



Prosperity & Livability Committee
Members: Ewing, Hill, Wagner and Williams
Chaired by Council Member Ewing
3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room
April 6, 2016 – 9:00 A.M.

MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Committee Chair Jason Ewing, and Committee Members Alyce Hill, Jay Wagner and Chris Williams

Also Present:

Council Member Cynthia Davis

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Budget and Performance Manager; Jeron Hollis, Communications & Public Engagement Mike McNair, Director of Community Development; Richard Fuqua, Affordable Housing Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Thanena Wilson, Community Development Administrator; Maria Smith, Deputy City Clerk and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

Judy Stalder, TREBIC; SaraBelle Tate, High Point Chamber and Felicia Jones, Resident and Human Relations Commissioner

News Media:

Pat Kimbrough, High Point Enterprise

Handouts:

- *City of High Point North Carolina Strategic Planning*
- *Painting City Streets*

Note: These handouts will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

Strategic Plan

Chairman Ewing called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. and welcomed Committee Member Williams to the Committee. The goal was to look at two of three strategic plans that were assigned to Prosperity & Livability Committee to act as a continuant between on how Council would like to work through those two plans and to go back to Council with monthly reports its successes and needs.

Committee Member Hill began with the goal on how to attract the millennials where there was a discussion on business incubators. She shared some information from Southwestern Foundation that found some work and asked to share with committee and to get the committees feedback.

1. Long Term Goals

Chairman Ewing reported the long term goals that increased the population of active engaged entrepreneurial and millennials living in High Point by 25 percent. He discussed at their retreat to a millennial task force that they could get some information and try to find out what millennials wanted, what would keep them here, how to engage the ones that are currently here and how to attract the ones that are not here. City Manager Demko recommended to have SaraBelle Tate, High Point Chamber, Chair the task force and to come back to the Prosperity & Livability Committee with some recommendations on who should serve on that task force. He noted that the Committee could set perimeters as to what size the task force should be, what sectors to touch, and then hand it to Ms. Tate to manage it and report back to the Committee and then our Committee to Council.

Committee Member Wagner mentioned that he would like to make sure that they get all those people involved and when they are involved they will know others to talk to as well and that we also need to look at some of the millennials who are here, but don't attend schools here. Chairman Ewing asked if any Committee Members had any objections with Ms. Tate being the Chair for the task force; there were no objections voiced. Committee Member Hill inquired on the timeframe and Chairman Ewing suggested 90 days for the task force and that it could possibly be done less than 90 days and they could meet once in between that timeframe. He did note that summertime may be more challenging.

Council Member C. Davis brought up a question regarding High Point University and asked about GTCC students working in the trade classes and would want them to stay, as well as other colleges in the vicinity. Chairman Ewing responded as to identifying to the primers and reaching out to all of the post High School Education Institutions within the City limits and beyond. Committee Member Wagner shared some millennials that are here or from here that do not go to school and suggested that would be a group that we would need to hear from.

Judy Stalder, TREBIC, suggested tapping into restaurant sectors because a lot of the students work at these establishments (i.e. LuLu and Blu and Blue Rock Pizza and Tap, etc...). Council Member C. Davis mentioned, in addition to the colleges, the "not so cool kids" work at fast food restaurants and just getting the information out and whatever can be done to fill that space.

Chairman Ewing advised that perimeters need to be identified and smaller committee would be more productive. He suggested identifying a core of 6, 8, 10, or 12 and then it could be expanded into a large group where they could pull millennials of every shape and size to have focus groups or town home meetings. Council Member C. Davis would like it to be very diverse and have all walks of life. Chairman Ewing mentioned that he does not want to give Ms. Tate too much constraint with a general number to consider. The consensus number seemed to be under ten.

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager, advised that Greensboro through their Chamber also had a millennial type program and suggested to contact them that had been working. Chairman Ewing mentioned Synergy in Greensboro. Committee Member Wagner noted that they need to make sure that the task force understands what the Committee is asking them to do. He noted what would entice them in terms of entertainment and jobs and what specifically and what type of jobs that they would be interested in because that would determine if we are looking to do an incubator and what they are looking for and type of housing they are looking for. Chairman Ewing added what total livability needs.

Committee Member Hill added that our goal is increasing by 25 percent was to access what we have. She noted it would be approximately near 3-5 years. Mr. McCaslin remembered from the retreat that there are a number of millennials working here by day but then going home to Greensboro and Winston by night and how do we keep those people here.

Chairman Ewing looked at Ms. Tate for guidance being with the Chamber and being in touch with those business owners and to find out how many millennials they have within the businesses live in High Point, how many do not and that would help us gauge the demographics and then look at the Planning Department at the populations studies to fill in some gaps.

Chairman Ewing asked for the Committees approval for Ms. Tate to Chair the millennial task force and would like it to be less than ten numbers and for it to be as diversified as possible from walks of life as needs stand point and report back to the Committee within 90 days. He would also like for them to identify how many millennials in High Point and once that is identified, what their needs are and how they want to live their quality of life (beyond bars and restaurants) and to include and that may need to expand transportation.

