



## **PROSPERITY & LIVABILITY COMMITTEE (Virtual Meeting)**

*Chaired by Council Member Hudson*

*Committee Members: Hudson, Holmes, Peters, and Jefferson*

**September 9, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Council Chambers**

### **MINUTES**

*As part of the City of High Point's ongoing COVID-19 Mitigation efforts, in-person attendance will not be allowed at this meeting. Instead, the meeting will be live-streamed and the public will be provided an opportunity to listen to the meeting once the meeting is in session.* [www.HighPointNC.gov/VirtualPublicMeeting](http://www.HighPointNC.gov/VirtualPublicMeeting)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Following a virtual roll call vote for attendance, Chairman Hudson called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

The following Committee Members were **physically present** in the Council Chambers: Chairman Wesley Hudson, and Committee Members Cyril Jefferson and Monica Peters.

### **Participating remotely:**

Council Member Michael Holmes, Council Member Britt Moore, and Council Member Tyrone Johnson

Mayor Jay Wagner was also physically present in the Council Chambers.

### **Staff physically present:**

Randy McCaslin, Interim City Manager; Greg Ferguson, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Ryan Ferguson, Communications & Public Engagement; Sandy Dunbeck, Executive Vice President- High Point Economic Development; Mark McDonald, Director of Transportation; Mary Brooks, Deputy City Clerk; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk.

### **Staff participating remotely:**

Karen Rimmer, Special Events Coordinator; Loren Hill, President- High Point Economic Development Corporation; Marshall Yandle, Vice President- High Point Economic Development Corporation; and Tim McKinney, Director of Facility Services.

*Note: The following documents will be attached in Legistar and incorporated as a permanent part of these proceedings.*

1. *Photos- Proposed Locations for "Welcome to High Point" Signs on S. Main Street*
2. *Current Special Event Policy (adopted April 6, 2020)*
3. *Verbiage suggested for Categories of Events to amend the current policy*
4. *PowerPoint Presentation: 2020 Traffic Calming Projects*
5. *PowerPoint Presentation: Small-Scale Manufacturing Initiative*

## PRESENTATION OF ITEMS

### **2020-329     Discussion- Street/Intersection Painting**

Staff will provide information on the Policy to Allow Enhancement of City Streets, Intersections, Alleys, and Cul-de-sacs that was adopted by the City Council on August 15, 2016 and facilitate any discussion on possible revisions to the policy.

*Mark McDonald, Director of the High Point Department of Transportation, shared that a street enhancement policy was adopted by the City Council in 2016 that allowed the painting of local streets in residential neighborhoods by residents, although the policy has yet to be utilized. He reported that the city has recently received some requests to paint streets other than the permitted residential streets and the policy currently does not allow any painting on streets except for residential. He advised it would be up to the City Council as to if the policy would be amended for that purpose. He further explained that the intent is for the painting to be "local art" and is not to be any advertisement or support/nonsupport of any issue.*

*Mayor Wagner shared the history on how the idea came about as a result of a visit he made to Portland, Oregon several years ago. At that time, they had at least 45 intersections that had been painted/improved and they had bus tours of those areas as well. He explained how it has helped to reduce crime, boosted and stimulated community involvement, increased property values, etc.... He further explained that one of the key things that Portland did in order to get around the constitutional questions on speech, was the restriction of no words, no recognizable symbols, and no promotion of any sort of political agenda.*

*Due to safety concerns, the City of High Point's policy was set up and restricted to only allow painting in intersections/cul-de-sacs located in residential neighborhoods. Mayor Wagner asked Mr. McDonald to speak to the reason these restrictions were placed in the policy. Mr. McDonald advised that most residential streets have very limited pavement markings that are used for traffic control, so there would be very little conflict with those markings. He spoke to how there would be a lot of pavement markings on the major intersections and how paintings in major intersections could cause driver confusion and would not be conforming to the typical methods of controlling traffic at intersections.*

*At this time, Chairman Hudson noted that Committee Member Jefferson asked for this matter to be placed on the agenda and asked him to speak to the request.*

*Committee Member Jefferson explained it was in regards to numerous inquiries that he has received by residents about potentially changing the policy and doing things differently. He advised that Phyllis Bridges made the formal request and shared that he has talked with Mayor Wagner about it. He noted that although he realized that the details of Ms. Bridges' request are outside of the currently adopted policy, he felt more questions/information was needed. He asked Mr. McDonald to share some data to substantiate the safety concerns and asked about any accidents that might have occurred in the past and if there are any other municipalities that allow this.*

