

# MMC Meeting regarding Greene Tract

August 30, 2023 / 3:30- 5 pm / Chapel Hill Public Works Building

## 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

Marie Parker, Assistant Town Manager

Trish McGuire, Planning Director

Marty Roupe, Development Review Administrator

### Chapel Hill:

Chris Blue, Interim Town Manager

Britany Waddell, Planning Director

Judy Johnson, Assistant Planning Director

Pam Hemminger, Absent due to illness

### Orange County:

Jamezetta Bedford, Chair Orange Board of County

Commissioners

Travis Myren, Deputy County Manager

Cy Stober, Planning Director

Perdita Holtz, Deputy Director – Long-Range

Planning & Administration

## Meeting Goals

1. Updates on ~~Inman~~ Property [Acquisition](#).
2. Review of Community Engagement process.
3. Update on Master Plan process.
4. Identify next steps.

## Meeting Summary

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### This meeting addressed the following topics:

1. Update on the ~~Inman~~-Property [Acquisition](#)
2. Review of Community Engagement process
3. Update on Master Plan process

## Shared agreements out of this meeting

### *The MMC decided to recommend...*

- To negotiate the contract with Gensler as the Community Engagement Consultant to include the base and optional activities outlined in their proposal. The total cost of the proposal would be \$360,000
  - Each Board will consider their portion of the consultant fees in their September or early October meetings before the item is presented to the Board of County Commissioners as part of the Consent Agenda\* on October 17, 2023.
  - Consultant will be confirmed by the end of the year.
- To follow the Town of Chapel Hill Review process in the development of the Greene Tract
  - Staff members will develop a matrix of standards/ codes to flag as decision points
    - Information will be shared with the MMC before sharing it with the design consultant; expected to design consultant by the end of the year.
- To have staff members develop a matrix to compare a development agreement v. conditional zoning and share with the MMC.
- When the time is right, for staff members to talk with new property owners of the Inman Property to discuss access point to the Greene Tract.
- For Cy Stober to talk with Gensler to get their thoughts about benefits/ drawbacks/ considerations regarding whether to use a compass group/ steering committee.
  - Once gathered, staff will share this information with MMC.
- For the MMC to meet again the week of October 17.
  - Polling will determine exact date, time and location.

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\* Chair Bedford emailed follow-up on 9/11/2023 that this would be on the BOCC regular agenda, instead of the consent agenda

## Details per Topic Area

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### 1. Updates on the ~~Inman~~ Property Acquisition

#### Key points

- Chris Blue shared that the group did not get the ~~Inman~~ Property to provide for Greene Tract access. It went to a higher bidder, ~~who offered approximately \$30,000 more~~.
- It may still be possible to get access to the Greene Tract from the new owners.
  - It is not clear when the sale will be finalized, but staff will continue to monitor.

### 2. Review of Engagement Process

#### Key Points

- Cy Stober discussed responses to the RFP for the Community Engagement Consultant. (The MMC previously decided to split the project into two proposals – one for Community Engagement and one for Professional Services to Design a Master Plan.)
  - Better response this time. They received around 5 proposals; had two interviews; and have awarded a preliminary contract to Gensler.
  - Gensler gave an excellent presentation on how to re-engage with a group of people who feel like they have been engaged exhaustively.
  - VHB will be a subcontractor of Gensler as they are more “on the ground” locally.
  - The review group was comprised of representatives from all three jurisdictions, and the proposals were vetted through Equity and Inclusion staff.
  - Gensler proposed a 16-month timeline for their engagement.
  - The engagement team will be working with the community to identify design and development interests, specify uses, clarify maximum and minimum development parameters, and deliver these to the design consultant.
- The group discussed which standards will apply for the new design.
  - Brittany Waddell suggested that the group use Chapel Hill standards, unless one of the other jurisdictions has a more restrictive standard.
  - Staff will develop a matrix of standards/ codes to flag and bring back this information to the MMC.
    - This information will be needed by the end of the year.

- Chair Bedford noted that it will be good to work through these issues ahead of time since the community will have questions and concerns that will need to be addressed.
- Staff will develop a pros/cons list to compare a development agreement versus conditional zoning. The MMC will need this information for future planning.
- **MMC decided to follow the Town of Chapel Hill development standards in development of the Greene Tract.**
  - It makes the most sense to follow the development standards of the entitlement agency, unless there is a significant reason to deviate from the standards.
- Discussion around the timing of the community engagement and design processes.
  - The engagement piece will start first, and then the design award will follow. There will be overlap when the engagement consultant is working with the design team.
- More details from the Engagement Consultant's proposal:
  - All social media will be done by the public partners on this project – messaging will continue to be managed by staff and not the consultant, for consistency.
  - Proposal included plans to table at already scheduled community events.
  - Optional
    - Some of these options come with a higher price tag.
    - Proposal would be \$270,100 total, with add-ons bringing the total to \$360,000.
  - Engagement services include listening sessions, temporary installation of oral histories.
- Discussion around whether to include a “compass group” as part of the engagement process:
  - Chair Bedford expressed concerns about elevating some interests and voices over others in a compass group format, as well as that it could be time consuming and end in the same place.
  - Brittany Waddell emphasized the importance of being proactive and front-loading community engagement.
  - Mayor Seils noted that we are not starting from a “clean sheet” but instead, we are starting with the *Mapping Our Community's Future* report.
  - Cy Stober noted the importance of robust community engagement that tells the story of the future.

- Trish McGuire noted that there are examples of polarized groups that have made progress and achieved a shared outcome via a similar group.
- Brittany Waddell added that if we do have a compass group, it must be clear how their feedback will be used. What weight will we give the group?
- The MMC agreed that the compass group would focus on “how we develop the Greene Tract, not if we develop the Greene Tract,” including the information in the 2021 Resolutions and ILA (Interlocal Agreement).
- Richard White raised a concern about equity as it relates to the groups that have been engaged in the past.
- Mayor Seils added that people on the compass group/ steering committee cannot be there to undermine decisions that have already been made. The group should be composed of members who are already on-board with the process.
- Discussion around how to determine composition of the compass group, if that option is implemented:
  - Staff offered three different options:
    - (1) *Option 1 – Equal appointments by all 3 boards*
    - (2) *Option 2 – Number of appointments based on 2021 ILA Cost Share (43/43/14)*
    - (3) *Option 3 – One Board appoints all members*
  - No decision was made in this meeting. The MMC will continue to discuss.
  - Action step – Staff will ask consultant following questions:
    - Have you used a strategy with a steering committee that had effective outcomes, especially when interests are polar opposites?
    - Importance of how we use information from the steering committee – What happens if their input isn’t taken seriously?
    - Importance of targeting voices we might not hear regularly in the spirit of advancing equity
- **MMC decided to accept the higher figures offered by Gensler and everyone agreed to pay portions for each respective jurisdiction.**
  - As an interim step, each Board will consider higher amounts in September or early October, before the item is presented to the Board of County Commissioners on the Consent Agenda on October 17, 2023.

### 3. Update on Master Plan Process

Staff shared update on the RFP process for Master Design Services.

**Key Points**

- Staff is currently reviewing 6 applications for the Master Design Services contract.
- Staff does not yet know the cost associated with the Master Plan Design Services.
- The MMC will decide on funding for the Master Plan at a later point.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.