

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS  
NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES, PUBLIC FORUM ON THE PRELIMINARY  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM, AND WORKSESSION ON  
THE BUDGET AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM  
HELD BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN  
CHAPEL HILL, MUNICIPAL BUILDING,  
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1986, 7:30 P.M.

Mayor James C. Wallace called the meeting to order. Council Members present were:

Julie Andresen  
David Godschalk  
Jonathan Howes  
David Pasquini  
Nancy Preston  
R. D. Smith  
Bill Thorpe  
Arthur Werner

Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Managers Sonna Loewenthal and Ron Secrist, and Attorney Ralph Karpinos.

Public Hearing on Community Development Funds

Roger Waldon, Planning Director, gave a presentation on the purpose of the hearing and the Community Development (CD) funds. He said the hearing was to receive proposals and ideas from citizens for use of the CD funds. Mr. Waldon stated that the current FY 1986 grant would be approximately \$315,000 or 10% less than the FY 1985 grant. He said the funds were generally used for rehabilitation of existing housing, to help provide low and moderate income housing, and for public improvements to aid low and moderate income persons. He referenced the attachments to the memorandum which stated the three year objectives and plan, the spending plan, timetable, and objectives of CD legislation.

Mr. Julian Raney, representing the Planning Board, encouraged the Council to use the CD funds for Homeownership programs.

Mr. Al Mebane, representing the Human Services Advisory Board, spoke in support of using CD funds for acquisition and provision of low and moderate income housing. He introduced a letter to the Council from the Board. (For a copy, see Clerk's files.)

Mr. Watts Hill, Jr., representing the Affordable Housing Task Force, encouraged the Council to use the CD funds for the provision of low and moderate income housing and related capital improvements. (For a copy of text, see Clerk's files.)

Mr. Judson Barrett, representing the Chapel Hill Housing Authority, spoke in support of rental rehabilitation, housing assistance, monetary support for a new Tenant Council of Public Housing, and completion of a pedestrian walkway between 751 Pritchard and Umstead Park. (For copy of text, see Clerk's files.)

Mr. Burnelle Powell, representing the Inter-Church Housing Corporation (IN-CHU-CO), encouraged continued support from the Council for rental rehabilitation. He cited the current demonstration project for \$25,000 to put new siding on one of the buildings in the Elliott Woods development. He indicated that the group's request of \$85,000 was still in effect and expected that the demonstration project would indicate the exact amount of funds needed.

There were no further comments from citizens.

Council Member Smith suggested using approximately \$100,000 in CD funds for site preparation for low and moderate income housing. He said he was pleased to see similar support for low and moderate income housing from Messrs. Hill and Barrett's presentations.

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Council Member Preston asked for clarification on the reasons why the length of time between the funds being granted to IN-CHU-CO and a contract being signed. Manager Taylor replied that the process had been more involved than the staff or IN-CHU-CO had originally thought, but he did believe there was no any intention of either party to unnecessarily delay the project.

Council Member Smith asked whether or not it was necessary to replace all the siding on each building. Manager Taylor replied that the staff was attempting to determine if this was indeed necessary and that this was part of the reason for the delay in processing the grant funds.

Council Member Werner said that he agreed there was a need for more affordable housing in Chapel Hill. He suggested Mr. Hill and his group provide more information on their deliberations regarding ways of providing affordable housing. Mr. Hill stated that the group had discussed whether or not curb and gutter was always needed and whether the OWASA connection fees could be defrayed by use of CD funds as possible examples of reducing the costs of such projects.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOWES MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GODSCHALK TO REFER TO THE MANAGER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (9-0).

#### Capital Improvements Program Public Forum

Sonna Loewenthal, Assistant Town Manager for Environment and Development, gave a presentation on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and process. She indicated that the CIP was used for long-lived projects. Assistant Manager Loewenthal said that funding for the CIP was either through a "pay as you go" basis or through debt financing in the form of revenue or general obligation bonds. She indicated that in the Manager's Preliminary CIP there were several items which if approved would require the issuance of general obligation bonds to provide funding. These bonds would be paid for through increases in the tax rate over a set number of years.