*City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle affirmed that in the past year, the environment has changed from the federal government and they have been clamping down on painted intersections, bike lanes, etc.... for safety purposes and to date nothing has been settled regarding this. She advised that arguments are out there that claim this slows the traffic down; however, the federal government does not agree. She also pointed out that the "government speech" environment has changed causing other cities to pause similar programs so they can get things in place for it to be managed correctly and not be challenged.*

*Committee Member Jefferson asked if any consideration has been given to any viable alternatives to the formal request that has been received. Mayor Wagner explained that he did meet with Ms. Bridges earlier this summer after she sent him an email about the possibility of painting a mural on Hamilton Street that would say something like "End Racism Now," but he encouraged her to operate under the city's existing policy. He shared his reservations about how painting political language on streets could bring forth even more requests and that many might not agree with the language and spoke to how the city would have to make the determination about any language used because of the Constitutional threat. City Attorney Carlyle advised withstanding any challenges would prove to be difficult although the people do have the right to be heard, a determination would have to be made as to what could be allowed.*

*City Attorney Carlyle asked if NCDOT would have to approve any requests involving state-maintained streets and Mr. McDonald replied in the affirmative but pointed out that Hamilton Street is not a state-maintained street.*

*Mayor Wagner advised that he would not have a problem expanding the policy to paint more than residential intersections and noted that Chapel Hill has painted some of their crosswalks to make them more visible. City Attorney Carlyle pointed out this is the argument that the federal government is making and would not be acceptable. The Mayor spoke to the legal exposure the city could incur and expressed concerns about the city getting bogged down in reviewing the "art."*

*Committee Member Peters mentioned that Council talked about creating more diversity during the Council Retreat held in February and suggested the possibility of painting crosswalks to express diversity in art at the Hamilton/Commerce intersection might be an example.*

*Committee Member Jefferson stated he would like to engage the responses regarding the formal request that was made by Ms. Bridges and asked, again, if any consideration was given to any viable alternatives. He asked the Mayor about Ms. Bridges' response during*

*their conversation. Mayor Wagner stated that when Ms. Bridges submitted the idea of painting words on Hamilton Street, he encouraged her to reach out to the High Point Transportation Department. Mr. McDonald confirmed that she did reach out to the Transportation Department to inquire about whether or not Hamilton Street was a state-maintained street, but that was the extent of the inquiry.*

*Mayor Wagner advised that he believes that Ms. Bridges is still interested in painting Hamilton Street and that she would still like the policy to be amended to allow that. He reiterated his concerns about the constitutional liabilities associated with these types of requests and it has reached a point whether the City Council wants to amend the policy.*

*Committee Member Jefferson suggested that more information needs to be gathered such as the federal government's standpoint and more conversations are needed but felt as stewards of the resident's and the public's trust, it was certainly worth further deliberation.*

**2020-330****Discussion- New "Welcome" Sign on South Main Street**

Staff will facilitate discussion regarding a proposed "Welcome" sign to be located on S. Main Street.

*Randy McCaslin, Interim City Manager, advised that he asked Tim McKinney, Director of Facility Services, to look at two of the city's existing "Welcome to High Point" signs and provide an estimate and Mr. McKinney estimated a new sign on S. Main Street to be in the \$15,000 range. Mr. McCaslin stated he also asked the High Point Transportation Department (HPDOT) to look at possible sites along S. Main Street and they came up with two sites that are owned by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) which would require their approval.*

*Mark McDonald, HPDOT Director, shared some visual pictures and aerial photos of the property located in the southwest quadrant of the city--both properties are located on state-owned property in the vicinity of S. Main Street/Archdale Road. He noted since both pieces of property are located in the NCDOT right-of-way, they would need to talk with NCDOT about constructing the sign in their right-of-way and obtaining the necessary encroachments.*

*Committee Member Peters mentioned a meeting she had with business owners in the S. Main Street area and one of the complaints that many had was they do not feel like they are a part of High Point. She spoke to how one of the sites was actually suggested by one of the business owners as a possibility for placement of a sign and noted that sometimes the smallest gesture could change attitudes and show that the city cares.*

**Chairman Hudson then moved to forward this matter to the City Council with a favorable recommendation for approval of a new "Welcome to High Point" sign to be located on S. Main Street on one of these two parcels as recommended by staff. Committee Member Peters made a second to the motion, which carried by the following 4-0 vote:**

Aye (4):

Chairman Hudson, Committee Member Holmes, Committee Member Jefferson, and Committee Member Peters

**2020-331      Discussion- Modifications to the Special Events Policy (City-Sponsored Events)**

Staff will facilitate discussion regarding possible modifications to the Special Events Policy for city-sponsored events.

