

## MEETING NOTES

### MACON/PLEASANT HILL PROJECT

MASTER CONTRACT#: TOOELNV100523 · TASK ORDER#: 10 · PROJECT#: NHIM0-0016-01(092), BIBB

Version #: 1.0

Issue Date: 1/30/2013

**Attendees:** GDOT: Clinton Ford, OPD, Eric Duff, OES, Karlene Barron, Communications; Kim Larson, Communications; Scott Roberts, ROW, Darlene Parker, Procurement, Charles Lawrence, OES

EnviroResolution (ER): Tommy Craig, Jeff Dickerson, Jenny Carter, Banks Craig, Andrea Gray

PHNIG: Peter Givens, Naomi Johnson, Della Henderson; Captain Willie May

Lord Aeck: Courtney Swann

Other: Russell Claxton

**Location:** Dan High Crime Prevention Center, 2000 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Macon, GA

**Date:** 1/17/2013

**Purpose:** Macon/Pleasant Hill – meeting with PHNIG representatives

**CC:**

## Discussion

### Item 1: Presentation of Vacant Lot Plan

#### Action Item(s)

Courtney Swann presented an overview of the draft Vacant Lot Plan. In drafting the plan, he reviewed all of the lots previously suggested by the community and considered many factors including: residential groups, activity levels, distance to highway, proximity to other vacant lots, and suitability of roads for moving houses. The current plan lists four (4) relocation options for each residential home. The Little Richard House will be relocated across the street from Jefferson Long Park and the Half House will be relocated within the Linear Park.

The Vacant Lot Plan shows the Masonic Lodge being relocated across the street or next door to the Dan High Crime Prevention Center due to the existing commercial nature of the corner. Mr. Givens and Ms. Johnson shared concerns about cluttering the corner or making it look too commercial when its history had not been commercial. Mr. Givens made it clear that he did wish to preserve the Masonic Lodge, but that he wanted to consider other locations.

Mr. Swann quickly moved through the presentation. Tommy Craig noted that Ms. Henderson's home was 1515 Fourth Avenue and asked Mr. Swann to pause for a moment on the slide depicting her home.

Mr. Swann stated that several overall approaches were considered for relocating the homes. One approach was to cluster the homes and re-create existing groupings in uninhabited areas in Pleasant Hill like Mohan Lane. Mr. Givens stated that he would need to review the plan in detail; however, he was concerned with this approach as he would prefer to relocate the homes within currently occupied, visible, and traveled streets. Mr. Givens wants the relocated homes to serve as a catalyst to start the community's 5-year plan which was derived and documented in coordination with the City of Macon's Planning and Zoning Department and is available online. Mr. Givens and Ms. Johnson expressed their desire to attract a new generation of people to Pleasant Hill. Charles Lawrence noted that they need to carefully weigh visibility versus desirability in order to attract new residents. Mr. Givens related his idea to building model homes in a new neighborhood close to the entrance to showcase the types of homes

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that will be built throughout the neighborhood. He suggested that the homes be moved to visible streets like Walnut Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue rather than hidden on Roosevelt Street or Willis Lane. Mr. Swann and Mr. Givens agreed that moving homes next to vacant, boarded up homes is not a good approach.

Eric Duff stated that based on the input received from the PHNIG at the meeting, GDOT and its consultants will go back through the plan and make revisions. Mr. Lawrence stated that based on the feedback, the number of options might be reduced. The group discussed the need to balance the scatter approach with the cluster approach to make the homes marketable to young families.

Mr. Givens requested that his group be allowed to study the plan and then meet with Lord Aeck prior to any plan revisions. He noted that he would make himself available at any time.

Next step: Clinton Ford will provide four (4) hard, large, copies of the Vacant Lot Plan to Mr. Givens by next week. The PHNIG will review the plan and then contact Clinton to setup a meeting with Lord Aeck and others.

