MINUTES

COUNCIL DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 12, 2025 – 4:00pm
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:	Gary Daniel, Chair, Council Member Billy Parrish, Heart of Brevard Representative Nicole Bentley, Executive Director, Heart of Brevard Parker Platt, At-Large Member Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio
Members Absent:	Pamela Holder, Council Member Lee McMinn, Citizen Member
Staff Present:	David Todd, Assistant City Manager Paul Ray, Planning Director Emily Brewer, Senior Planner Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator Selena Coffey, Assistant to the City Manager
Media:	Nick Haseloff (*Transylvania Times*)

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Gary Daniel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:01pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

A quorum was certified by Assistant to the City Manager Selena Coffey.

C. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Bentley made a motion to approve the agenda, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Platt. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Platt motioned, seconded by Ms. Bentley to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2025 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Heart of Brevard Walkability Assessment

Mr. Parrish introduced the agenda item, noting that the Heart of Brevard had been working with Heart of Brevard board members and staff, council members and Mayor Copelof, and city staff. He distributed a binder for the committee's review and noted that there were 237 findings within the assessment. He noted that the Public Works Department had been able to address 46 of the last 184 items within last year's walkability assessment. He commended Public Works for their work on this. Mr. Parrish encouraged the city council to consider this year's walkability assessment in their upcoming priority-setting retreat and budget workshop.

Mr. Parrish provided an overview of the significant categories needing improvements within the downtown walkability assessment as follows:

1. Brick paved areas
2. Concrete sidewalks
3. Street trees
4. Tree wells
5. Public sector mulched areas
6. Private sector landscaping and outdoor areas
7. Light poles and street light standards

Mr. Parrish noted that there were approximately 58 safety issues that needed to be prioritized and noted that the next step would be to meet with the Public Works Department to begin addressing these and other priorities within the assessment.

The committee discussed the need to address the functionality and aesthetics of streetlights downtown, as there are many different types of lights, and it may be appropriate to standardize these in the future. There was further discussion of finding better ways for tracking the addressing of elements within the walkability assessment.

F. Downtown Business Sidewalk Inquiries

Mr. Ray started off this discussion, noting that there were a few items out of compliance with the city's sidewalk usage standards that were approved by the city council. He noted that the following items were out of compliance:

1. Phone booth at Rocky's Grill and Soda Shop
2. Butterfly bench owned by Blast from the Past
3. White squirrel in front of the White Squirrel Shop

He raised the potential of the city leasing these items as a way to address them. Mayor Copeloff noted that the White Squirrel Shop was agreeable to a lease with the city, but did not want to relinquish its ownership. Ms. Bentley noted that the committee may want to include the Crystal Mountain Gem Mine dinosaur in this lease approach. Ms. Brewer noted that the city should be careful in vetting any such lease agreement because the city could be responsible for liability with these structures. The committee continued their discussions in

this regard. Ms. Bentley recommended that City Attorney Mack McKeller attend the next committee meeting and the next shareholder meeting be rescheduled for Mr. McKeller to be present for that meeting as well. Ms. Copeloff asked if enforcement would begin on March 1 and whether enforcement could be delayed until the sidewalk regulations were discussed more in depth and the committee had heard from the attorney.

Mr. Daniel summarized the discussion, noting that Mr. McKeller would be asked to attend the next meeting to share legal implications about newspaper boxes and the potential for leasing the iconic items discussed earlier in the meeting. He noted that he would recommend that the city not delay sidewalk usage enforcement, but delay charging the fee.

G. Public Comment

Drew Dean, a downtown business owner, stated that she felt that downtown business owners were more distraught about the sidewalk fee than the regulations themselves. She spoke about the streetlights briefly and suggested speaking with Duke Power about them. Ms. Drew noted that she didn't like the trees downtown but noted that the city's downtown could benefit from consistency in the types of trees planted. She suggested that the city invest in large planters downtown to provide more consistency. Ms. Dean commended the city's Public Works Department.

H. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Downtown Master Plan Committee was scheduled for Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 4:00pm by motion by Mr. Platt, second by Ms. Holder, and all in favor.

I. Adjourn

Ms. Bentley made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Platt. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:09pm.

Minutes Approved: MARCH 18, 2025

X _____
Gary Daniel
Chair, Council Member

X _____
Selena D. Coffey
Assistant to the City Manager