



Municipal Conference Room

Burlington City Council Work Session Minutes

**425 S. Lexington Avenue, Burlington, NC
5:00pm - Monday, August 19, 2019**

www.BurlingtonNC.gov/councilpackets

Council Members Present:

Mayor Ian Baltutis
Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Hykes
Council Member James Butler
Council Member Robert Ward
Council Member Harold Owen

Council Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

City Manager, Hardin Watkins
City Attorney, David Huffman
Interim City Clerk, Beverly Smith

Nolan Kirkman, Rachel Kelly, Bob Patterson, Peter Bishop, Mike Nunn, Todd Lambert, John Vernon, Morgan Lasater, Jay Smith, Daniel Shoffner, Jeff Smythe, Tony Laws, Lisa Wolff, Jeff Andrews, Scott Bibler, Al Cablay, and Peggy Reece.

Media Present: Tomas Murawski, Alamance News, Elizabeth Pattman - The Times News

A) Western Electric Property – (AIA) American Institute of Architects - (SDAT) Sustainable Design Assessment Team Final Report

Economic Development Director Peter Bishop provided an informational overview on the final report and on-site activities since the AIA-SDAT public events. He provided background details for which the City of Burlington, in partnership with the American Institute of Architects and Blue Empire, LLC (property owner) applied for and received a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) grant in 2018 to create a community-driven vision plan for the redevelopment and rebirth of the former Western Electric / Tarheel Army Missile Plant in northeast Burlington.

Mr. Bishop reported the results from multiple public events and presentations that were held in late 2018 on and near the property to engage the public and various stakeholders in a community-based visioning for the future of the property. He explained the result of these actions is a final report with suggested action steps for the property owner and to a lesser extent, the City, to ensure a positive, economically viable and sustainable outcome for the community as the property is cleaned up and redevelops. He commented the final report is published on the City of Burlington's website to view.

Mr. Bishop highlighted the following Issues of Focus that were created by AIA-SDAT that they built these suggestions and recommendations around:

1. Increasing connectivity to downtown, greenways, and the new sidewalk plan.
2. Providing family resources and opportunities that do not currently exist.
3. Becoming the center of a community health and wellness supported by the local and regional governments and healthcare systems.

4. Developing the site incrementally and being responsive to varying and evolving community needs.
5. Concentrating community/regional resources and amenities in and around Western Electric.
6. Attracting future residents and improving the lives of current residents in the neighborhoods around Western Electric.

Mr. Bishop explained that redevelopment of this kind will take time and money. He noted the City does not control the private property of this site and supports many of the elements of this final report, but does not have final say in what is decided about the development of this property that mainly involve the property owner and private market of interactions the City will not be a part of.

Mr. Bishop referenced the following agencies involved in the environmental remediation of this property as well as the roles and responsibilities of each. He reported the NCDEQ is the lead state agency, the US Army Environmental Command (AEC) which works closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers are focusing on what is underground. He reported City staff in Inspections, Engineering and Economic Development have been involved in monthly conference calls to remain involved in the process of exploring these areas of development.

Environmental Remediation



Mr. Bishop reported upon investigation, its recently been determined is that there is not any risk to any surface waters on this site, no vapor intrusion has been found at any of the adjacent properties and the hot spots involved appear to be onsite of this property. He explained there has been some underground water contamination discovered that is on the site, contained in a certain area of this site, but does not present a problem to surrounding properties at this time. He reported the next steps of the US Army AEC in the next year or so will be to conduct a feasibility study and a record of decision which is the final word on how they are going to permanently remediate the underwater issues at this site.

Mr. Bishop further states responsibilities of the owner of the property which include an updated asbestos survey to best identify what remains on the property. The City will rely on these findings for future permitting should development begin within the remaining buildings to be certain there are not issues with that redevelopment or demolitions at the time of construction.

Mr. Bishop provided an overview of how the City is accomplishing its goals for this site. He explained the City activated this site by seeking meaningful, insightful engagement with the community, encouraged the release of data about the project to create a better eco system for this

project. He communicated the City's is supporting future neighborhood success for this site by investing in the improvements such as the renovations at the Burlington Athletic Stadium, North Park pool, trails, intersection and roadway improvements, City Greenway Phase 2 and doing all we can to support the redevelopment of this property. He explained how the City's goal with community issues are being addressed with changes moving to more engagement opportunities by getting out into neighborhoods, cultivating partnerships with residents and citizens, making investments and advancements in civic infrastructure as we work together for a common goal.

City Manager Hardin Watkins asked Mr. Bishop to illuminate the four difference redevelopment groups that visited this site.

Mr. Bishop described two types groups that are main target for a facility like this, such as companies that focus on historic redevelopment like the American Tobacco Campus in Durham, NC. He explained these companies identify buildings with these great historic features to collaborate redevelopment for a more modern structure for community and residential uses. He described another group of investors known as Opportunity Zone investors that get a special tax credit for reinvesting capital gains from different investment into a specific area of the community that may have low to moderate income.

Mayor Baltutis commented on questions and concerns for the surrounding properties, such as the large parking lot across from Western Electric site and asked Mr. Bishop to share feedback from the report where solutions were provided to surrounding sites.

Mr. Bishop responded there has been significant interest in that site. He reported the property owner has turned down a few fast food developments and some full price offers in order to find something better and more meaningful for the community.