Council Member C. Davis raised the question if census data would be able to help with obtaining millennial numbers. She also suggested contacting some universities and local colleges so they could supply their enrollment numbers. Mr. McCaslin mentioned Andy Piper, in the Planning Department who would be very good with the census data and gets updated per yea, but currently is at 2010. Committee Member Wagner recognized that the cities with higher education typically tend to be more vibrant.

Chairman Ewing advised Ms. Tate to identify where and how many millennials we have and asked her if she felt that this is feasible to have the task force assembled within 60 days and Ms. Tate did feel it was possible. He suggested having it ready for their June Committee meeting. He also suggested she submit a roster beforehand so they could review it to see who is on it, to

get more information about where they are at and to get a clearer directive at that time and beyond the collection of the data of how we really want to go out to the millennials.

Council Member C. Davis asked if the Committee would want to meet the ones chosen to serve in July so they could feel engaged by those that would be asking them to serve. Chairman Ewing did not feel the necessity but, instead, after it was assembled to let himself or Mr. McCaslin know or anyone on that Committee that would like to attend the task force meeting as an observer since this would be less formal.

Chairman Ewing confirmed with consensus that Ms. Tate would lead the task force and the first Wednesday in June would have information to see how the progress is moving and would get an invitation to attend if any choose to do so. Chairman Ewing then thanked Ms. Tate for taking this task force on.

Chairman Ewing advised it would be helpful to review the needs and wants of the millennials before structuring an incubator.

Committee Member Hill reported on how Southwest Renewal Foundation was looking at incubators and referenced the Shakespeare building. She attended a meeting yesterday and noted that they had put a fair amount of research into incubators and had received a proposal for a needs assessment. They had a committee and were to convene Friday for the first time and asked to have a representative from the City on the committee. Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager, suggested that the representative should be from Prosperity & Livability Committee. Committee Member Hill advised she would report this back to them.

She reviewed their proposal for services with the first phases would be the needs assessment. This would cost approximately \$40,000 and they raised some money \$10,000 which they felt was unrestricted. She shared that they did not want to invest the money into this, but it is an opportunity for the City to work together with them but they want to get some buy in from the City. She noted that they are a step ahead of us on it and she is trying to get a handle on this. She did share that they do not want to get too far ahead down the road if they do not feel like this is something that the City can incorporate into the City's Strategic Plan. Mr. McCaslin asked if they intend on it being in the Southwest area. She replied that at one time it was and it not being limited and would like it to be citywide. Committee Member Hill stated that they are trying to move forward and would like to get Council's feedback. Mr. McCaslin reported they had probably 3-4 groups to meet on this over the years. Committee Member Williams commented on the placement and wanted to know if we were willing to vary from what we were saying because the point was to have them near the downtown area. Chairman Ewing pointed out the Core City was the target and there could be successful multiple incubators that could cover different industry and needs and at some point that could have ancillary that are in north or south and outside of the core area that service an industry developed around the area (i.e. Piedmont Parkway) there could be a better place up there for an incubator up there that could help service those industries. As they mentioned in the retreat, they need to try to restrict what and where these places go and let them do what they need to do to be successful and give them the tools and support that we can to develop.

Mr. McCaslin asked Committee Member Hill if she knew when and where they would be meeting, but she was not familiar with the meeting location. Mr. McCaslin suggested Mr. Hemann attend that meeting to help keep the City engaged. Chairman Ewing advised at some point there would be a benefit in combining what we get from Business High Point and from Southwest and probably other groups also in developing incubators. Committee Member Hill believed that it was difficult to convene a process for a meeting this Friday. Chairman Ewing stated that he believes that they are premature in the whole method until we can identify.

Committee Member Wagner passed along some information to Mr. Hemann on innovation districts which is akin to incubators and an article about how they work. He also shared some information on some food incubators outside of Asheville. He reported it is a shared use and agricultural processing commercial kitchen facility and designed for development for food products. He explained how it was developed in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. He explained it is basically a large shared kitchen and it allows people to come in. He noted it generally costs \$30,000 - 100,000 to take an idea for a product and get it on the shelf at the grocery store. He mentioned that you would have to go through all the development of a product. He personally believed that this could be an opportunity for us because GTCC has a culinary school and out of those chefs some of them would like to develop products.

Committee Member Wagner also shared an idea that came out a couple of years ago through the IGNITE High Point process. It started up in Charlottesville, VA. He explained that they made a “make-a-space / business incubator / shared creative space” and they like to be in university towns. He shared they also did one in Richmond. He advised they come in and actually set it up and they are all about implementation. He shared the website: hack.cville.com. He reported that they actually gave us a quote at \$120,000 to set one up and their idea for High Point and gave Etsy.com as an example to set up an incubator in High Point and to set up a real life “Etsy” and to share space of what they are creating and twice a year we would be able to sell to the whole world during market.

From a groundwork stand point, Chairman Ewing thought this was a good idea, but when talking about a diversified task force, it might not be so diversified in the sense of industry. He felt it was important to make sure there are people from the restaurant sector, business sector, and to hit the different sectors to generator ideas and/or needs. Committee Member Wagner suggested organizing a small trip to Charlottesville and felt it could benefit the group. Chairman Ewing advised to wait and allow some time for Mr. Hemann to review the material/information on the subject.

