

**Hickory Bond Commission**  
**Quarterly Meeting**  
**December 6, 2016 at 5:00 P.M.**  
**Hickory City Hall, Council Chambers**

A meeting of the Hickory Bond Implementation Commission was held at Hickory City Hall in Council Chambers on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Alan Barnhardt, Jennifer Beane, Michael Bell, Ellie Bradshaw, Jim Campbell, Dana Chambers, Jennifer Clark, Rob Dickerson, Sandi Fotheringham, Ralph Griffith, Charlie Hayes, Jennifer Helton, Allison Holtzman, Alan Jackson, Anthony Laxton, Will Locke, Norm Meres, Cliff Moone, Hani Nassar, Dean Proctor, Stacey Rash, David Roberts II, Katherine Rogers, Carolyn Sinclair, Mike Thomas, Suzanne Trollan, Nick Walden, Susan Walker, Burk Wyatt, Jason Yates, and Frank Young

A quorum was present.

**Members Absent:** Patricia Bowman, Paige Brigham, Norm Cook, Ed Farthing, Kimberly George, Shauna O'Brien, Kay Schmucker, Ernie Sills, Mikaela Simmons, and James Tilton

**Others Present:** Multiple City Staff and Department Heads

**I. Call to Order**

Vice Chair Holtzman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Thomas moved, seconded by Mr. Young that the Minutes from the August 31, 2016 meeting be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. Introduction of New Members**

Ms. Surratt referenced the two new Bond Commission Members: Jim Campbell, assuming Bee Watts' unexpired term on the Streetscapes and Gateways Subcommittee and Sandi Fotheringham, assuming Crystal Killian's unexpired term on the Riverwalk Subcommittee. Ms. Surratt added that both Jim and Sandi had done a great job of familiarizing themselves with the Bond Projects and had attended several functions/events already.

#### **IV. Discussion of November 30, 2016 Bond Commission Workshop and Next Steps**

Ms. Surratt started by advising the group there was a lot to cover in the next hour and she would do her best to keep everyone focused. She thanked members for making time out of their schedule to attend tonight's meeting as well as those who attended the Workshop on 11/30. She shared that her biggest takeaway from the last week's workshop was the realization there is still much work to be done on Gateways and added that staff learned today from AMEC there were some costs associated with this project and bond members would be updated to assist them in making practical decisions. With respect to City Walk, the biggest topic of discussion is the bridge. Ms. Surratt told the group that towards the end of the meeting, Mr. Butler would be sharing some information as to where we are in the Riverwalk interview process.

Ms. Surratt advised the handouts distributed were copies of what was shared with attendees at the workshop last week. She further offered to send electronic copies to members upon request. Ms. Surratt brought the group's attention to the PowerPoint being displayed on the screen and pointed out the long map of City Walk which basically ran from 4th Street to Union Square. She added that it was a double-barrel walk-way (10' in some sections and up to 14' in other sections), and pointed out several of the improvements to Union Square including the creation of more greenspace as well as additional parking to balance out parking spaces that had been reclaimed on the north side of the tracks. She reminded members this was public record information so it could be shared, but stressed it was still very much in draft format. She encouraged members to take handouts home to study and share with others in the community.

Mr. Young mentioned the group discussion from the workshop in which the group decided the area south of the track by the post office did not need to be 14' wide and that would likely be modified. There was a lot of discussion about maintaining parking, how the walkway would be used, where it went in relation to storefronts, the performance stage and green areas, and keeping the walkway adjacent to the stores and seating areas.

Ms. Surratt quickly flipped through several slides of the bridge options reflecting concepts for the pedestrian bridge. In the meeting on Wednesday, members were able to walk around tables and look at the drawings. This created an informal opportunity for straw polls as to preferences which ranged from very traditional to modern in style. Ms. Surratt stated the arch rendering (first in the packet) received the most votes, adding that while it was not a formal vote, it provided a sense of preference. Ms. Surratt commented that some things heard included the "train truss" look seemed to fit in nicely and the arch of wood, black cable and braces gave a modern treatment to the rail of the walkway. This bridge actually sits between the road (vehicle) bridge and the railroad bridge. Ms. Surratt stated many group members liked a façade with edging or pillars on each side of the car bridge and train bridge to dress the structures up a bit. She also mentioned many folks seemed to favor a decorative feature that could be installed on one or both sides of the structure.

Ms. Surratt advised she received a number of comments about brick and the fact it would blend in with the Mill District. She stressed the unique challenge the City and Bond Commission is faced with; a position of being between two worlds. She added it was important to be forward-thinking but still hold on to our history. Ms. Surratt advised the group she believed AMEC (Ron Huffman) understood that better after spending time at the workshop. Ms. Surratt sent Mr. Huffman a copy of the Lake James bridge that was referenced during the workshop and told him that Hickory did not want to be second in line behind Lake James and wanted to avoid that.

