



Richland County
Development & Service
February 23, 2021 -5:00 PM
Zoom Meeting
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Allison Terracio, Chair, Derrek Pugh, Gretchen Barron, Cheryl English, and Chakisse Newton.

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Livingston, Bill Malinowski, Jesica Mackey, Michelle Onley, Leonardo Brown, Tamar Black, Angela Weathersby, Kyle Holsclaw, Ashiya Myers, Mike Zaprzalka, Stacey Hamm, John Thompson, Brian Crooks, Geo Price, Randy Pruitt, Lori Thomas, Mike Maloney, Elizabeth McLean, Stephen Staley, Allison Steele, Syndi Castelluccio, Dante Roberts, Lauren Hogan, Dale Welch, Clayton Voignier, Michael Niermeier, Michael Byrd and Bill Davis.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Ms. Terracio called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. **Regular Session: December 17, 2020** – Ms. English moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, approve the minutes as distributed.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Mr. Pugh moved, seconded by Ms. English, to adopt the agenda as published.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton.

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR** – Ms. English moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to nominate Ms. Terracio as Chair.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton.

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

a. **Amend the County's current ordinance, in order to allow lighting on Broad River Road [DICKERSON]** - Mr. Voignier stated staff's recommendation was for Council to find a funding source other than Neighborhood Redevelopment Fund for the provision of street lighting

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service Countywide. In accordance with Sec. 21-12 of the County Code of Ordinances, states the County shall not provide street lighting on any highway, street or road until such time as sufficient funds are appropriated to provide the service Countywide. Staff's alternate recommendation would be that the County discontinue paying for street lighting service currently paid for through the Neighborhood Redevelopment Fund until such time as another appropriate funding source is identified.

Ms. Newton stated, for clarification, the ordinance can be interpreted two different ways. There are some regulations that say you cannot do something unless you can do it for everybody. This sounds like you can do it; you just have to identify a funding source.

Mr. Voignier responded staff interprets it that street lighting not be provided until a funding source has been identified to provide the service Countywide.

Ms. McLean responded she interpreted it as funding for the entire County is available.

Ms. Newton inquired what has determined who gets lighting besides funding. Is there any criteria? She noted we are currently paying for lighting on Broad River Road, and she was curious as to what we are currently paying for.

Mr. Voignier responded he is not aware of certain criteria established for current lighting we are paying for. Those were made through various Council motions. He noted we are currently paying for certain street lighting on Broad River, but not for all that could/would be provided on Broad River.

Ms. Terracio noted the amount to provide Countywide lighting service was an astronomical number, and would be a very large project.

Ms. Barron stated, if this is going to be an ordinance that we are changing, it has to be across the board and criteria needs to be put into place. She noted they need to know the amount to fund this project Countywide in order to identify the funding.

Mr. Malinowski agreed we need to know the amount. He noted we were not able to progress in the past because the amount cited was so large.

Mr. Livingston requested staff to look at how other municipalities are handling lighting.

Mr. Pugh moved, seconded by Ms. Barron, to defer this item until we get more information.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor of deferral was unanimous.

- b. **Solid Waste - Richland Recycles Events** – Dr. Thompson noted you have seen the amount of litter we have the County and State. Staff has taken a proactive role in terms of assuring we can have some convenient sites for our residents to bring their recyclable items to us. We do not have to pay someone to use their space. We can utilize Columbia Place Mall. We will set up the site throughout the year, and work with PIO to advertise to ensure we have participation at these events.

Ms. Terracio noted she has constituent outreach surrounding litter. She inquired if there were any plans to educate citizens about how to have bulk items picked up.

Ms. Castelluccio responded a lot of what they are doing is educating people and updating their resources with more information about what people are looking for. They are partnering with Lexington County and the City of Columbia to host an event at the Riverbanks Zoo this weekend. At this event, they will be providing information about what is recyclable curbside, at the recycle centers and the upcoming events. They will also be distributing a brochure, which will be a quick reference of what is recyclable in Richland County, drop off locations, and a number to get bulk items picked up. They will also be promoting their app.

Ms. Barron noted the clean sweeps were halted due to the pandemic. She inquired if anyone knew if/when they would resume. In addition, is there a Countywide plan to address the waste along the roadways in the County?

Dr. Thompson responded whether it is a clean sweep or staff picking up litter it is ongoing. He advised Ms. Barron to reach out to Mr. Brown or himself with any requests, so they can route the request to Mr. Maloney, Public Works and Mr. Wilson, Special Services.

Ms. Barron inquired if that would include the clean sweeps.

Dr. Thompson responded in the affirmative. He also noted they were working with Councilwoman Newton to organize an event in a few weeks. We noted our resources are strapped at times, but they will do everything we can. The inmate labor is not available due to the pandemic, and that is a huge issue. They are working with temp agencies to get people to help us beautify our County. We also want to jointly work with SCDOT to address this matter.

Ms. Newton stated she was under the impression the clean sweeps were on hold because of inmate labor. She know we were going around picking up trash, but not doing what was formally known as a clean sweep.

Mr. Maloney responded the clean sweeps were halted due inmate labor in March. We are currently utilizing County staff for high capacity events, but it will not be as robust until they get the inmate labor back.

Ms. Newton inquired about the need for the liability waivers for vendors and volunteers. She was concerned and unsure why a County event would need vendors and volunteers.