Julian Raney, representing the Planning Board, said the Board felt there needed to be more funds set aside for greenways and entranceways acquisition. He said the Board did not feel there was a pressing need for a southern park given other recreational opportunity and facilities south of Town, and that the Town might investigate possibility of further Town use of UNC's Davis Library instead of expanding the current Town Library. He said the Board was concerned over the possible depletion of fire training facilities and perhaps an arrangement with the City of Durham could be developed and therefore a burn building would not have to be built as proposed. He concluded by saying the the Planning Board suggested using funds to set up bicycle rack facilities in the downtown areas and cooperation with local garden clubs to accomplish proposed improvements to Town cemeteries.

Council Member Andresen questioned the validity and reality of the Town having greater use and access to the University's library. She stated that there already existed a parking problem at the University library and further Town use would just exasperbate the problem.

Josh Gurlitz, representing the Community Appearance Commission, endorsed the Manager's recommendation of acquisition of open space and greenways. he said the Commission also strongly encouraged further landscaping of the Town Cemeteries. Mr. Gurlitz further recommended that further implementation of the thoroughfare plan needed to be in conjunction with a comprehensive public signage system that would be color and style coordinated. He also said the Commission felt there should be funds designated for purchase of artwork to enhance any new public facilities. (For copy of text, see Clerk's files.)

Mr. Philip Sloane, representing the Greenways Commission, said the Commission endorsed the proposal for further acquisition of open space and greenways. He said they felt the recommended \$50,000 per year for greenway trail development was modest but adequate. Mr. Sloane said the Commission supported the idea of holding bond referendums this year to aid in the acquisition of open space and greenways, but felt the bond referendum for open space should be separate from any bond referendum for a southern park. He also said the Commission hoped the Council would take into consideration the greenway system when approving improvements to the thoroughfare plan.

Council Member Preston thanked Mr. Sloane for his presentation and asked the Manager for his opinion on whether or not the issue of a southern park and open space should be separate on a bond referendum. Manager Taylor replied that it was up to the Council to decide in what manner, if any, a bond referendum would be proposed and the method of listing questions on the ballot could be refined as a referendum neared and specifics were provided.

Gina Cunningham, representing the Entranceways Task Force, endorsed the recommendation for a comprehensive, coordinated signage system. She said the Task Force was in the process of developing proposals for a welcome center and several mini parks for the Council to review.

Caroline Lindsay, representing the Parks and Recreation Commission, said the Commission endorsed the Manager's preliminary recommendations and added that the Commission would like to add to next year's proposal the addition of light replacement for the athletic facilities. For future years, the Commission supported more open space acquisition, and a 2500 square foot addition to the Community Center to house conference room, locker rooms, and fitness space.

Council Member Smith asked the Assistant Manager for Community and Human Services to investigate the percentage of non-Chapel Hill citizens using Town recreation facilities because he had heard this was causing some problems at the Community Center.

Lisa Price, representing the Library Board of Trustees, said the Board was pleased with the Manager's recommendation of \$4 million for the library expansion. She said the Board also recommended funds for further repairs to the Bookmobile. Ms. Price reiterated key points of the Library Board's November 25th presentation to Council which discussed the location and service needs of an expanded library.

Council Member Smith encouraged the staff to review all alternatives before spending large amounts of money in either replacing or fixing the Bookmobile. He also commented that he had reservations about the possibility of having the library outside of the downtown area.

Council Members Andresen and Howes asked Ms. Price for comments regarding the Planning Board's recommendation that the Town use Davis Library as an alternative to expanding the Town's current library. Ms. Price replied that she did not feel that this was a viable alternative because of the parking problems at Davis Library and the differences in the types of books within the two libraries.

Council Member Godschalk thanked the Library Board for their thoughtful consideration of the issues and endorsed the recommendation for library expansion.

