

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

REGULAR SESSION

September 5, 2017

The Cultural Resources Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 5, 2017, 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Development Services Center, 622 S. Prairieville St., Athens, Texas with the following members present, to-wit:

Chet Patel
Beth Faulk
Virginia Reeder
Kelley Townsend
Jon Garrett
Deanne Boswell

Adrianna Hinds, Cultural Resources Coordinator

others present: Janicia Evans

with the following members absent; Brad Smiley

constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 6, 2017 SPECIAL SESSION

A motion was made by Member Faulk, seconded by Member Reeder to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2017 Special Session. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

Adrianna Hinds, Cultural Resources Coordinator, stated that in 2010 the City had commissioned SEC Planning to create a Downtown Masterplan for the revitalization of the downtown area. She expressed that the Downtown Masterplan would provide the City with a vision to build upon as the community grows, creating a positive community image that would be appealing to the residents and visitors. She stated that staff has reviewed that masterplan and believes that it is still useful today. Ms. Hinds communicated that there is a remaining balance of \$30,000 in the Capital Improvement Fund to improve the downtown area. She expressed that staff would like to receive input from the Commission to determine the next project. She presented to the Cultural Resources Commission the top four (4) recommendations for the downtown improvements from the 2010 Downtown Masterplan:

- **Continuing Landscaping Efforts:**

Ms. Hinds presented to the Commission recent pictures of the landscaping downtown. She expressed that continuing with the landscaping will give the downtown area a finished look. The Downtown Master Plan recommends tree plantings. Staff would like to explore the possibility of removing the remaining Yaupon trees and planting new, more location appropriate trees in those places.”

Chairman Patel asked Ms. Hinds what was the cost of landscaping. She answered that she has not begun the research.

Member Reeder asked, “Is it possible to reach out to different civic organizations such as garden clubs and ask if they would be interested in volunteering to work on planting in the downtown area”. She stated that if the organizations volunteer or even donate; the money could be utilize in other needed areas. Ms. Hind stated that staff has considered that as an option.

- **Utilities Relocation**

Ms. Hinds stated many cities that staff has visited have relocated their electrical lines underground. She presented pictures of the current electrical lines downtown, stating it is disorganized and that the lines are starting to drape pretty low. Ms. Hinds stated that in the 2010 Downtown Masterplan it states, “utility boxes, lines, and poles, are a distraction in the downtown area”. She communicated that staff has realized that \$30,000 is not going to cover all the downtown area, however, once the project has started staff could present it to Council and possibly receive the direction to keep moving forward with the project.

- **Enhancement of Cobra Lighting**

Ms. Hinds explained that the 2010 Masterplan mentions that upgrading or improving the cobra lighting would be a way to improve the aesthetics downtown.

There was little discussion.

- **Athens Alley Refresh**

Ms. Hinds stated that Athens Alley was also included in the 2010 Downtown Masterplan. She expressed that Athens alley is in need of improvement. She stated the sidewalks need improvement as well. She also informed the Commission that the City has purchased trash bins and bike racks for the alley. She stated that Athens Alley is overgrown and the landscaping in

that area is not very consistent. She stated that it was last on the list because there are no businesses looking into those buildings. Ms. Hinds explained that studies show that if cities improve the looks of certain areas more businesses would be interested.

Member Boswell reiterated Member Reeder's suggestion regarding reaching out to different civic organizations. She agreed it is a great idea.

After discussion, each member agreed that if organizations volunteer or donate that could save the City money to work on other priorities.

Member Boswell expressed her thoughts regarding relocating the utility lines.

Member Garrett suggested that any new businesses downtown should be required to bury electrical utility lines underground.

Ms. Hinds stated that the City does have a Central Business District portion in the Zoning Ordinance. She stated she believes that it does mention that any new construction of electrical utility lines must be buried underground. She stated that staff is working together to find a better solution for burying the downtown electrical utility lines underground.

Member Reeder communicated that even though the relocating of the electrical utility lines is the most expensive, she believes that it's going to be the most beneficial in the downtown area. She said that every time there are weather issues electrical problems follow. She feels that if the electrical lines are relocated to underground that will fix the problem.

The members agreed unanimously.

There was discussion regarding the relocation of the electrical utility lines.

Chairman Patel made a motion to have the City staff move toward considering relocating the electrical utility lines as a priority and work with local organizations for the downtown landscaping project, seconded by Member Reeder. The motion carried unanimously.

CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

There was no discussion.

CULTURAL RESOURCES COORDINATOR UPDATE

Ms. Hinds provided the following updates:

1. General update on the Downtown Facade Projects
2. Informed the Commission that all three (3) of The Texan Summer Series went well
3. The Texan project should be completed by December
4. City has purchased LED lights to replace current Christmas lights

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION UPDATES REGARDING
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Chairman Patel provided the following updates:

- Uncle Fletch Hamburger Festival – September 23, 2017
- Halloween at the Hatchery is approaching

Member Reeder provided the following updates:

- Art Gallery will host Art & Wine Walk – Oct. 28, 2017
- Art Gallery will host Art Show – November 11, 2017 & January 27, 2018
- Arboretum will host Veterans show – November 11, 2017

Member Boswell provided the following updates:

- The Duck Race for Henderson County Community Partners Rainbow Room – September 30, 2017
- Trinity Valley Community College “Family Day” – September 23, 2017

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION REQUEST FOR FUTURE
AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 16th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2017.

Chet Patel, Chairman

ATTEST:

Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary