

Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
April 12th, 2018

Presiding: Chris Sheridan, Chair

Members in Attendance: Shannon Fickling, Rick Hutto, Carey Pickard, Loretta Thomas, Gene Dunwoody, Jr., Blake Sharpton

Members Absent: Kathryn Gerhardt

Others Present: Bill Causey, Jan Beeland, Ethiel Garlington, Emily Hopkins, JR Olive, Julie Wilkerson, Jeni Gard, Forrest Gard, Mayor Robert Reichert

Staff Present: Alex Morrison, Slayten Carter

Media Present: N/A

Location: ECD conference room, Terminal Station 200 Cherry St Macon, GA 31201

Time convened: 8:37 a.m. Time Adjourned: 10:10 a.m.

I. General Topics

- A. Cary Pickard made a motion to rearrange the order of the agenda since the Chairman was delayed.
- B. Cary Pickard suggested that the guests provide introductions to the board and to one another. Guests introduced themselves as the board waited on the chairman to arrive.
- C. Cary Pickard, as interim chair, gave Alex Morrison the floor to discuss the Side Walk Cafe. Alex Morrison reported that the Side Walk Cafe for Little India has not submitted an application yet, but they assure Alex they will get it in soon.
- D. Shannon Fickling mentioned that as Cherry Street progresses, there will be an increase in business owners wanting to apply for side walk cafes. She suggested that she and Alex get together to finalize the details as to how the business owners will go about applying for that. Alex Morrison reported that the owners of Parish have decided not to put up a fence around their cafe, since they are so pleased with the side walk reconstruction. The fences at The Dempsey and Comics Plus of Macon are also not going up post-construction.
- E. Alex Morrison requested to strike Item II (Financial Report) from the agenda since he had not heard anything from Karen. There was a suggestion that the UDA might need a new accountant to handle the financial reports. The UDA will send out an RFP for a new accountant this month.
- F. The chairman, Chris Sheridan, arrived at 8:45 a.m.

II. Mill Hill Auditorium-Update, Alex Morrison

- A. Alex Morrison reported that the UDA plans to close on the Renasant note this week. Blake Sharpton said that Renasant was wanting to renegotiate

the note and has caused a delay in its closure. Alex Morrison said that the kitchen equipment is in at the Mill Hill Auditorium and the sidewalk is completed as well.

- B. Cary Pickard suggested the resident artists give a brief introduction of themselves and their plans for Mill Hill. Jeni and Forrest's specialities include ceramics and community engagement. When asked about programming for Mill Hill, they said they had not quite made any new plans since the last update provided at the March meeting. Cary Pickard suggested that the board might want to look in to more ways in which we could better advertise the program. Chris Sheridan suggested that their contract could be for too short of a time period to implement the kind of programs we hope to have at the East Macon Arts Village. JR Olive said that he submitted a Downtown Challenge Grant to extend the funding for this program, keeping the resident artists here for a full year rather than six months. Cary Pickard agreed, saying that an extended contract for the resident artists would allow for more programming and made a motion for the UDA to formally write a letter of support to the Community Foundation of Central Georgia in favor of the foundation giving a grant to fund an extended contract. Motion passed. Gene Dunwody volunteered to check in on the resident artists over the next month. Slayten Carter will draft a letter to support a grant to extend the community artists' presence in the community and will send it to Alex Leahy with the CFCG.
- C. Alex Morrison requested to go back to Item I, to inform the chairman of the update. He restated that Item VI (Sidewalk Cafe for Little India) was stricken from the agenda.
- D. While revisiting Item I, Rick Hutto provided a correction to the minutes. He struck the sentence: "The need to find a new FAA House is crucial." The minutes were corrected and were then approved by the board.