Dianne Byrne, representing the Transportation Board, said that the Board was not ready at present to make recommendations on the Preliminary CIP. She said they were waiting further information from the Manager's Office on specific issues regarding the thoroughfare and traffic signalization improvements.

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Ruth Thomas, speaking as a citizen, said that any expansion of the library would necessitate additional parking and if the library expansion were at a downtown site there would be a problem of guaranteeing the library patrons would have parking spaces. She went on to say that there needed to be additional funds for expanding and updating the library's collection. Ms. Thomas concluded by saying that there needed to be a way to get the citizens who use the library but live outside of the Town to financially support the library.

Roland Guiduz, representing Village Cable, renewed the company's offer of a \$25,000 grant to local governments to aid in cablecasting government meetings.

Randy Shank, representing the Research Triangle Group of the Sierra Club, expressed approval of the Manager's recommendations, but said the group would prefer to see more funds set aside for open space acquisition.

Elizabeth Barrow, a resident of North Forest Hills, asked for funds for a bicycle path along Airport Road from Estes Drive to North Forest Hills.

Council Member Preston asked where specifically the residents would like the bikeway placed. Mrs. Barrow said they hoped it would be placed along Airport Road.

Watts Hill, Jr., speaking as a citizen, spoke in support of funding for thoroughfare improvements. He also suggested the Council visit other communities noted for their aesthetics, like Lexington, Virginia, to get ideas on ways to improve the downtown area of Chapel Hill. Mr. Hill encouraged the Council to find a way to eliminate the inequities of residents outside of Chapel Hill taking advantage of the Town's facilities without paying for them. He also urged the Council not to support Town projects that would be in direct competition with current private operations.

Council Member Pasquini asked the Manager to further explain the potential tax increase as a result of any bond referendum. Manager Taylor replied that in essence, if the Council approved the proposed capital improvements programs which would require bond referendums, and the citizens voted for the bond referendums, it would add approximately \$.01 to the tax rate for every \$1 million passed. He went on to say that this increase would be spread over several years.

COUNCIL MEMBER GODSCHALK MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER PRESTON TO REFER TO THE MANAGER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (9-0).

#### Worksession

Council Member Thorpe said the Town needed to be sure that when evaluating sites for the proposed library expansion, it proceeds in a manner so as not to inflate the price of the property. He also said that if a bond referendum was approved then the reasons for the referendum needed to be as specific as possible.

Council Member Smith said the Council needed to let the Manager prepare an operating budget to his discretion, meaning the Council should not limit the Manager by saying there would be no tax increase. He also said the Council needed to proceed with improvements to the Thoroughfare Plan and 15-501 Bypass signalization.

Manager Taylor asked the Council if there was a consensus for him to prepare a memorandum on a bond referendum package for this fall.

Council Member Pasquini suggested having the Council choose 2 or 3 of the recommendations for a bond referendum instead of all five proposals.

Council Member Howes said there appeared a growing consensus for the needs outlined in the Manager's Recommended CIP, but that the proposals for library expansion and open space acquisition needed to be more site specific when presented to the public.

Council Member Godschalk suggested that the CIP projects requiring a bond referendum be split, with the Thoroughfare Plan, library expansion, and open space acquisition as the most important.

Council Member Preston asked the Manager for clarification of the impact of any tax increases, both operating and capital and the fact it would not all occur at once, but be spread over a few years.

Council Members Andresen and Werner felt the bond referendum should contain all the items and let the citizens decide which issues were the most important.

Mayor Wallace said it appeared to be the general consensus of the Council for the Manager to further develop a bond referendum package and present it to the Council for them to decide which items would be presented to the public.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOWES MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER GODSCHALK TO ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LITIGATION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (9-0).

Mayor Wallace called the meeting back into regular session.

COUNCIL MEMBER HOWES MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WERNER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (9-0).

The meeting adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

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Mayor James C. Wallace

  
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Nancy J. Wells  
Town Clerk

