

MINUTES

Regular Meeting: Workshop Session
George W. Clay, Jr. Utility Operations Center

March 5, 2007
Monday, 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor W. Ted Alexander, presiding; Council Members Christopher H. (Chris) Mabry, Robert H. (Bob) Still, Jeanette D. Patterson, Michael R. (Mike) Royster, Joel R. Shores, Jr., Dicky Amaya; City Attorney Sam B. Craig, City Manager Rick Howell, City Clerk Bernadette A. Parduski, Director of Finance Theodore B. (Ted) Phillips, Director of Utilities Brad R. Cornwell, PLS, EI, Fire Chief William P. Hunt, Director of Public Works Daniel C. (Danny) Darst, Jr., Director of Parks and Recreation Charlie Holtzclaw, Director of Planning Services Walter (Walt) Scharer, AICP; and Media Representatives

Mayor Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed all who were in attendance. Mr. Shores gave the invocation and Mr. Mabry led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

A. Approval of Agenda:

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Amaya, second by Mr. Still, City Council voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

B. Public Hearings: None

C. Public Comment: None

D. Consent Agenda: All items listed below are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one introduction, motion, second, and vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member so requests, in which event, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately.

ACTION TAKEN: Mayor Alexander presented the consent agenda and asked if any item should be removed before calling for action. There being no requests for removal, Mrs. Patterson made a motion to approve the consent agenda and each item as presented. After a second from Mr. Royster, the consent agenda and following items were unanimously approved:

- 1) Consideration of approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 19, 2007

2) Consideration of FY 2006-2007 Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 5:
Ordinance No. 5-2007

END CONSENT AGENDA

E. Special Presentation:

1) City of Shelby Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan – URS Corporation

Mr. Howell provided the background information for this project which was initiated in 2005 when the City was awarded a grant from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative to create a comprehensive pedestrian plan. Mr. Howell stated that the need for more comprehensive transportation planning has been identified by NCDOT in the past several years. Ultimately a Comprehensive Transportation Plan with elements including vehicular, railroad, pedestrian, and bicycle components will replace the old “Thoroughfare Plans” previously adopted by Council. Mr. Howell concluded that the pedestrian plan will prove to be an invaluable tool allowing better planning for pedestrian facilities and placing the City in a stronger position to compete for grant funds.

Mr. Scharer introduced Bill Clark, Transportation Planner with URS Corporation, from Charlotte, North Carolina.

Mr. Clark began his presentation by referencing the two documents provided for Council’s review: The Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan Executive Summary and the draft of the Shelby Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.

Mr. Clark defined a pedestrian plan as a prioritized implementation plan outlining projects to enhance the pedestrian environment. The recommendations contained in the plan included the following:

- Infrastructure projects such as sidewalks, off-road paths, and pedestrian signals;**
- Policies and guidelines to ensure future pedestrian-friendly development; and**
- Education and encouragement programs to promote safe walking for all members of the community.**

Mr. Clark added the benefits of walking which include:

- Health benefits**
- Transportation benefits**

- Environmental benefits
- Economic benefits
- Quality of life benefits

Mr. Clark stated the pedestrian plan goals are to:

- Connect important destinations
- Support and guide pedestrian-friendly land use decisions
- Improve safety and accessibility
- Improve environmental conditions and health
- Encourage economic and social vitality
- Promote awareness
- Update and maintain existing pedestrian facilities

Mr. Clark summarized Shelby's current pedestrian environment as follows:

- Recent development trends toward US Highway 74 Bypass
- City is becoming more suburban in character
- A growing interest in Uptown
- Existing sidewalks in older neighborhoods close to Uptown
- No off road paths, but good corridor possibilities exist
- Viable potential pedestrian connections
- Future US Highway 74 Bypass presents an opportunity for land use changes

Mr. Clark reviewed Shelby's existing pedestrian policies as follows:

- Planning Commission may request sidewalks to be built with new developments.
- Land Use Zoning policies for a defined Corridor Protection District and the Central Business District tend to be positive for pedestrians.

Mr. Clark stated that a total of two public forums were held over the course of this project. In addition, surveys were distributed with the City utility bills and were returned with valuable public input. Mr. Clark summarized the key points raised by the public as follows:

- The need for sidewalks, off road paths/greenways, and traffic calming
- Heavy traffic and high speeds make walking dangerous
- Existing facilities need to be connected

Mr. Clark cited examples of the problem areas which included:

- Peach Street/Forest Hill Drive/Country Club Road/Kings Road
- Highway 74 connectivity
- Senior Center and schools
- Hospital area
- No grocery stores have sidewalks
- New developments

Mr. Clark discussed the deficiencies in Shelby's pedestrian network and made these observations:

- Missing sidewalk connections decrease connectivity.
- Wide roads and high speed limits encourage speeding.
- Roads planned only for automobiles limit safe walking.
- Lack of sidewalks and crosswalks decrease options.
- Poor pedestrian access to new developments encourages driving.

