

MMC Meeting regarding Greene Tract

April 25, 2023 / 3:30- 4:30 pm / Virtual

Purpose

For Orange County, Carrboro and Chapel Hill to continue to collaborate around the future of the Greene Tract.

Participants

Carrboro:

Damon Seils, Mayor

Richard White, Town Manager

Trish McGuire, Planning Director

Marty Roupe, Development Review Administrator

Chapel Hill:

Pam Hemminger, Mayor

Chris Blue, Interim Town Manager

Britany Waddell, Planning Director

Judy Johnson, Assistant Planning Director

Orange County:

Jamezetta Bedford, Chair Orange Board of County Commissioners

Bonnie Hammersley, County Manager

Travis Myren, Deputy County Manager

Cy Stober, Planning Director

Ashley Moncado, Special Projects Planner

Meeting Goals

1. Share updates since the last meeting on January 10, 2023.
2. Discuss plan for the property purchase to enhance Greene Tract access.
3. Identify next steps.

Meeting Summary

This meeting addressed three topics:

1. Updates since the meeting on January 10, 2023
2. Status of the RFPs for Greene Tract Master Plan
3. Discuss Property Purchases to Enhance Greene Tract Access

Shared agreements out of this meeting

Move forward with...

1. Re: RFPs: notifying RFP respondent of rejection; gathering information from firms who did not submit RFPs; and creating new RFQs with timelines that split the process into two parts (community engagement and technical design services);
2. Re: Property Acquisition – Boards consider purchasing the Property, with the hope of votes happening before June 30th.

What's Next / Action Items

1. Staff will follow necessary process and notify respondent that their RFP will not be accepted.
2. Staff will gather feedback from firms who attended information session and did not submit RFPs.
3. Staff will develop a new process and timeline for requesting RFQs and splitting the process.
4. Judy Johnson will share her PPT and written documents relating to the Property.
5. Travis Myren will review MOU section relating to shared ownership and exiting as it applies to future ownership of the Property, should it be acquired.
6. All jurisdictions will communicate necessary information with respective Boards to get approval of Property purchase, with the hope for this happening by June 30.
7. This MMC group will meet again virtually from 3:30 – 4 pm on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 to review the timeline for the RFQs.
8. This MMC group will meet again virtually from 3:30 – 4:30 pm on June 27, 2023.
 - Chris Blue will ask Anita Badrock to facilitate the meeting.
 - The purpose of this meeting will be to finalize the plan for the Inman property and the RFP/ RFQ process.

Details per Topic Area

1. Updates since the last meeting on January 10, 2023

Key points

- Chair Bedford has not shared the January notes with her Board, because the sale of land is a closed session item and the sale is still pending.
- Mayor Hemminger shared that Chapel Hill had an open discussion about the sale of land because it was related to fund balance.
- Ashley Moncado shared that, just today, she took the plat and the deed to the Orange County Register of Deeds office. They accepted it so it is being processed. We should see a change on the tax and GIS records soon.
 - This step was necessary for the Orange County Commissioners to consider preserving the land.
 - When the deeds are official, they will be mailed to the County Managers office. Ashley will be checking daily to see when it is officially recorded.
 - Once the deed is official, we will meet with the Orange County DPR staff to discuss conservation of the 60 acres.
 - Chair Bedford added that her Board does know about DPR doing this plan as it was an open session item.

2. RFPs for the Greene Tract Master Plan: Adapting the process for RFPs

Key points

- Cy Stober shared that the County released the RFP in late March, and they were due on April 18, 2023. The County only received one proposal totaling \$367,000, and unfortunately, this proposal was lacking with regard to community engagement.
- Given the importance of the project to Rogers Road, community engagement is a critical piece of the proposal. Without this important section, we are not comfortable recommending this proposal.
 - Judy Johnson explained that her team was also disappointed with the proposal. Although we want this process to move forward, we shouldn't just accept something that doesn't meet the needs.
- Mayor Seils asked why there was a poor response to the outreach of proposals?
 - It would be interesting to know why the other groups did not submit proposals.
 - Cy Stober added that five firms attended the information session, and there were almost no questions. Out of the five firms, only one submitted a proposal.

- Mayor Hemminger added that it would be helpful to reach out directly to Renaissance Partners to see why they did not submit an RFP, especially given their previous work in the community. She agreed with Judy that we don't just want to accept any proposal.
- Mayor Hemminger added that the SAPFO report came out stating that no new schools are projected in the school system for at least 10 years.
- Cy Stober presented the solution of splitting this project into two proposals: (1) a community engagement RFQ; and (2) a technical services RFQ for the design element.
 - Going the RFQ route would allow for great negotiation and for the community engagement consultant to sit on the steering committee for the technical services work.
 - Trish McGuire added that we should develop questions to ask the firms regarding why they didn't respond. We can use that feedback to help shape next steps. It is a big important project and not an insignificant amount of money.
 - Mayor Seils asked if these two approaches would be parallel or sequential?
 - Cy Stober responded that the group discussed having a 4-6 month lag, whereby the community engagement work would have at least a 3-4 month head start.
 - Mayor Seils suggested it might be good to hear from the firms *before* we adopt and finalize any new approach.
 - Chair Bedford asked if the 4-6 month delay was related to the meeting calendar? She noted that she can call another meeting if needed.