*Chairman Hudson distributed copies of some verbiage he was recommending for Categories of Events (co-sponsored events) that could be added to the Special Event Policy for clarification purposes. He proceeded to read the statement into the record as follows:*

*Categories of Events. Co-Sponsored- Co-sponsored events are determined by the City Council and are events of general interest to the public which provide a special economic development benefit or advance the City's (livability or) public image. (The city will not co-sponsor fund-raising events for any organization.). The City will determine.....*

*He explained the reasoning behind his request was that the City continues to receive a multitude of requests from nonprofits for co-sponsorship of 5K races, etc.... and it is his preference to have an across-the-board policy so that it is fair to everyone.*

**At this time, Chairman Hudson moved to forward this proposed amendment to the City's Special Event Policy to the City Council with a favorable recommendation. Committee Member Peters made a second to the motion.**

*For further discussion, Committee Member Jefferson asked if the Coltrane Jazz Festival would fall under this proposed amendment because they are a nonprofit. Chairman Hudson replied they would not because the amendment would allow for exemptions like the Coltrane Jazz Festival. Committee Member Jefferson expressed concerns regarding the amendment citing ambiguity. Chairman Hudson explained that the Coltrane Jazz Festival is not a fundraising event and noted the funds that they raise helps to maintain the event.*

*Committee Member Peters asked if the Labonte cycling event would be exempt. Council Member Hudson replied that they would not be exempt.*

**At this time, Committee Member Peters rescinded her second she previously made to the motion.**

*City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle advised that these answers are not definitive at this point in time because any questions about the exempt/nonexempt status of any event would have to be weighed on a case-by-case basis. Committee Member Jefferson questioned the effect of the amended language and asked for further clarification citing he could think of several additional examples--all of which are still fundraising events. He reiterated his concerns regarding ambiguity of the amendment and questioned the need to adopt this language to modify the City's current policy.*

*City Attorney Carlyle advised that while she was not involved in drafting the wording of the proposed amendment to the policy, she believed the intent was to make it easier for Council to make these types of decisions. Chairman Hudson affirmed this was the case and that he was trying to prevent spending months discussing city-sponsored events that could be arbitrarily changed by Council later on.*

*Committee Member Peters felt the currently adopted policy should remain unchanged and noted if the policy is changed, the wording in the policy could very well deter many organizations wanting to hold fundraising events in High Point.*

*Committee Member Holmes shared his biggest concern is taking these questions as they come up on a case-by-case basis, if there are going to be exemptions, and what would qualify for an exemption. He felt there seems to be a lot of gray area in interpretation of the proposed policy change and the adjustment would leave too much subjectivity for it to be clear to anyone.*

*Chairman Hudson reiterated the reason he was recommending it be added was for more clarity. He further explained one of the dangers is public perception that in allowing someone to co-sponsor and event while denying others and this could be perceived as doing favors for friends.*

**Chairman Hudson then withdrew his previous motion and advised he would like to bring it back up for further discussion at a future meeting.**

**2020-335****Presentation- New "Traffic Calming" Projects**

Staff will provide a presentation on new "Traffic Calming" projects.

*Mark McDonald, Director of Transportation, advised that the City Council adopted the Traffic Calming Policy in 2016 and a line item for installing the traffic calming devices has been included in the budget. He noted several applications/petitions have been received from residents and identified the following five locations that staff will be moving forward on to install speed humps using the funding in the budget. He shared an aerial map of the areas where these speed humps will be proposed. Data has been collected for these areas and it has been determined that these petitions meet the requirements in the policy. Staff is proposing to have one contractor do all five locations under one contract instead of doing separate contracts for each location.*