Ms. Castelluccio responded some of the events will require different vendors. For example, the collection of electronics would require the County to pay a vendor to bring their own truck and crew to collect electronics and then leave. There will only be a few vendors. The majority of the time it will be County staff. Legal recommended the waivers since these events would take place on County property. At times we partner with other entities, and those organizations will bring volunteers with them. We would want them to sign a waiver.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Pugh to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the use of the Columbia Place Mall Parking Lot that is designated as Richland County Property for the Annual Recycle Richland Drop-Off Events that are scheduled on average 3-5 time a year to make it more convenient for Richland County Residents to recycle and properly dispose of items that are not collected curbside.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English and Newton.

The motion in favor was unanimous.

- c. **Petition to Close Portion of Old Percival Road/Spears Creek Rd** – Ms. English noted Councilman Jackson and Councilwoman Myers were going to hold community meetings, but they did not. She also noted these roads have not been used in a while and with the current pandemic she was not sure if a community meeting would be feasible except by Zoom.

Ms. Terracio inquired if this was a time sensitive item and the risk associated with not closing this portion of the road.

Ms. McLean responded she was not aware of any risks. This issue has been ongoing for two years. The attorney for the people who want the road closed sent a notice to Council. At that time, the committee deferred the item for a community, but the meeting never took place. The petitioner's attorney requested the item be placed back on an agenda because his clients would like to move forward with the road closing. The attorney has not yet filed a lawsuit, but when he does the County will have 30 days to respond. The property owner does not have any objections and County staff (EMS, Planning, etc.) do not have any objections.

Ms. Newton inquired about the outreach process used to contact the residents, and was anything done to obtain additional feedback.

Ms. McLean responded, per State Law, in order to close a road, there has to be a notice to the persons that have properties on the road. She noted Mr. Sanders, the petitioner's attorney, is on standby if the committee would like to speak with him.

Mr. Malinowski inquired as to who currently owns the road, is there any monetary value to the road, and if the value of abutting parcels increase once the road becomes a part of someone else's. He stated Richland County needs to determine if it is feasible to come up with a fair market value that would include an increased value in abutting parcels, and possibly request some type of financial remuneration for closing the closing road.

Ms. McLean stated the part they are trying to close is a County that has not been maintained for some time. The County has no interest in the road. Any citizen can petition a court to close a road. She has never seen a court award compensation for closing a road. The residents are taking the road off of the County's hands, and would save the County money. She noted she could not speak to the property values. She noted the petitioner already owns the other part of the road.

Mr. Malinowski stated any piece of property has value, and if the County owns this the value could be determined by the square footage. The County should not just give it away.

Ms. English stated she had to give the County the right-of-way, and the County now maintains the road. She inquired if the portion being closed was previously a right-of-way and is not going back to the original owner or does the County own the road outright.

Mr. Sanders responded sometimes public right-of-ways are given as an easement for a portion of the land. He believes that might be the case with this road. Someone gave a right-of-way to put a road down the boundary and it would lead into their property, but it would be a public

right-of-way that has created the road. Regardless of who owns the underlining fee, when the County closes the road, the Order by the Master-in-Equity would deed half of the road to the median line to the property owner that runs contiguous to that portion of the road and the other half will be deeded to the person across the road.

Ms. Barron inquired as to who previously closed a portion of the road.

Mr. Sanders responded the Furniture Services Inc. and the Sanders Group closed a portion of the road.

Ms. Barron inquired if Mr. Sanders was affiliated with the Sanders Group.

Mr. Sanders responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Newton inquired if this item as a single reading item or if it would require additional readings.

Ms. McLean responded this is a single reading item.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. English, to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the petitioner's request to close the subject road and direct Legal to answer the forthcoming lawsuit accordingly.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- d. **Mutual Easement Agreement between Washington & Assembly, LLC and Richland County, South Carolina impacting the Richland Library branch located on Assembly Street, Columbia, South Carolina** – Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Ms. Terracio, to approve this item.

Ms. English stated this is beneficial and will not cost the library anything. She thinks this is a good project and is great for the library.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if the property does not sell, does the library get the easement. He noted, if we grant the agreement, the library should benefit immediately.

Ms. McLean responded that nothing will happen unless the developer goes through with the sale. We would execute the agreement and an escrow agreement, which would hold the documents until the sale is final.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if there would be an additional liability to the library or the County prior to the sale going through and the easement being executed.

Mr. McLean responded not that she was aware of.

In Favor: Pugh, Terracio, Barron, English, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

6. **ITEMS PENDING ANALYSIS: NO ACTION REQUIRED**

- a. **I move to evaluate affordable housing options to include the option of establishing an Affordable Housing Trust Fund for Richland County as a benefit to the public. Housing is considered to be “affordable” when 30% or less of one’s income is spent on housing and utilities. In Richland County, nearly half of renters pay more than a third of their income on rent and utilities** – Ms. Terracio inquired if the staff had any new information pertaining to this item.

Ms. A. Myers responded staff included all current information in the agenda packet.

- b. **I move to direct the County Attorney to work with the County Administrator to research and draft an absentee landlord ordinance. The ordinance should provide potential remedies for individuals who violate county ordinances and provide, via supplemental documentation, a comprehensive review of the legal impacts [potentially] associated with the adoption of such an ordinance. [NEWTON and DICKERSON]** – Ms. Newton inquired if Legal could provide a timeframe for when they would be providing the recommendations.

Ms. McLean responded she sent a draft ordinance to Ms. Powell and Ms. Newton. Public Works, the Sheriff’s Department, Administration and Legal had a conference call regarding the document, and there are still operational concerns staff is addressing before it sent back to Council.

Ms. Terracio requested the previous circulated ordinance be shared with the new Councilmembers.

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:59PM.