2. Goal to Create a Downtown Catalyst Project that Produces 500 Private Sector Jobs, 15-20 New Restaurants and Shops, 250 Residential Housing Units

Chairman Ewing reviewed the goals associated with this and advised that a report would be forthcoming possibly at the end of April. He hoped the report would be in so it can be reviewed at the May Prosperity & Livability Committee Meeting and advised there is a consensus to make something happen.

He noted the ST short-term goal is to receive the sports and entertainment facility report; accept; approve; determine ownership and financing; and to direct implementation. He explained there was some interest to help foster some private interest and there has already been a lot of private money raised for the studies. He stated that once the report is in, he would like to see the committee make a recommendation to Council for a resolution in support to show the public that the Council is supportive of the project.

Council Member C. Davis stated she has no problems with that, other than the fact that the portion that involves the city should be put on a bond referendum so people can vote on whether or not the city spends a sizeable amount of money on it. She reiterated that she's not necessarily against it, but is concerned about the method by which the city participates without the citizens have a say in it.

Chairman Ewing also believes a large part of this would depend on how much the private sector steps up and if Council commits to at least the infrastructure support, etc.... this will hopefully give the private sector the confidence to start raising more money. He pointed out all over the U.S. ballparks have been built with 100% private funds. He felt it was important that Council go on record in support of the concept and the need for private buy-in moving forward. Council Member C. Davis noted she did not have a problem with the city providing the infrastructure/services portion, but she did have a problem with the larger portion.

Mr. Ewing asked if the completed study would include the financial piece as well as financing options. Mr. Hemann stated he did not recall if it would have all the details in it because this would not be determined until it is known as to what kind of public support there is for it. Mr. Hemann commented another thing that would be in the report would be a determination as to the ancillary development around the ballpark and additional tax base that would justify city involvement/investment.

Chairman Ewing felt the benefit to the City would not necessarily be the facility itself, but it would be all the economic development that can and will occur around it, which is part of the strategic plan and creating jobs, retail, and more residential housing. He reported that he looked forward to seeing this at either a Manager's Briefing or the May 4th Committee meeting and would make the recommendation to Council. He advised that until the report it received, it would be premature and suggested tabling this strategic initiative until the May 4th meeting.

Painted Intersections in Portland

Committee Member Wagner shared an idea from Portland regarding painted intersections and asked for approval for him to work with the city attorney on a proposed ordinance that could be brought back to the Committee in May for consideration. He explained an architect who lives in Portland got the idea from a visit he made to Central America. He wanted to create a focal point for the neighborhood and shared his idea with the city, but they turned him down. After being turned down, he took the initiative to paint the street anyway and after they saw the design, they ended up liking it and decided to allow it. He explained requests from the neighborhoods go through the Transportation Department and requires a permit to allow neighborhoods to paint their intersections. As part of the process, they are required to submit plans, a petition

showing support from the neighbors and agree to maintain it. He pointed out this has resulted in a drop in crime, promotes traffic safety and increases property values.

Committee Member Wagner mentioned an unwritten rule that states that they would not approve any recognizable symbols, names or words. He also stated that High Point would be the first in North Carolina to do this. Eric Olmedo, Budget and Performance Manager, pulled up some examples on-line to view the different street designs in Portland. While excited about the Portland intersection idea, Committee Member Wagner emphasized that this project would not cost the City anything.

Council Member C. Davis expressed concerns about the artwork being destroyed and asked who would be responsible for any damages. Committee Member Wagner explained it would be the neighbors responsibility and they would have to handle it. Committee Member Williams mentioned there would be community and they would see what's going on and address it.

Committee Member Wagner mentioned part of the ordinance would be that neighbors would have to maintain the paint or the Transportation Department can revoke the permit. He noted that every year they would have to repaint it. Council Member C. Davis raised the question if they abandoned it what would happen? Committee Member Wagner suggested it might just fade away. He proposed meeting with Ms. Carlyle and Mark McDonald, Transportation Director, to have a proposed ordinance by next month.

He passed out the handout from Ms. Carlyle regarding Painting City Streets. He noted that this document is regarding safety and that approval would be needed from neighbors from what he believed is suggested from 2/3 of the block of the neighbors. Ms. Carlyle advised adding some language. Ms. Carlyle will look into the legal requirements for giving the property owners notice per Committee Member Williams request.

Council Member C. Davis mentioned an area near her and whether or not the city or the Housing Authority would have to sign off on those situations. In response to Council Member C. Davis' question, Ms. Carlyle saw this as an advantage for them to possibly buy the paint. Committee Member Williams offered to speak to Ms. McGill when this is drafted.

Chairman Ewing suggested that Ms. Carlyle and Committee Member Wagner come back in May to discuss legal parameters of their proposal and then take the idea to the neighborhood groups to determine if there is support for it.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria A. Smith
Deputy City Clerk

Jason P. Ewing, Chairman

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