- 1. Arlington Street (two speed humps are proposed)*
- 2. Gavin Drive (two speed humps are proposed)*
- 3. Jamesford Drive (three speed humps are proposed)*
- 4. Kensington Drive (three, possibly four speed humps are proposed)*
- 5. Wesley Drive (two speed humps are proposed)*

*Mr. McDonald shared some renderings of what the actual speed humps would look like and advised the installation cost would be about \$5,000 for each speed hump; a total of \$65,000 for the 13 that are proposed in these five locations. He explained that Council approval is not required because of the policy that is already in place; however, staff anticipates the need for some additional funding to complete these traffic calming projects for this year because the cost will exceed the \$50,000 that has been budgeted, but felt confident they could find additional funding within his departmental budget. Staff plans on going out to bid later this fall with construction beginning soon thereafter.*

*Committee Member Jefferson inquired as to if it would be bid out to one contractor or multiple contractors and Mr. McDonald replied that it would be one contractor. Committee*

*Member Jefferson asked if the MWBE program includes transportation projects such as these. Interim City Manager Randy McCaslin advised this would be a good opportunity for a small company.*

*Mr. McDonald reported that they have received petitions for a number of other locations but won't be able to fund those projects in this year's budget.*

*Council Member Moore asked staff if the speed humps/devices that were recently installed on Rotary have worked. Mr. McDonald spoke to how staff feels it has been successful; it has achieved the purpose for which the traffic calming measures were installed; and speeds are a little lower in the area.*

*Council Member Moore asked if staff has encountered any major problems with the maintenance on the streets with the installed traffic calming devices. Mr. McDonald advised that he was not aware of any but would certainly reach out to the Public Services Department to ensure that there have not been any issues.*

**2020-340****Presentation- Small Scale Manufacturing/Opportunity Zones**

The Economic Development staff will provide a presentation on the Small Scale Manufacturing/Opportunity Zones initiatives.

*Sandy Dunbeck, Executive Vice President- High Point Economic Development Corporation, advised that the EDC staff has been working with the Small-Scale Manufacturing/Opportunity Zones Task Force and they have been actively meeting over the past year. She then introduced Marshall Yandle, Vice President- High Point Economic Development Corporation, who was participating remotely.*

*Mr. Yandle explained this Task Force is a multi-departmental effort between the Economic Development Corporation, Planning Department, Community Development Department, and the Library. He advised the area was scaled down from what was submitted in the original application and the Southwest area was chosen as the study area. They had a kick-off event in July 2019 and Mayor Wagner appointed a task force of 15 people consisting of the community/business community and council representatives. The Task Force met in August and did a tour of the Southwest area in September so the members could become acquainted with the location. A work session was held at GTCC which resulted in eight priorities; four of these priorities/committees started work in November of this past year and have been meeting on an as-needed basis, reporting back on progress to the Small-Scale Manufacturing Task Force quarterly. These priorities were identified as:*

- 1. Southwest Downtown Area Plan*
- 2. Target Properties*
- 3. Training & Programming*
- 4. Commercial Shared-Use Kitchen*

*Each one of these priority areas had a city staff liaison assigned to assist with the process. There were also breakout groups such as GTCC, Boys, the Boys and Girls Club, etc..... He also spoke to how they have planned a resource fair during National Night Out in October; how they plan to work with 16-24 year-olds and do company tours; and are currently*

*working on a webpage that will have an interactive map that would identify the locations and resources; and how they also assist with resume-building and career development. He then turned the floor over to Heidi Galanti, Planning Administrator with the High Point Planning Department.*

*Ms. Galanti shared a flow chart showing the process and advised that the projected kicked off in January 2020 with a 26-member staff and citizen committee that met three times before COVID and spoke to how they have been in a holding pattern since that time. She advised the next steps in the process will be the creation of a vision/mission statement and to create goals, objectives, and action steps to address the various themes. They have high hopes to get everything back on track again in the Fall of this year, and spoke to how they would need to schedule and hold a public input meeting before taking it to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council in the Spring of 2021.*

*Committee Member Holmes asked how these initiatives might dovetail into other workforce initiatives in High Point and if there were any statistics available. Mr. Yandle felt it was a little early to be able to provide an answer but offered to get more numbers in the areas they are targeting. Committee Member Holmes inquired about how GAP might factor into the overall program for the small-scale manufacturing. Mr. Yandle explained it was definitely a part of it and they are trying to get more folks in this part of High Point informed and aware of the GAP program.*