Next steps

- 1) Notify the respondent that their RFP was not accepted
- 2) Reach out to all firms who attended the information session to get more information about why they didn't respond to the RFP; and
- 3) Develop an alternative strategy with a corresponding timeline.
 - ⇒ Judy Johnson will put together a timeline within the next week or two, and all groups can share the same information with their Boards as an information message in the Board packets in the next week or two
- 4) This MMC group will meet again to evaluate the new timeline.

3. Property Purchases

Judy Johnson explained that an environmental assessment was completed at the property a month ago, and nothing significant was found on the site. There was small concern about the mounds, and whether we needed to do additional work on those. The environmental

assessment did not identify any potential contamination sources in the mounds. The debris observed would be able to be disposed at a permitted landfill.

Judy added that she has continued to have conversations with the property owner to purchase the property. Is there interest among partners to participate in those discussions?

Key Points

- All jurisdictions are open to moving forward with purchasing the property. All groups still need full approval from each respective Board/ Council.
- Mayor Hemminger expressed hope that everyone can be supportive. There is no way into the larger property without going through the property. This property could be used for affordable property in the future. We still need to work out negotiations from the adjoining property owner as we need a small part of their land to make this work. Chapel Hill is ready to move forward with spending the money on their portion of the property.
- Chair Bedford added that her Commissioners haven't discussed it yet. Do we have an update on the price? Would mobile homes be considered for this property?
 - Mayor Hemminger responded that we would want something denser and more energy efficient. There are no utilities there now, so we would likely look to a housing partner to do something there. It could be of interest to Community Home Trust, Habitat for Humanity, or Tiny Homes.
- Richard White asked about the timeline for this transaction, and there was agreement around trying to purchase the property before the end of this fiscal year. It would be helpful to have a packet of information to share with the Council.
 - **Next step – Judy Johnson will share her PPT and packet of information with all partners.**
- Mayor Hemminger added that this family will sell to someone else if we don't go ahead and buy it now.
- Mayor Seils added that we should be able to get the information in front of his Council soon.
- Travis Myren asked how much of the property would be required for Greene Tract access versus other purposes? His Board would want to have this information.
 - Chair Bedford responded that this would be contingent on getting the easement with the adjoining property owner. That needs to happen simultaneously.
- Cy Stober added that he recently met with David Stancil and let him know this issue might elevate again soon, given the RFP. He is pivoting to make sure newer staff members are aware of what to expect.

- Judy Johnson added that she went over to the property recently when people called about chainsaws. There were men building jumps.
 - For safety reasons, individuals shouldn't go alone to respond to concerns and need to involve Public Safety.
 - The land is not open to the public.
 - Judy shared that there will be trails, likely within the Headwater Preserve in the future.
- Mayor Seils asked what information is needed from each jurisdiction in order to move forward with this?
 - Mayor Hemminger noted we will need to know if you are in, and we will need to have a vote to move forward before arranging for an attorney for the closing. Hoping for votes to happen before June 30th, so closing can occur over the summer.
 - There is an offer out for for the 4 acres, and there will be closing costs.
 - We need confirmation that we are ready to go so that we can pass it by the end of June 30th.
 - Mayor Hemminger added that once the property is purchased, this group can discuss the best use of the land and take that back to our Boards.
 - Judy Johnson confirmed that the zoning for the property is for single-family residential use and that there are three, lawfully created lots there.
 - The zoning could be changed in the future if the three Boards would like to see a different use of the land.
- Chair Bedford asked who will be the point person to connect with the adjoining property owner, noting to her it's contingent on having the access from them?
 - Judy Johnson will work with the adjoining property owner, as they have worked together previously. Judy will work with the partners to have those conversations.
 - Travis Myren asked if we have talked about ownership structure? It will take time to get those documents in place. We would need something more formal than the Greene Tract ownership model, so that there would be a way for parties to exit if desired.
 - Mayor Hemminger added that we have that already in the MOU with the Greene Tract. **Travis will review the Greene Tract MOU regarding that section to see how it's applicable in this case.**
 - Chair Bedford added that she can imagine that her Board would want to own the road; whereas Chapel Hill might want to own the portion for residential property. We should expect those questions from our Boards.