### Item 2: Follow up from November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting

#### Action Item(s)

##### Uniform Act Process:

- Jenny Carter presented the question posed at the last meeting which was: What happens if a property owner is unable to relocate within the 90-day window allowed under the Uniform Act?
- Scott Roberts answered:
  - The Act requires that the owner relocate within 90-days of signing the option agreement or within 60-days of signing the closing documents
  - The owner may make a request for a 30-day extension
  - If the owner needs a second 30-day extension, he/she may be charged rent
  - Each case is looked at individually based on the circumstances

##### Discussion of Exchange Agreement schedule:

- Jenny Carter stated that based on discussion at the November meeting, the initial meetings with Exchange Agreement eligible property owners were moved from November/December to January/February to account for the holidays.
- Peter Givens stated that each property owner should have the option of having an advisor or representative present at the meetings and that the schedules of the property owner and the advisor should be considered when GDOT/Jeff Dickerson set up the meetings. Mr. Givens spoke to an attorney who is willing to assist the property owners pro bono.

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#### Item 3: Update on Richard Penniman House negotiations

##### Action Item(s)

Scott Roberts stated that there is an agreement in place and that the closing paperwork is being prepared. Barring any unforeseen obstacles, the acquisition of the Penniman House for use as a community center will occur.

#### Item 4: Prequalifying of contractors

##### Action Item(s)

Eric Duff stated that GDOT will host a workshop for community contractors at its Macon office in late February 2013. The workshop will provide information on how to become prequalified to do work for GDOT, the advantages of being prequalified, and information on obtaining DBE certification. Mr. Givens stated that he intends to bring a group of contractors to the meeting.

#### Item 5: Russell Claxton and Consultant Procurement

##### Action Item(s)

Darlene Parker introduced herself and requested that Mr. Givens state his concerns regarding Russell Claxton.

Mr. Givens stated that Russell Claxton began working with the Pleasant Hill group when it first started and that he did a great deal of the initial design work. Later in the process, GDOT hired MAAI and MAAI agreed to incorporate Mr. Claxton in its efforts. Now MAAI is no longer working on design efforts associated with the Jefferson Long Park or with streetscape improvements, only with linear park development.

Ms. Parker stated that procurement is a qualification based selection process.

Mr. Claxton gave a history of his involvement with the project. He did many of the initial designs. He believes he worked as an independent contractor of MAAI. He was at one time prequalified with GDOT himself, but it has since lapsed.

Ms. Parker stated that Mr. Claxton would have had to have been shown as an employee of MAAI because any sub-contractors working for MAAI would have had to been prequalified in their own right. Ms. Parker also stated that Mr. Claxton needs to obtain prequalification status again if he wants to do work with GDOT. Contractors are hired through an RFQ process. If Mr. Claxton wants to be considered for work, he needs to be prequalified and he needs to respond to an RFQ. She noted that URS, the consultant for this portion of the mitigation project, has already been hired.

Mr. Givens and Ms. Johnson expressed frustration over starting over with a new consultant. Mr. Claxton expressed frustration with GDOT using his work through a new consultant.

#### Other Items of Discussion

##### Action Item(s)

Ms. Johnson stated that January 19<sup>th</sup> is National Service Day and invited everyone to come help in the

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#### Pleasant Hill Garden on Saturday

Jeff Dickerson stated the need for additional community outreach for this project. He explained that GDOT is required to clearly document its community outreach efforts as a part of the Environmental Justice Policy set by President Clinton in a 1994 Executive Order. Next month, GDOT will be hosting a meeting to include both the PHNIG and other community leaders.

Mr. Givens stated that community outreach efforts had gone on in the past and that there had been a number of opportunities for community leaders to be involved. He also expressed concerns over having a larger group than necessary to go through specifics of the project.

Karlene Barron asked Mr. Givens if he could document his means of distributing information to the community. Mr. Givens stated that he has information he could provide.

The meeting ended with Jeff Dickerson reading an excerpt from the 1994 Executive Order at Ms. Henderson's request, and reiterating that future meetings would be open to other community leaders.