



Community Housing, Neighborhood Development and Public Safety Committee

Chaired by Council Member Golden

Committee Members: Golden, Peters, Scarborough, and Williams

January 8, 2019 – 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room

Agenda

Present:

Chairman Jeffrey Golden, and Committee Members Monica Peters and Christopher Williams
[arrived at 10:08 a.m.]

Absent: Committee Member, Donald Scarborough

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Tim McKinney, Maintenance Operation Director; Terry Houk, Public Services Director; Robby Stone, Assistant Public Services Director; Trevor Spencer, Public Services Manager; Brad Embry, Cemetery Parks Supervisor; Mike McNair, Community Development Director; Michelle McNair, Community Resource Manager; Eric Olmedo, Budget & Administrative Director; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

Phyllis Bridges, Vice Chair of High Point Preservation Society
Jerry Mingo, Community Activist (Burns Hill neighborhood), Citizens Advisory Council Member
Cyril Jefferson, Washington Street Renaissance, Citizens Advisory Council Member
Robert Erwin, Resident

News Media:

Pat Kimbrough, *High Point Enterprise*

Note: The following documents were distributed and will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

- *Coltrane House: Proposed Goal and Draft of Potential Stakeholders*
- *Photographs of Greenhill Cemetery, Proposed Fencing, and Proposed Informational Sign*

Coltrane House

Assistant City Manager Randy Hemann distributed a draft of thoughts for the Coltrane House and noted it is labeled as “draft” because he has not approached several of the people identified on the list to gauge their interest in serving as potential stakeholders. The goal is to convene a group of stakeholders to discuss the use of the Coltrane House and at the conclusion, report the findings back to the Community Housing, Neighborhood Development & Public Safety Committee for further discussion. Cathleen Turner and Ted Alexander with Preservation North Carolina have both agreed to facilitate the project.

The stakeholders will:

- Review preservation plans and cost estimates;
- Identify a potential use for the Coltrane house, funding sources, and sustainability plan;
- Pursue possibility of further historic designation and potential national landmark status;
- Discuss potential historic marker; and
- Discuss and come up with a small area plan for the general vicinity.

Mr. Hemann encouraged suggestions for other stakeholders that are not on the list. The following additions were suggested:

- ✓ Bruce Davis
- ✓ David Tegnell

The goal is to convene the stakeholders to start discussions in mid to late January.

The Committee was in agreement for staff to move forward.

Greenhill Cemetery

Robby Stone, Assistant Director of Public Services, advised this matter was discussed at the last Committee meeting on December 4, 2018. He reported that as the Committee directed at the last meeting, staff has been working with Ray Gibbs, Executive Director- Forward High Point, on a proposed plan for the cemetery which will include decorative fencing, landscaping for the area, etc.... Mr. Stone advised that the sketches were not quite ready to be presented at this meeting. He then shared some photographs of the cemetery that were taken by staff.

At the last meeting, an estimate in the range of \$65,000-\$70,000 was provided for a vinyl coated chain-link fence around the perimeter of the cemetery with similar type gates and removal of the existing fencing. Mr. Stone advised the more decorative type fencing would increase this somewhat.

The following challenges/obstacles have been identified for Greenhill Cemetery which is located at the intersection of Meredith/Leonard Streets.

1. Existing fencing is not aesthetically pleasing and is not in good condition.
2. Close proximity of an existing utility pole to the cemetery.
3. Cemetery is currently being used as a cut-through for residents which results in issues with trash, litter, etc....
4. Graves are extremely close to the road.
5. Adjacent structures are major eyesores and built right up to the property line.
6. Adjacent home on the corner currently uses the roadway to gain access to rear of their property.
7. Safety at the cemetery.

The proposed plan will include:

- Decorative fencing and gates with larger posts and signage.
- A gate installed to eliminate the cut through, foot traffic to help mitigate some of the safety concerns.
- Construction of a turn-around so vehicles can easily enter and exit the cemetery when visiting.

Brad Embry, Cemetery Park Supervisor, explained that once the gates are added someone on staff would be responsible for opening/closing the gates daily which means families may not be able to visit as often.

In response to some safety concerns that were recently voiced by citizens at the last Council Meeting regarding the Oakwood Cemetery, Chairman Golden asked if there have been any reports of crime and drug activity in the Greenhill Cemetery. Mr. Embry replied not necessarily in the cemetery itself, but there continues to be evidence of drug activity on the streets around the cemetery.

A brief discussion followed regarding the homes adjacent to the cemetery and whether or not the city should pursue the opportunity to purchase the properties. Staff has been working with the city's Legal Department about reaching out to the property owner(s) to do some test digs to determine if the soil might be conducive for a possible expansion of the cemetery.

Committee Member Williams expressed concerns about the gates being closed at times but acknowledged it may be necessary if it starts to become an issue with criminal activity in the cemetery.

Committee Member Peters made a suggestion to put in some low maintenance plants that grow upwards.

Mr. Stone advised that staff would continue working with Mr. Gibbs on the plan and would bring back something for consideration with cost estimates at a future meeting. Chairman Golden asked staff to please relay that many of the residents are concerned about the safety at the cemetery.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk

Jeffrey Golden, Chairman