Mr. Clark stated that pedestrians generally have three needs when it comes to walking. His three walkability musts include:

- Short distances with direct routes
- Safe walking areas
- Pleasurable routes

Mr. Clark described the types of pedestrian projects detailed in the plan which include:

- Standard sidewalks 5 feet wide
- Wide sidewalks 6 to 15 feet wide
- Striped shoulders
- Multi-use trails and shared-use paths
- Safe crosswalks signalized or unsignalized
- Signed pedestrian routes and connections

Mr. Clark provided recommendations intended to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment summarized as:

- Use of 11 Pedestrian Oriented Development Districts as a planning tool
- Requirements for infrastructure associated with new developments
- Acquisition of easements for pedestrian projects

In addition to infrastructure projects and policy modifications, a variety of

ancillary programs are recommended to enhance the overall pedestrian environment in Shelby. Mr. Clark cited examples of beneficial programs and highlighted the following:

- Create “spot improvement” and on-going maintenance programs
- Develop programs to encourage walking
- Improve safety with education and enforcement

Mr. Clark stated that a combination of funding sources will be needed to construct the infrastructure projects proposed in this plan and reviewed possible funding options as follows:

- State/federal sources:
 - Transportation Improvement Program
 - Enhancements and congestion mitigation
 - Incidental projects
 - Grant programs i.e. Safe Routes to School
- Local sources:
 - Capital Improvement Program
 - Coordination with other projects
- Private and Non-profit sources:
 - Local developers
 - Foundations

Mr. Clark concluded his presentation by urging Council to adopt the plan and to implement the plan with active assistance from a new Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee.

There was a brief discussion between Council members and Mr. Clark regarding on road parking. Mr. Clark explained that parked vehicles create a chicane configuration which can be utilized for traffic calming to benefit pedestrians. Mr. Clark also responded to questions regarding textured, reflective white striping for pedestrian markings and the connection between engineered roads and reducing speed limits. Mr. Clark further stated that it is important to realize that sidewalks are not designed for bicycles, and bicycle planning needs to be incorporated with roadway planning or with paved paths off of the road right-of-way. The pedestrian plan does not provide specific projects or recommendations for bicycles and Mr. Clark recommended a comprehensive bicycle plan as well.

Mr. Howell cited the City of Brevard for its pedestrian trails as a good example of effectively connecting people with places. Mayor Alexander

also mentioned the Cities of Lincolnton and Morganton and the Town of Bakersville for their successful pedestrian plans. The Mayor stated that there is a strong correlation between the pedestrian plan and the City Center Master Plan as both plans near fruition. Mr. Howell announced the public hearing to consider the Shelby Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan will be conducted on Monday, March 19, 2007.

F. Unfinished Business: None

G. New Business: None

H. City Manager's Report:

Mr. Howell advised Council that he is seeking to schedule dates for the upcoming budget workshops. Mayor Alexander also suggested scheduling the crime summit, which was discussed at Council's retreat, for a workshop session in the near future.

With regard to the decision of the North Carolina Utilities Commission to approve only one of two requested power units to be built at Duke Energy's Cliffside Steam Station Plant, Council, by consensus, plans to send a letter outlining its support for the Duke project and requesting the Utilities Commission to reconsider their decision.

Mayor Alexander expressed his appreciation to Mr. Still for presiding over the Council meeting of February 19, 2007.

Mr. Mabry reminded all present of the Northeast Shelby Weed and Seed Kick-off Celebration set for Saturday, March 17, 2007, from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m. at Shiloh Baptist Church, 914 Frederick Street in Shelby.

Mr. Still reminded all present of a new event, Shelby Art on the Square, to be held in conjunction with the Foothills Merry-Go-Round Festival, on Saturday, April 28, 2007. The Honors Awards Reception and Presentation Ceremonies will be held Thursday, April 26, 2007.

Mr. Shores announced that he will attend the next meeting of the Cleveland Association of Governmental Officials (CAGO) on Thursday, March 15, 2007, and inform the Association that the City of Shelby will host the next meeting on June 21, 2007 at the Shelby City Park Community Center.

I. Adjournment: There being no further business for Council's consideration, Mayor Alexander adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Bernadette A. Parduski
City Clerk**

**W. Ted Alexander
Mayor**

Minutes of March 5, A. D. 2007