ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201. The Honorable Peter M. Brown, Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Peter M. Brown	Chair	Present
Will Brennan	Member	Present
Aditi Bussells	Member	Present

PRESENTATIONS

1. Catalyst for Columbia: The Impacts of Historic Preservation in Columbia - Mr. Donovan Rypkema, Principal of PlaceEconomics

Mr. Donovan Rypkema, Principal of PlaceEconomics explained that the Catalyst for Columbia study covered demographics in historic districts; older housing and affordability; property values; the impact of the Bailey Bill; and heritage tourism. The study included architectural conservation districts and protection areas. Approximately 6.5% of Columbia's population lives in these districts representing people at all income levels. There is a greater white population in the architectural conservation districts. The breakdown of owners and renters is about the same. There has been a statistically significant reduction in the African-American population within historic districts. Some of this is a result of student housing. About 45% *(32,000 units)* of the housing stock is from pre-1970. There is a higher share of people at 30% of the area median income and below living in the older housing stock and a lesser percent at the upper end. The racial distribution is a reflection of Columbia as a whole. There is a higher percentage of home ownership in the older units because it is more affordable.

The average property values in architectural conservation districts are more than the city as a whole. This is showing you a change in household wealth and intergenerational wealth transfer opportunity due to the enhanced rate of property value.

We used county level data on heritage tourism. Overnight visitors have a lot more economic impact. Almost 40% of heritage visitors stay overnight and 47.1% of visitors are heritage travelers. Heritage tourism generates over $180 million in direct labor income and over $37 million in direct state and local taxes.

We reviewed all Bailey Bill projects. More than half of the projects were less than $100,000. The minimum required investment was almost $15 million but they spent $217 million. There is a trigger for a significant amount of investment. Since you added the Bailey Bill in Columbia, an average of 58 direct jobs were created annually and those workers received over $3 million in income.

In conclusion, heritage tourism is beneficial for the city, property owners, and businesses that have tourism. The Bailey Bill is defensible as an appropriate public tool for the investment that it generates in the city. Over the next ten years, it is important to look at how to get historic districts that better serve the African-American population. Encourage the use of the Bailey Bill especially since it is available for residential properties. Look at other historic resources that should be designated, if appropriate. You can't build new and rent or sell cheap. It is important to keep the older housing stock in place.

There was discussion about how the percentage of renters and owners compare to other markets; how the reassessment affected property values between 2018 and 2019; the designation process; San Antonio's Under 1 Roof Initiative and other modest intervention programs; and increased student population/units.

2. Missing Middle Housing Scan and Deep Dive Presentation - Mr. Taylor Oxedine and Ms. Kim Fuller, Co-Executive Officers at Central Carolina Realtors Association and Ms. Mitali Ganguly, Associate II at Opticos Design, Inc.

Mr. Taylor Oxedine, Co-Executive Officer / Central Carolina Realtors Association said we wanted to present this study for use in the planning and development of more housing options, to provide more affordability, and to make the City of Columbia a more walkable area.

Ms. Mitali Ganguly, Associate II at Opticos Design, Inc. presented a scan and deep dive on missing middle housing (MMH) in Columbia. It is an analysis of existing conditions to identify areas that support more missing middle housing. The deep dive includes zoning and lot testing to identify barriers in current zoning. The project goal is to enable and encourage more MMH types. Missing Middle Housing is house-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods. MMH offers a middle form and scale and attainable housing choices. These units are lower in cost by design. The balance of missing middle type units in Columbia is 26% compared to 10% in the US. Missing middle housing optimizes the available space on a typical lot. MMH in Columbia includes townhouses, fourplexes, duplexes, and multiplexes. Each type of MMH has unique attributes and requirements that minimize wasted space and provides a single family living experience. You can add new building types to existing neighborhoods or onto existing single family homes. MMH can be distributed throughout a block; transition from single-family to higher density or to a corridor mixed-use; or as the end-grain of a single-family block. Areas that provide services, food, shopping and transit were identified as walkable centers. We looked at four zoning districts that are MMH ready: Residential Mixed (RM-1 or RM-2), Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC), and Mixed-Use (MU-1). We also looked at the regulatory barriers and lot testing for each zoning district.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Planning and Development Services Director said most of our neighborhoods have RM-1 or RM-2 zoning classifications within them. Our in-town walkable neighborhoods have single-family residential and RM, meaning that you can more than one dwelling unit.

Ms. Mitali Ganguly, Associate II at Opticos Design, Inc. said the top two barriers to MMH were density being too low and parking requirements being too high. The driveway width and location standards are causing hurdles for many of these lots. The development standards are geared towards a higher density than what is typically MMH. She presented examples of solutions for narrow and deep lots using a combination of different MMH in lower and higher density areas. Recommendations include policy recommendations; zoning standards; the entitlement process; focused edits on zoning standards for RM-1, RM-2, MU-1, and NAC; and guidance for implementation and next steps.

There was discussion about the percentage of RM-1 zoning in the core of Columbia; RM-1 in comparison to RM-2; a possible zoning review; increasing density while maintaining character; having less regulation and being more user friendly; overcoming NIMBY; case studies of cities of a similar size that have balanced the need for affordable housing and the existing neighborhood; the need for a strategic study/plan for the development of empty lots; blending MMH with parcels owned by churches and other non-profits; engaging a designer to model development options for specific properties; and the number of MMH units needed in Columbia.

Mr. Taylor Oxedine, Co-Executive Officer / Central Carolina Realtors Association said we will send the full deep dive and policy changes to you. The National Realtors Association helped us pay for this study. It was a $100,000 investment. It is good to see that the City is planning for different options. We will be doing a similar presentation for the business community.

There was consensus of the committee to review the Design Development Review Commission's annual report along with history on the formation of the DDRC at the next meeting.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

3. Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(5) – *Withdrawn*

   Commercial Retention and Redevelopment Program

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made by Dr. Bussells and seconded by Mr. Brennan, the meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk