

Hickory Bond Commission
December 8, 2015 at 4:30 P.M.
SALT Block Keiser Community Room

A meeting of the Hickory Bond Commission was held on Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at the SALT Block Keiser Community Room.

Members Present: Alan Barnhardt, Jennifer Beane, Mike Bell, Patricia Bowman, Paige Brigham, Dana Chambers, Jennifer Clark, Rob Dickerson, Charlie Dixon, Ed Farthing, Kimberly George, Charlie Hayes, Jennifer Helton, Allison Holtzman, Andrew Howard, Alan Jackson, Anthony Laxton, Will Locke, Norm Meres, Hani Nassar, Shauna O'Brien, Adelia Parrado-Ortiz, Dean Proctor, Stacey Rash, Katherine Rogers, Carolyn Sinclair, Mike Thomas, James Tilton, Nick Walden, Susan Walker, Bee Watts, Burk Wyatt, and Frank Young

Members Absent: Norm Cook, Tom Dobbins, Ryan Edwards, Jerisha Farrer, Jeff Hale, Mike Holland, David Roberts, II, Gayle Schwarz, and Suzanne Trollan

Others Present: Multiple City Staff, Freese and Nichols Staff, and community members

City Manager Mick Berry opened the meeting at 4:37 P.M. He commented on Corning's recent announcement that they would be moving to the Charlotte area, although their plant will stay in Hickory. He noted that Corning was very complimentary of the City's efforts and confirmed that the City is moving in the right direction.

He explained the importance of the prioritization process and the necessity to come to some consensus as a group. He reminded everyone that ultimately City Council would make the final determination but a solid recommendation from the Bond Commission to City Council would be highly beneficial. He also reminded everyone that they are working with \$35 million because \$5 of the \$40 million is going to Park 1764.

Mr. Berry then announced that the City would be receiving \$9.6 million towards the Citywalk based on the State Transportation Improvement Program. He also added that the City would continue to be aggressive in its pursuit for additional funding.

Bond Commission Chair, Burk Wyatt encouraged everyone to remove their "subcommittee hats" and put on their "Bond Commission hats" and focus on the big picture. He also expressed the importance of building the skeleton first and making a long range plan for later funding. He then gave the floor to each subcommittee to share their thoughts.

Charlie Dixon, Riverwalk Chair, said that there was a great deal of enthusiasm on his subcommittee. He briefly went over the three Riverwalk proposals and also noted the challenges with Duke Energy, licensing, and environmental regulations. He also expressed the desire for Riverwalk to align with and compliment the Lackey Project. Considering the longer

term plan for Riverwalk, Mr. Dixon noted that there were uncertainties regarding the far side of the 321 bridge and how that area would be funded and developed.

Ms. Paige Brigham, Streetscapes & Gateways Vice-Chair, explained that there nine streetscapes and five gateways that had been considered by the subcommittee. They had studied maps and prioritized the projects. She added that the streetscapes and gateways projects can touch every part of the city and they could also connect Citywalk and Riverwalk. She explained that prioritizing had been a detailed process and that she hopes everyone likes their input.

Mr. Frank Young, Citywalk Chair, shared that their subcommittee had prioritized and that their overall consensus was that they want to complete the walk from Lenoir Rhyne to Downtown, instead of completing only segments. So any further prioritization came in choosing which amenities will be a part of the Citywalk design. Overwhelming, the subcommittee chose to support the iconic bridge as a major amenity. They also agreed to delay the connectivity from Old Lenoir Road to Riverwalk, as that is just an entirely different project.

Mr. Mike Thomas, Citywalk Vice-Chair, concurred that the bridge received tremendous support. Also, the parking deck was well received. He encouraged everyone to focus less on their own subcommittees and to consider various opinions while working in groups. He also added that the priorities represent a timeline, rather than a definitive “no.” Projects that aren’t currently funded, will hopefully be funded at a later time.

Mr. Charles Archer had each subcommittee stand and number themselves one through three. Each group of one, two, or three joined together at the appropriate table. He explained that FNI had organized the pairwise data collected at the last subcommittee meetings. Based off of that data, FNI created three options of the bond projects, each fitting into the \$35 million budget. A FNI staff member worked with each of the three groups to go over in detail the three options.

Mr. Archer reminded the commission members that all of the polling data had previously been sent to them in an email and that they had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with that information. He asked if anyone required any further information before starting. No one requested additional information. However, Mr. Mike Wayts gave a brief presentation overview of the polling data.

The group exercise then commenced. Each group reviewed the options, discussed likes and dislikes, and then rotated to look at the next option.

After the groups had thoroughly reviewed each of FNI’s options, Mr. Archer had each subcommittee number themselves one through four to create four new groups. These groups joined together, discussed the options, and chose to either endorse one of FNI’s options or create a new option themselves. Each group chose a spokesperson to explain their newly created option or to endorse one of FNI’s options.

After some time of working together, the groups made their announcements. One of the four groups endorsed one of FNI's options, while the other three groups created their own options. Each newly created option was similar to FNI's options, with only one or two changes. After all four groups had presented, each of the now six options were hung on the wall. Each commission member was given a sticky dot to place beside the option of his or her preference. This input will be used by FNI to help determine the final project recommendation that will be sent to City Council for approval.

The votes were tallied as follows:

FNI's Option A – 8 votes
Group 1's Option – 6 votes
Group 2's Option – 4 votes
FNI's Option B – 1 vote
Group 4's Option – 8 votes
FNI's Option C – 0 votes

Mr. Archer reminded everyone that this information would be used towards formulating the final recommendation and he thanked everyone for their input.

Ms. Surratt echoed Mr. Archer's gratitude and added that she was proud of the commission's tremendous amount of work. She reminded everyone that there was holiday social following the meeting at American Honor Ale House and she also reminded them about the City Council Workshop on December 15.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Burk Wyatt, Chair
Hickory Bond Commission

Sarah Prencipe, Deputy City Clerk
City of Hickory