Hickory Bond Commission
August 31, 2016 at 5:00 P.M.
Highland Recreation Center – Community Room

A meeting of the Hickory Bond Implementation Commission was held at the Highland Recreation Center in the Community Room on Wednesday, August 31, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Alan Barnhardt, Jennifer Beane, Michael Bell, Patricia Bowman, Ellie Bradshaw, Paige Brigham, Dana Chambers, Jennifer Clark, Rob Dickerson, Ed Farthing, Kimberly George, Ralph Griffith, Charlie Hayes, Jennifer Helton, Allison Holtzman, Anthony Laxton, Will Locke, Norm Meres, Cliff Moone, Hani Nassar, Shauna O'Brien, Stacee Rash, Katherine Rogers, Kay Schmucker, Ernie Sills, Mikaela Simmons, Carolyn Sinclair, Suzanne Trollan, Dean Proctor, Mike Thomas, James Tilton, Nick Walden, Susan Walker, Burk Wyatt, Jason Yates, and Frank Young.

A quorum was present.

Members Absent: Norman Cook, Jerisha, Farrer, Alan Jackson, Crystal Killian, David Roberts II, and Blake L. Watts Jr.

Others Present: Multiple City Staff and Department Heads

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Holtzman called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Thomas moved, seconded by Mr. Moone that the Minutes from the April 19, 2016 meeting be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Introduction of New Members

Vice Chair Holtzman introduced the two new Bond Commission Members: Ellie Bradshaw, assuming Charlie Dixon's unexpired position on the Riverwalk Subcommittee, and Crystal Killian (not present), replacing Adellia Parrado-Ortiz on the Riverwalk Subcommittee.

IV. Appointments to Subcommittees

Ms. Surratt took the floor advising the group that Chair Wyatt was running late and moved on to Agenda Item V.

V. Overview of the Bond Program January 2016 - current

Ms. Surratt welcomed all members, advising them that Agenda Packets were located on the table near the entrance. She shared with the Commission that City Council

reviewed and approved the Citywalk and Gateways Design Contracts at their August 24, 2016 meeting and explained both contracts would be on the September 6, 2016 Council Agenda for second reading. Ms. Surratt referenced the other handouts in the agenda packet including the updated Bond Commission member list and asked that members review it and advise staff of any corrections. Ms. Surratt recapped the Bond process, reminding the group that it all began with the November 2014 election. The 42 member Board is now moving into their 18th month. The past 12 months have included working with Freese Nichols, Inc. (FNI) on the prioritization process stemming from the list of projects that came out of Inspiring Spaces. Ms. Surratt told the group that FNI prepared preliminary cost estimates and created the map of projects, referencing Riverwalk (Option 2) and the 3 Gateways: US 321 at Highway 70, US 321 at Clement Boulevard, and Exit 125 at Lenoir Rhyne.

VI. Update on Citywalk Design Contract

Ms. Surratt talked about the Citywalk process, beginning with the interviews in June. She advised the group the City received 10 submittals and 6 firms were selected for interviews, adding everyone seemed to be in agreement that AMEC Foster Wheeler (AMEC) was the right pick. She stated that contract negotiation had occurred in July and a portion of August before taking it to Council on August 24, 2016.

Ms. Surratt spoke briefly about the contract itself, the Scope of Services, Fee and language required for contracts. AMEC has a broad team and offers multiple services under their umbrella. Additionally, she added, they have offices in several locations including Raleigh, Nashville, Atlanta and Charlotte. Ms. Surratt stated that two of their selling points were the fact they were heavy in landscape architecture and Norfolk Southern was a client of theirs. She added that AMEC's focus on signage and storytelling would enable them (AMEC) to communicate the visitor experience.

Ms. Surratt said that Brian Frazier, Planning and Development Director, has worked with AMEC, specifically Harold Thurston who will be the Project Manager, in a much smaller capacity with the Brownfield Project over the past few years and that his experience with them has always been very good.

Ms. Surratt reviewed the costs of the Citywalk project as reflected on the PowerPoint slide with the total project cost coming in at $15.1M, AMEC's construction project budget of $11.297M and the design fee of $997,971 which equates to approximately 8.8% of the total cost of the project in design. She added that the industry standard ranged from 8% to 9%. AMEC anticipates $50K for agency permits, fees and other expenses resulting in a grand total, not to exceed, $1,095,151. Ms. Surratt briefly spoke about grant money received/anticipated and the effect grant money could have on the project construction.

Ms. Surratt shared some highlights of the contract with the group, specifically the Bond

Commission's involvement at the 40% and 80% design phases and referenced a design workshop. Chair Wyatt asked if a date should be set for the workshop and Ms. Surratt explained that staff needed to wait on the engineers to provide some dates before scheduling anything concrete. Ms. Surratt added that she hoped to be able to provide the group with some fall commitment dates in the next few weeks. She added there will be 5 alternative designs for the pedestrian bridge over Highway 127 and spoke briefly on the redevelopment of Union Square.

Mr. Young asked if the budget of $15.1 was specifically Bond Commission money and if the Commission had access to grant money. Ms. Surratt responded that she thought the answer was yes, but it was ultimately a decision for Council.

Ms. Surratt stated there would be 3 restrooms along the Citywalk: 1 near the Friends of Hickory/Lowes Foods Park, 1 redeveloped at Union Square, and 1 near Transportation Insight and that AMEC would help determine the most logical placement for them.

Ms. Surratt talked about building 1.2 miles of Citywalk and referenced that Gantt charts (contained in the Agenda packet) reflected touch points and more detailed information about the project. Chair Wyatt expressed desire to show the public that the project was moving along and concern that if nothing were done until 2017, the public may lose interest. Mr. Moone questioned if something could be done to keep the community connected with the progress. Ms. Surratt responded that Mayor Pro tem, Brad Lail, addressed this at the last Council meeting and encouraged extending an opportunity for the public to "be plugged in" and provide some feedback.

