

**GREENSBORO HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION
PLAZA LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM
MELVIN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
APRIL 26, 2017**

-EXCERPT-

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Wharton, Chair; David Hoggard; Ann Stringfield; Cindy Adams; and Linda Lane.

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Cowhig, Stefan-Leih Geary and Hanna Cockburn - Planning Department. Also present was Terri Jones, Attorney for the Commission.

4. PUBLIC HEARING ON CONTRACT FOR COLLEGE HILL STUDY AND EVALUATION OF STREET, INTERSECTION, PEDESTRIAN, AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS: (RECOMMENDED)

Mr. Cowhig stated that this item is an advertised public hearing for a contract in College Hill. Jeff Sovich, Planning Department, is present to present the contract. The Commission was given authority by the City Council to hold a public hearing on Municipal Service District (MSD) contracts. This is a result of the legislation that was passed last year with respect to Municipal Service Districts in North Carolina.

Jeff Sovich, Planner with the City of Greensboro, said that he has been working with the College Hill Neighborhood Association on their neighborhood plan and implementing that plan. At the request of the College Hill Neighborhood Association, City staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a study and evaluation of streets, intersection, pedestrian, and signage improvement concepts within the College Hill neighborhood, specifically the College Hill Municipal Service District. The evaluation panel received and reviewed two proposals in response to the RFP. They recommended awarding the contract to Team Better Block. A public hearing is required to be held for all contracts that use MSD revenue. Notice of this hearing was advertised in the Carolina Peacemaker for two consecutive weeks and a letter about the hearing was mailed to addresses within the boundaries of the district. City staff received two phone calls requesting more information about the purpose and nature of the project.

This project is a key step in implementing several goals and policies in the College Hill Neighborhood Plan and the 3-Year Capital Improvement Program for the College Hill Municipal Service District. The project will make small focused temporary adjustments to the geometry of streets and intersections in College Hill. The aim is to enhance the quality of place and livability that these improvements will bring to the neighborhood.

Mr. Sovich explained that parts of College Hill's street network currently serve primarily as conduits for cars rather than as outdoor room where neighbors can stroll and interact with each other. This project will test, evaluate and refine temporary adjustments on selected streets to identify which types of permanent improvements might be most effective over the long term in reaching a balance between transportation function and the neighborhood goal of the function of streets.

Mr. Sovich indicated that the range of temporary treatments that will be used are commonly grouped under the banner of Tactical Urbanism. He explained the concept of Tactical Urbanism and provided examples of common treatments that included high visibility crosswalks, street furniture, way finding signs, bike lanes, lane roundabouts, parklets, curb extensions, intersection murals, pop-up shops and cafes, street side dining and transit stops.

The neighborhood requested to use a private firm on this project instead of staff for two reasons. The type of work the neighborhood is seeking is outside the range of tasks that City staff are normally trained and equipped to perform. Additionally, the neighborhood wants to bring a fresh perspective and innovative approach to addressing their concerns and issues within the unique constraints found in College Hill. Based on the results of the treatments tested, the contractor will develop recommendations for permanent improvements that will form the basis of future construction projects in College Hill.

The evaluation panel evaluated the two proposals based on the following criteria: (1) the capacity to carry out a specific task in a timely manner; (2) examples of similar work products and services; (3) ability to provide creative solutions; (4) task performance; (5) estimated cost; (6) education and training of personnel; and (7) participation of Minority or Women Only Business Enterprises. Client references from past projects were also contacted by staff. The proposal from Team Better Block was chosen because the panel felt that they displayed a stronger understanding of the unique challenges and needs of College Hill and they presented a more realistic allocation of personnel hours to accomplish the range of work tasks. The firm's total proposed cost of the project including travel expenses and over 500 hours of personnel time is \$54,625 to be funded from the College Hill Municipal Service District account.

The scope of services for the project includes the following tasks: (1) review of current conditions; (2) concept development; (3) concept testing; (4) measurement of evaluation; (5) recommended permanent improvements; (6) branding and signage scheme; (7) a community meeting; (8) and a Communication and Summary Report at the conclusion of the project. Mr. Sovich explained that there will be extensive collaborative public involvement efforts to the project that will be led by the College Hill Neighborhood Association and City staff.

The purpose of today's hearing is to provide an opportunity for interested parties to learn more about the project and to comment on the recommendation to award this project to the firm, Team Better Block. The City Council will be asked to consider authorizing the City Manager to sign the contract for this project with Team Better Block.

Chair Wharton opened up the public hearing for comments.

James Keith, 303 South Mendenhall Street, is president of the College Hill Neighborhood Association. He thanked Mr. Sovich for his work and commitment to the neighborhood. The Association is looking forward to improving the livability of the neighborhood. He said the neighborhood is more like a racetrack in certain areas and the overall feel and safety of the area is a concern. He felt that Team Better Block displayed a better sense of neighborhood. There is an opportunity to reduce the cost by having the neighborhood residents do some of the implementations themselves. He looks forward to the collaboration between the neighborhood, Team Better Block, the Planning Department and the Greensboro Department of Transportation.

Lisa Kessler, 213 South Mendenhall Street, thanked Mr. Sovich for his work on this project. She encouraged everyone to support this project.

David Sevier, 311 South Mendenhall Street, thanked Mr. Sovich, James Keith, and the entire College Hill Neighborhood Association for the large amount of work they have done on this project. This project has been needed for a long time and he noted that Mendenhall Street has become a racetrack which creates a safety hazard for residents.

Matt Russ, Tate Street Coffee, is a business owner on Tate Street. He expressed support for the project and thanked James Keith for his hard work. He thanked the Association for including the businesses on Tate Street in this process and commented on the important walkability factor in neighborhoods.

David Cannon, 924 Carr Street, is with the College Hill Neighborhood Association Board of Directors. He thanked Mr. Sovich and Dan Curry for their work on this project. He commented on the large benefit from this project not only for the neighborhood but for the entire community. He encouraged everyone to support this venture.

Mr. Hoggard moved to recommend approval of the contract to City Council, seconded by Ms. Stringfield. The Commission voted unanimously 5-0 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Wharton, Hoggard, Stringfield, Lane, Adams. Nays: None.)

(RECOMMENDED)