Center to public parking by relocating the gates closer to the parking deck to preserve the pay/reserve section. The public parking could be accessed either by entering on Franklin Boulevard or Marietta Street.

- There may be other privately owned parking lots downtown that could possibly be leased. Staff will continue to look into this option.

Additionally, staff proposed a ‘drop-off’ zone in the on-street parking on South Street adjacent to St. Stephen’s AME Zion Church-Unity Place. Mr. Fred Lowery, St. Stephen’s AME Zion Church representative, stated that he saw no problem with the City providing the ‘drop-off’ zone and that he would notify the Church of the proposal.

Staff advised the Committee that Artspace continues its due diligence in evaluating additional sites that were brought up since the last meeting as well. The Committee also heard further input from the Community Foundation representatives, Dr. Richard Rankin and Mr. Ernest Sumner, and Downtown merchant Mr. Skip McPhail.

**Committee Recommendation:** The Committee accepted the discussion for informational purposes, and no action was taken. The Committee further directed Staff to work directly with St. Stephens A.M.E. Zion Church representatives in possibly proceeding with a ‘drop-off’ zone on South Street. Further discussion will continue at the next Center City Revitalization and Housing Committee Meeting.

**Necessary Council Action:** None at this time.

**ITEM 3: Presentation by Building and Development Task Force:**

Chairman Pierceall recognized Mr. Gerald Sosebee, Chairman of the Gastonia Building and Development Task Force (GBDTF) for the presentation. Mr. Sosebee presented items for follow-up discussion on their previous requests for changes to the City’s Land Development Policy and to answer any questions by the Committee. Staff advised the Committee that:

- The GBDTF’s request to repeal the Park and Recreation Fee ordinance and refund the revenues from those fees was scheduled for discussion at the April Planning Commission meeting;
- The GBDTF’s request to implement a “grandfather” status to subdivisions that were approved prior to the implementation of the System Expansion Fee is being scheduled for discussion at the Council’s Utilities Committee. This would also include discussion of the GBDTF’s request to establish a policy to reimburse developers for costs of newly installed water and sewer lines;
- The GBDTF is moving forward with creation of ‘subcommittees’ to review City design standards and compare them to other municipalities.

Overall discussion by the Committee, Staff and the GBDTF concerning the pros and cons of these issues continued. The GBDTF clarified that they were not asking that the System Expansion Fee be repealed but rather that it be suspended for 5 to 10 years. The Committee also heard comments by GBDTF members, Mr. Jim Stewart and Mr. Tripp McLean. The GBDTF requested additional information from Staff with regard to historical data associated with the referenced topics.

**Committee Recommendation:** The Committee accepted the discussion for informational purposes, and no action was taken. The Committee directed Staff to assemble any available information as requested by the GBDTF and forward accordingly to them.

**Necessary Council Action:** None at this time.

**ITEM 4: Other Related Matters:**

**Lease Agreement for 212 W. Main:**

Staff presented information regarding additional space on the second floor of 212 W. Main that could potentially be leased. The Committee discussed the necessity of bringing before Committee/Council short-term leases. The Committee discussed implementing an overall master plan so that the City Manager could approve short-term (month-to-month) leases, with a 30-day termination notice.

**Committee Recommendation:** The Committee voted unanimously (2-0) to recommend to full Council that the City Manager be authorized to approve short-term leases (month-to-month) for second floor spaces based on square footage, with a 30-day termination notice.

Having no other matters to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.