Mr. Young challenged the group to spend time with the drawings and think about what the group (as a whole) has said from the beginning about being iconic. He encouraged them to look at it from the perspective of a visitor adding that it will be here for generations. Mr. Young posed the question “Is this the look we are trying to portray?” He added that while it is important to be iconic, it was equally important not to get caught up in the neighborhood the bridge was located in.

Mr. Wyatt suggested the group consider the collection of the bridges, adding there were several to address and questioned if they should all look alike. For example, he said, should one be iconic and one be traditional? What should the overall look and feel be?

Mr. Moone reminded the group there had been discussion about the I-40 bridge being more modern. He shared that while driving through the area last week, he thought about an 80’ bridge and realized how tall it would be – maybe too tall.

Discussion ensued among several group members. Ms. Surratt interjected there were two very different looks – and the group needed to zero in on which style they preferred: cables versus an arch. She stressed the importance of sharing feedback with AMEC and added staff would be working on a way to gather feedback and share it with the design team.

Mr. Young agreed that a decision needed to be made. He added that the group really had not defined what “iconic” is. Is it contemporary or traditional? Discussion ensued among the group regarding the definition of iconic ranging from one of a kind, to widely recognized to well established.

Mr. Dickerson cautioned against being too modern and added that with modernism (Epcot for example) you have to be careful, it may not be appreciated in a particular time from now, Charleston, of course is an exception.

Mr. Bell brought up the topic of branding in connection with the bridge. Ms. Surratt commented that was a great point and added that the City has already established a brand (approximately 5 years ago) and encouraged the group to look at Inspiring Spaces, branding on the City website, Crafting Hickory etc.

Ms. Surratt spoke to the group about information learned from AMEC (Bill Hood) last week. She advised the NCDOT construction schedule is moving up 3 years, which changes how staff believes the design money should be distributed. Ms. Surratt reminded the group that \$250K had been earmarked for the two interchanges and 70 and Clement Boulevard and 70 and 321. She told the group her recommendation, if they were comfortable with it, is to postpone the Clement gateway and seek out grant funding through STP-DA or other sources for it when the time is appropriate. She suggested moving the entire \$250K to the 70 and 321 interchange to achieve a more visual impact.

Ms. Surratt shared with the group information she, Mr. Butler and Mr. Hansen learned in a telephone conversation with the design team today. She explained to the group the bridge concepts presented by AMEC in the workshop will require all of the \$250K. She went on to say that she wasn't comfortable recommending a bridge treatment and nothing else. The concepts AMEC presented were well above the budget. Mr. Moone asked if all of the concepts were above the budget and Ms. Surratt replied that many of them were; particularly, the leaves and the double-helix spiral. She mentioned that because it was a federal highway, there were other options for funding that would be looked at when the time came.

Ms. Surratt moved on to discussion about landscaping drawing the group's attention to the PowerPoint. The landscaping plan presented by AMEC is more than the \$250K earmarked money. She stated that the SW and NE quadrants were the most visible from both directions and added that City staff felt it was more important to welcome people in and not wave goodbye as they left. That being said, focusing landscaping on the SE and SW (not the NE side) would make a huge statement. Ms. Surratt clarified she was not advocating for one or the other but just sharing information from discussions between staff and the design team.

Ms. Surratt stated she believed it was important to set aside a portion of the money for some type of artwork or sculpture as a welcoming element, and encouraged the group to think about options. Ms. Surratt then spoke about keeping with the well-crafted theme and our brand, adding that "H" identified with our brand, and had definition and effect to it. Ms. Surratt told the group that she was being persuasive in asking them to think about the "H" or some structural element that could serve as a gateway, pulling people off the highway and (as Mr. Griffith mentioned last week) sending a youthful message. She told the group she wasn't advocating for the "H" but for some form of art, structure, or sculpture in the \$50K to \$75K range that could fit in the landscaping and keep us within the \$250K budget.

Mr. Moone asked if all of the "H" examples were feasible and Ms. Surratt confirmed they were. She added that she was trying to paint a framework for expectations. She went on to say the landscaping was a good backdrop and could be impressive and create

a memorable driving experience. She shared with the group that she remembers exactly what the landscape looked like at the Pinehurst traffic circle in 2005 for the US Open because it made that much of a difference in how she viewed that town. Ms. Surratt added that a structure craftsman oriented and within our budget is also desirable for the gateway. Ms. Surratt stated that while she was enamored with the leaves, they are not within our budget.