*Committee Member Peters noted that she is part of the Opportunity Zones Task Force and the Small-Scale Manufacturing Task Force and how great it was to get together before COVID and generated some great ideas for the Core City. She wanted everyone to realize that these task forces are still working behind the scenes and thanked the staff for all of their hard work.*

*At this time, Mr. Yandle turned the floor over to Christina Adams, who has been assisting with the commercial shared-use kitchen priority. Ms. Adams spoke to how they have been meeting about every two weeks; how they mailed out surveys to food truck vendors; how they have partnered with several other community partners to host on their website such as the Greater High Point Food Alliance, Farmer's Market, etc....; how they will link back to Economic Development Corporation to obtain some data; and that one of the members serving on the committee, Talissa Ward, has opened a shared-use commercial kitchen in Winston-Salem.*

*Ms. Dunbeck pointed out that Nena Wilson with the city's Community Development Department has been leading this effort as well and spoke to how they believe there is a demand for shared-use commercial kitchens--whether it be a private investor or some other means to help the idea go forward.*

*Mayor Wagner advised there is a shared-use kitchen in the City of Asheville and asked if anyone has had any contact with the NC Department of Agriculture to see about the possibility of applying for a grant. Ms. Adams replied that they would definitely start exploring that as an option. Mayor Wagner shared that he has some connections with the Department of Agriculture and offered his assistance to help facilitate if needed.*



*Sandy Dunbeck then provided an update on the targeted properties group. She shared that one of the recommendations from the report was to invest in anchor space in the small-scale manufacturing area as they were working on the multi-purpose stadium and other things. She advised that they met with Ingrid Volk, who owned 18 different properties in this area, predominantly along Green Drive (many were in the Opportunity Zone and included part of the Brittnano's project). There were some smaller properties in the area that they thought might be a good way to minimize the city's investment, but provide space that could work for a small-scale manufacturer and how they were able to acquire two of these properties through the Community Development Department:*

- 1. **504 Amos Street** (already had a tenant involved in small-scale manufacturing, Lee and Margaret Broadway, who do furniture refinishing). She spoke to how they take great care in maintaining the property and noted this property does have additional land for expansion and for gardening; and how this is a great little building and piece of property where they can help support people as they grow.*
- 2. **713 W. Grimes Street.** Located right beside the proposed greenway that the Southwest Renewal Foundation is working on. They were able to acquire this property and she spoke to the historical significance of the structure on the property noting that it was a "railhead building." She advised that it was overgrown with kudzu and had an assortment of stored items, but the owner cleaned everything out and the kudzu was removed which revealed that the purging would have to be improved. She explained that the Task Force wanted a place in the neighborhood to call their own and it was suggested that they could possibly have small-scale manufacturing in the back section of the building and have story boards in the front of the building that would share the story of small-scale manufacturing in High Point and connect people with assets/resources available in the area.*

*She spoke to how they wanted to let the neighborhood know about the work going on and they wanted to come up with some type of logo for the area that would emphasize the small-scale efforts. So, they dovetailed in with all the other marketing and branding work going on in the city, but decided they needed to focus on and brand these small buildings in the area. So, they developed some logos that to put on the signage in front of the buildings that have been acquired and ultimately chose #1 "High Point Maker" so, they would utilize it for signs, banners, to place on the buildings that the city own.*

*Ms. Dunbeck then provided a quick update on the Opportunity Zone which is dovetailed into the downtown Opportunity Zone. She shared that they were certainly pleased with the Brittnano project and how it has developed a lot of interest. She noted that although the Brittnano's have not yet made an announcement regarding their project, the city does remain very hopeful that the project will come to fruition and bring the \$65,000,000 to \$100,000,000 investment to High Point. She advised there have been multiple other companies reaching out to High Point who are looking at buildings and properties in the Opportunity Zone.*

*She noted all this work really adds up to helping encourage people to invest in High Point and create jobs. She also pointed out the Task Force wants to address ways to improve the cleanliness in neighborhoods and areas in the Opportunity Zone, so they are talking about doing some events involving Keep High Point Beautiful to do clean-ups in the Opportunity Zone area.*

*Following the conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Dunbeck asked if there were any questions. There were none.*

### ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hudson stated there were no additional items on the agenda and asked if there were any further comments. There being none, there were no objections to adjourning the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk

---

Wesley Hudson, Chairman