VII. Update on Streetscapes & Gateways

Ms. Surratt began the updating the Commission on the Gateway project. She stated the RFQ was posted in June and interviews were held in July. The Bond Commission gave staff feedback and AMEC, having significant gateway experience, was selected. The negotiation process moved along, much like Citywalk, and the contract was given to Council at the August 24, 2016 meeting and will be on the September 6, 2016 Agenda for second reading.

Ms. Surratt shared that staff was interested in AMEC's focus on branding and storytelling as well as their strong established relationship with NCDOT. Ms. Surratt used the PowerPoint to display several examples of AMEC's work product and the list of design team members dedicated to this project.

Ms. Surratt told the group that FNI estimated $250K for 2 gateways. As a reminder, this fee is for 2 gateways: US 321 and 70 - $100K and US 321 and Clement Boulevard - $150K. The construction budget submitted by AMEC is $32,956 and their design fee is $25,700. She added that AMEC will be designing some uniform temporary signage (speaking to Chair Wyatt's point) to keep the public excited about what is happening.

Ms. Surratt stressed the signs would be creative and professional and that, similar to the Citywalk process, Bond Commission members would have the opportunity to be involved at specified intervals.

Ms. Surratt mentioned the possibility of baseball-themed signage near the Crawdads stadium. Chair Wyatt stated that he appreciated AMEC was listening to what local folks want and were open to using local artists. Vice Chair Holtzman asked Ms. Surratt if there was a contact for committee members to email ideas. Chair Wyatt responded that he thought the committee should hold off on that and Ms. Surratt agreed and added that piece will start with the workshop.

Mr. Bell inquired if the contracts included construction administration. Ms. Surratt replied that construction administration was not included and mentioned the design team will be making 24 site visits (which are included in the contract) and that contract administration is done through bid with the contractor. Ms. Surratt briefly discussed the timeline and turned the program over to Rodney Miller, Assistant City Manager and CFO.

Mr. Miller talked about the $40M bond referendum with the Citywalk project being $15.1M of that and the $250K Gateway project. Mr. Miller explained that the City cannot do all $40M at once and that a $25M bond would be issued early 2018, based on 3 projects: Citywalk, Gateways, and Park 1764, totaling $35.5M, leaving approximately $4M.

Chair Wyatt asked Mr. Miller to speak briefly about the timing of Park 1764. Mr. Miller stated there was a joint meeting held with the City and County in June 2016 at which Council appropriated funds for sewer, which is basically the beginning of the infrastructure. Mr. Miller added that the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) secured grant money for what has already been spent and additional infrastructure dollars will go to City Council soon.

Mr. Miller referenced the $9.6M NCDOT grant the City has and stated we are currently at $28.7M in costs. He clarified that grant money was not reflected on the handout because it hasn't officially been received and that we are currently at net $33.2M of our $40M that is committed. Mr. Miller pointed out the $800K place-holder on the handout for parking improvements. Mr. Miller told the group there was a good cushion of funds that can be used once the decisions are made. Mr. Young asked about the history of NCDOT and what the likelihood was of receiving grants from them. Ms. Surratt commented that the likelihood was very good and the City is on DOT's work plan because we have a dollar amount listed and a year that is only 4 years out, but ultimately it is approved at the state level. She added that the MPO met last week (08/24/2016) and approved, explaining this was the state's version of a first reading. She further stated there was a 30-day comment period before final decisions are made the end of

September. Mr. Proctor asked how much cushion was built in for contingencies and Ms. Surratt replied 20% for construction and 10% for design.

Ms. Surratt spoke briefly about the City's relationship with FNI and that staff was unsuccessful in negotiating a contract for the next phase. She stated the City was still working with them on some level, though they are not conducting meetings, to provide services to review RFQs, submittals and reviewing contracts. Ms. Surratt also shared news that Michael Alberto had withdrawn his application and the City has re-advertised for the Project Manager position. Ms. Brigham commented that, as she understood it, the City did not continue with FNI because they were unable to negotiate the next phase and Ms. Surratt nodded.

VIII. Update on Riverwalk

Ms. Surratt spoke briefly about the RFQ for Riverwalk which has been posted on the web and is open for submittal until September 28, 2016. She added that it would take staff about 3 weeks to review and select firms to be interviewed. Ms. Surratt reminded the committee they would be involved in the interview process and anticipated that being in late October.

IX. Chair Wyatt took the floor and went back to Agenda Item IV and appointed Alan Barnhardt as Chair of the Riverwalk Subcommittee after the passing of Charlie Dixon. Chair Wyatt stated the group wasn't ready to address the remaining agenda items and they would be covered in future meetings.

Ms. Surratt addressed the group briefly about the Tiger Grant (Agenda Item XII) advising the group the City would resubmit, one more time, next year. She shared that Mayor Wright, two other Councilmembers and staff traveled to DC the day before final decisions were made. Ms. Surratt was told that Legislative staff was impressed with the City's submission, but they were not the ones making the final decision. She also talked about next steps including community briefings (perhaps at Octoberfest and/or the Farmer's Market). Ms. Surratt referenced a community briefing last year at Moretz Mills and commented that something similar would be done.

There was general discussion among the various tables and groups of people.

Chair Wyatt took the floor and advised the committee the next meeting would most likely be in December and added there was a lot of work to be done and adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:05.

Frank B. Wyatt II, Chair
Hickory Bond Commission

Cari Burns

Cari Burns, Executive Assistant to the City Manager City of Hickory