Ms. Surratt explained that we have about \$250K and can afford about one-third of the landscaping and nothing else or a sculpture and nothing else or maybe some of the bridgework and nothing else. She told the group she didn't like the options either, but the reality is that is where we are. She stated it would be ideal to slice and dice and get a little of everything. Mr. Locke commented that he felt we needed the sculpture and some landscaping. Several of the group members nodded. Ms. Sinclair reminded the group that one of the things they liked so much about AMEC was Therese's creativity and suggested giving her a chance to come up with something else. Several group members agreed with this suggestion.

Discussion ensued among the group about incorporating Therese's leaf motif in the shape of the leaf in Hickory's logo. Mr. Griffith pointed out it wasn't a good idea to create a structure that resembles Hickory's brand because brands are typically reassessed every few years. He added it was important to think outside of the box. Ms. Surratt advised the need for giving Therese and AMEC some guidance. Mr. young stated he believed a little landscaping and a sculpture was the direction he felt the group should move in.

Ms. Surratt reminded the group of the time and asked if anyone had any critiques with regards to the landscaping concepts. Mr. Moone responded that he loved the serpentine wall (hardscape) blended with the landscape (stained-glass pattern of shrubbery). Ms. Surratt added that the stained-glass pattern AMEC presented was in excess of 3,000 shrubs in addition to 10,000 flowering plants and trees. Mr. Hansen stated it was a lot of landscaping that the City would have to maintain because NCDOT would not. Mr. Dickerson asked what the estimated cost was and Ms. Surratt responded it was too early to share those numbers, but expected it to double the budget. Ms. Surratt explained to the group that if they were impressed with the landscaping concepts, the City could definitely go back to the table and work with them on costs. In conversations with AMEC, Ms. Surratt told them that pending the Bond Commission and Council having input, she felt they needed to scale down on the landscaping and leave \$50 - \$75K of the budget for a sculpture.

Discussion ensued among the group regarding an art sculpture. Ms. Holtzman stated that AMEC's sculpture designer, Therese, was just that – a designer, and an artist would have to be commissioned. Ms. Surratt confirmed Ms. Holtzman's comment. Mr. Hansen reminded the group they would still have to provide some direction as to what they were commissioning.

Mr. Thomas asked about wayfinding and Ms. Surratt responded there were 103 wayfinding signs to be installed over the next 6 months. Mr. Laxton suggested the group think of the art sculpture as a landmark and not a component of wayfinding. Mr. Wyatt commented that he liked the landmark idea.

Ms. Surratt asked the group if they were comfortable with moving the money for the Clement and 321 interchange to 70 and 321. She commended that any work done at Clement will be torn out in about 3 months so the money will have been wasted. Mr. Griffith asked if DOT was appropriating any money for landscaping. Mr. Hood (AMEC) responded that DOT would do minimal landscaping. Ms. Surratt advised there would be opportunities later for the Clement interchange. She told the group that staff would be getting back with them with regards to the bridges and asked them to really think through what they wanted.

Mr. Butler then addressed the group with an update on the Riverwalk. He advised that 3 firms had been interviewed several weeks ago on a staff level and one was singled out as the top firm in their opinion. He explained that staff is in the process of reviewing the initial proposal for the scope and fee and would be meeting to discuss individual comments and return those comments to the firm for another iteration of scope development and fee development. He added it was his hope to have as few iterations as possible, nail things down, and take it to Council for approval in January. Mr. Butler told the group the selected firm was Design Workshop and they were partnering with Rosales, and another firm out of Chicago for the structural work. He added that Design Workshop also had McGill (here in town) working with them. Mr. Butler explained staff was very impressed with their treatment of an "over the water feature" (though not technically a bridge) and added staff believed Design Workshop would be able to make it iconic.

Ms. Surratt addressed the group to wrap things up. She advised the next Bond Meeting would likely be planned for late January or February. She asked the group for feedback as to scheduling meetings at night or day adding she knew it was a huge investment of their time. The overall consensus was to keep a similar timeframe. Ms. Surratt reiterated the attendance at last week's workshop as great and thanked everyone for making time. She also mentioned there would be some members rotating off the Bond Commission in the February timeframe at the next Quarterly Bond Meeting. Finally, Ms. Surratt mentioned that Mr. Hansen would be retiring at the end of the year and invited Bond Members to his retirement reception at 5:30 p.m. on December 20th prior to Council Meeting.

Chair Wyatt thanked Ms. Surratt for staff's time as well as AMEC's time.

The meeting wrapped up at approximately 5:55 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank B. Wyatt II", written over a horizontal line.

Frank B. Wyatt II, Chair  
Hickory Bond Commission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cari Burns", written over a horizontal line.

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