B) Burlington Fire Department 2019-2024 Strategic Plan Presentation

Fire Chief Jay Smith provided an overview of the implementation of the Burlington Fire Department Strategic Plan. He reported in June, the Burlington Fire Department contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to facilitate and provide a Community-Driven Strategic Planning process. He announced this plan is the first Strategic Plan developed by the Department and takes from more than thirty external stakeholders and twenty-nine internal stakeholders to create a strategic vision for the Department over the next five years from 2019-2024. He introduced Daniel Shoffner, Strategic Initiatives Manager, Public Information Officer to present the official strategic planning document.

Mr. Shoffner reported on the key elements in the development of the 2019-2014 Strategic Plan and the purpose of the plan. He provided an overview of the input sessions conducted over the course of three days that served to provide Community Group Findings, Department Stakeholder Group Findings, and Community Priorities.

He shared the following goals identified in the plan and provided a brief overview of each objective.

Goals and Objectives:

1. Enhance and identify the departments training program to ensure safe, effective, and efficient delivery of service to our customer.
2. Enhance technology to improve services and training provided throughout all divisions of the fire department.

3. Evaluate and enhance the department's ability to provide world-class service to the community.
4. Enhance the department's ability to secure, maintain, and improve resources in order to provide an effective and efficient service for the community.
5. Create and promote a more desirable organization for prospective employees, retain current employees, and plan for the future.
6. Enhance external communications to effectively educate stakeholders on services provided throughout the different divisions of the fire department.
7. Prepare for, pursue, achieve and maintain international accreditation to better serve our community and to embrace excellence.

Mr. Shoffner concluded the plan also records the Burlington Fire Department's strengths, weaknesses, as well as possible opportunities and potential threats to provide guidance toward the larger issues and gaps that exist within the department.

Chief Smith encouraged everyone to thoroughly review the BFD Strategic Plan to further understand the goals and objectives that are detailed within the report step by step. He welcomed questions or comments as these items are further analyzed.

City Manager Watkins noted that future expenditures may flow from this document. He stated the City will massage this and future budgeting will be reviewed keeping this plan in mind to exam the fire service needs across the community. He thanked the community stakeholders, the Fire Department, Chief Smith and the leadership team at the department for the time and effort spent to prepare this plan. He mentioned Assistant Chief Matt Lawrence and expressed appreciation for his efforts in spear heading this process.

Council Member Butler commented on other fire departments with mutual aid partnerships and asked how we incorporate them into this knowledge and asked if these other departments would be affected by this plan and would that impact the accreditation process.

Chief Smith responded the City will communicate and receive input from these other representatives of the Burlington Fire Department to keep them involved as well.

Council Member Ward asked for clarification on when to apply for accreditation.

Mr. Shoffner explained the strategic plan is a component of the accreditation process and the goal of the Burlington Fire Department is to apply for accreditation in March of 2022.

Chief Smith responded the Fire Department is a registered agency already in the process with a projection of receiving accreditation in March of 2022. He noted there are changes to the guidelines which prompted the movement before there are new guidelines created.

C) Carousels & Carvings Visit

Ian Baltutis

Mayor Baltutis provided a report on his voluntary visit to Carousels & Carvings, Inc., in Marion, Ohio on July 29, 2019, on his way back from a personal trip that was within the same travel route of his return travels to Burlington. He shared images of the restoration team working on the Burlington City Park Dentzel Carousel.

Mayor Baltutis mentioned the timeline of the restoration process and shared images of the pieces of the carousel that have been stripped of paint to reveal the wood underneath the pieces and other components that are neatly stacked to carefully inspect for wear and tear. He shared an image of the center pole (below on the left), which was crafted from a tree that was one hundred years old when it was used to create the center of the carousel built in the 1940's.



The image (above to the right) shows the components of the carousel neatly stacked in the warehouse as they are carefully inspected and repaired during the restoration process.

Mayor Baltutis reported the company is working on four carousels at the same time. He shared history of the facility and how the company inventories each individual carousel and throughout the warehouse the designated areas for each piece. He described the detail of wood of the animals underneath the paint after the process of paint stripping and showed images of the animals placed on carts that roll around the factory while they are being restored.



The image (to the left) shows detail of the wood underneath the paint. Areas of the wood that need repair due to cracking or lack of moisture, will be tightened up in those loose areas, and gaps filled with epoxy on areas that have open spaces from separation that happened over a period of time.



The images (to the left and below) show the wooden animals placed on carts to roll about the factory during the restoration process.



After the wood of the animals are fully repaired, they will be painted with a method that will allow intricate hand carving to be seen and a more natural colorization. A metallic paint will be added to create an original shine of the leafing and details of the ornamentation. The anticipated completion date of the restoration is in the spring of 2021.

D) Boards and Commissions Reports

- Planning and Zoning Commission – None
- Traffic Commission – None
- Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC) - None

E) City Manager Comments

Council Member Bob Ward mentioned a call he received in reference to a rezoning being heard at the August 20, 2019, City Council Meeting with concerns regarding parking in the additional lot proposed. He invited the caller to attend the meeting and comment during the public hearing at that meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37pm.

Beverly D. Smith
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Interim City Clerk

August 19, 2019
Work Session