III. East Macon Project Update –Kay Gerhardt

- A. No formal updated was provided by Kay Gerhardt since she was not in attendance at this meeting
- B. Alex Morrison said there was no update from Dan Wallace. Gene Dunwody said he Alex Morrison reported that the UDA is still waiting on the engineering set before reaching the contractor for the streetscape project. Alex Morrison reported that Ethiel provided him with an update on the houses. Seven houses, including the Mill Hill Auditorium, will be completely done by the end of May. The 329 Garden Street property is something we need to take action on. The 329 Garden Street is the one we sold to Blade Davis and he is now leaving the neighborhood on odd terms. Ethiel

Garlington and Alex Morrison feel it is best to exercise the option agreement on 329 Garden Street now rather than handling it under new ownership.

Chris Sheridan asked how much it would cost the UDA; Alex Morrison said \$100. Chris Sheridan made a motion to approve. All were in favor.

C. Gene Dunwody will stay in touch with Dan Wallace on the housing issue.

IV. Downtown Projects Update –Shannon Fickling

A. Shannon Fickling reported that Cherry Street side walk construction is progressing nicely. The contracting crew has been very efficient. The project has run into some minor cost-plus issues, but those issues are trying to be resolved. Despite the few negative comments, overall feedback from the merchants and consumers have been positive. The design has been executed beautifully. Bill Causey reported that the construction team and the city have worked very well together. The Macon Water Authority has had to install four new water meters to irrigate the tree planters. The first quarter block was surprisingly the easiest project. Each quarter block seems to get harder, but Shannon has been able to come down and help with last-minute design issues. Bill Causey and Alex Morrison addressed the mayor about reconstructing the sidewalk in front of the Capitol. Mayor Reichert said that whatever does get done, it should be done with the same design to match whatever gets done in the future on Mulberry Street.

B. Mayor Reichert continued by asking to bring up his new business, since it is somewhat relevant to the discussion at hand. The Mayor reported that a few commissioners are concerned about the general business of the Urban Development Authority. He suggested that Alex and other representatives of the Authority schedule a time to provide a presentation to the commissioners explaining to them exactly what the Authority is made to do. Alex Morrison explained that the UDA was scheduled to meet with the Commission last week but were rescheduled. The board members agreed that they would like to be present at a full commission meeting, not just a committee meeting. Mayor Reichert said that he's getting a lot of grief for putting a lot of projects on the commission as a whole. Alex is assured that the UDA will get a second chance to address the committee on Economic and Community Development. Mayor Reichert suggested that checking with the Capitol Theatre before undergoing construction is a crucial first step. The UDA should make sure that the Capitol is not hosting a special guest artist when construction would happen. The mayor also added an addendum to his comment earlier, saying that he believes construction should preserve the historic style but also be somewhat consistent around the Capitol corner. The mayor requested to bring up another item of new business. The chairman approved.

V. New Business

A. Mayor Reichert addressed the problem of the ordinance forbidding the closure of third street under any circumstances. He argued that the UDA help address the commission on this matter, perhaps suggesting that loading zone be put in.

- B. Additionally, the mayor requested that the UDA help him and the Land Bank Authority acquire the blighted, dilapidated structures over at the Ocmulgee National Monument. He'd rather the UDA hold ownership than the federal government. He asked that the Authority make this a priority. Mayor Reichert then left the meeting. Gene Dunwody made a motion of support. All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. Old Business

- A. Loretta Thomas spoke with the tenant at 247 Schell St. He is willing to move. Loretta has a place for him to move to. He did not put his transfer request in on time, which is the only problem. He wants to transfer to Section A. He only asks that his brother be paid for helping him relocate. The board applauded the progress on this issue and thanked Loretta for her hard work. Cary made a motion in favor to close the deal on helping this tenant move. All were in favor and the motion passed.
- B. Cary Pickard said Bernd Park will be ready on May 31st for a rededication. He also said that he and Shannon toured the Dempsey and she has several ideas on how to improve the residents' lives at little cost. Cary was very impressed with the improvements inside of the Dempsey, having finally seen it in person.

VII. Closed session to discuss real estate acquisition

- A. Cary Pickard made the motion to move into executive session. Seconded by Loretta Thomas. All in favor and motion carried.
- B. The meeting was reopened at 10:05.
- C. Gene Dunwody made a motion to close the meeting. Loretta Thomas seconded.
- D. Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.