

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 1, 2021
Virtual/electronic meeting via Zoom

6:30 PM REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

The Charlottesville City Council met in an electronic meeting on Monday, March 1, 2021, in accordance with local ordinances to ensure continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease during the coronavirus pandemic. Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Nikuyah Walker and Councilors Heather Hill, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook. Vice Mayor Sena Magill notified Mayor Walker of her absence due to an emergency.

City Council observed a moment of silence.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council unanimously approved the meeting agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clerk of Council Kyna Thomas read announcements about free tax filing services

Mayor Walker announced the Budget Work Session for Thursday, March 4 at 4:00 p.m., and the March 5 application deadline for City boards and commissions.

Dr. Denise Bonds, Director of the Blue Ridge Health District, provided a Covid-19 update.

Councilor Hill read shared information about Community Development Block Grants available through the Community Investment Collaborative.

RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Walker presented a proclamation for Festival of the Book and Jane Kulow accepted with remarks.

CONSENT AGENDA*

Clerk Thomas read the following Consent Agenda items into the record:

1. MINUTES: January 19 Regular Meeting
2. RESOLUTION/APPROPRIATION: FY2020-2021 Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG) Substantial Action Plan Amendment and Reprogramming 2019 CDBG funds for COVID-19 Public Services (2nd reading)

- a. APPROPRIATION: Appropriation of Funds for 2020-2021 Community Development Block Grant COVID Rental Relief - \$244,950.82

**APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR
THE CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE’S 2020-2021
CDBG COVID RENTAL RELIEF**

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville previously approved the appropriation of certain sums of federal grant receipts to specific accounts in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds; and

WHEREAS, it now appears that these funds have not been spent in a timely manner and need to be reprogrammed as measured by the rate of expenditure of funds from the grantee’s line of credit (LOC) in accordance to 24 CFR 570.902(a); and

WHEREAS, the City Manager is hereby authorized to transfer funds between among such individual accounts as circumstances may require, to the extent permitted by applicable federal grant regulations; and

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that appropriations made to the following expenditure accounts in the CDBG fund are hereby reduced or increased by the respective amounts shown, and the balance accumulated in the Fund as a result of these adjustments is hereby re-appropriated to the respective accounts shown as follows:

Fund	Internal Order	Program	Proposed Revised Reduction	Proposed Revised Addition	G/L Account
218	1900332	Belmont 19/20	\$244,950.82		530670
218	1900399	CRHA Covid Rental Assistance		\$244,950.82	530670

- b. Approval of FY 2020-2021 Substantial Action Plan Amendment of the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan

**RESOLUTION
Approval of FY 2020-2021 Substantial Action Plan Amendment**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Charlottesville City Council hereby approves the FY 2020 - 2021 Minor Action Plan Amendment of the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. The

reprogrammed 2019 CDBG budget will be added into the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan for covid relief public service activities. No changes to the HOME budget will be made at this time.

3. Additional State Funding for Adoption Assistance - \$600,000 (carried)
4. Virginia Transit Association (V.T.A.) Free Transit Fare for Working Families Grant – \$180,750 (carried)

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council by a vote of 4-0 (Ayes: Hill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none; Absent: Magill) APPROVED the Consent Agenda.

CITY MANAGER RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY MATTERS

City Manager Chip Boyles shared an update on the following community matters:

1. Regarding sidewalks and crosswalks at Hazel and High Street, he shared information from Public Works that a study of this area was completed in September 2020 for the Safe Routes to School grant. The recommendations included near-term and permanent infrastructure. Installing sidewalks would require removal of 17 parking spaces. To address additional needs, Public Works will pursue a Safe Routes to School grant when the process opens up. The project was delayed due to Covid but is back on track.
2. Regarding credit card policies, he announced a work session scheduled for March 23 and that staff this would be an opportunity for Council to review its spending needs and funding options in order to inform the policy.
3. Regarding when the latest credit card issue became known, he advised that the City Attorney's Office was notified on December 4, 2020, with a question about a non-profit donation charged in October.
4. Regarding the number of recent evictions and foreclosures, he advised that he requested the information from the General District Court but had not yet received a response. He advised that the number was expected to be relatively low because of ongoing rental relief locally and from the State. In 2020 there were 34 evictions in the City of Charlottesville and 57 in Albemarle County.
5. Regarding the Charlottesville City Schools reconfiguration and Capital Improvement Plan, the report funded by the City is due in June and will give estimates and timelines for the reconfiguration.
6. Regarding the status of the manufacturing and installation of approved honorary street signs, Public Works completed the installation.
7. Related to the design of a historic marker for the slave auction block and plan for descendant community feedback, he advised that members of a Historic Resources Committee subcommittee met with descendants of individuals who had been traded at Court Square. They asked that no markers, temporary or permanent, be placed at the site

until there has been thorough and robust engagement with the descendants and community. The HRC agreed and will make plans for initial virtual engagement and other creative engagement options.

8. Regarding the Lewis, Clark and Sacajawea statue at West Main Street, the City's Procurement office has issued a request for proposals with a deadline of March 12.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Mayor Walker opened the floor for public comment.

1. Brielle DuFlon (Renting member and President of McGuffey Art Center), Kori Price and Derrick Waller (Curators from The Charlottesville Black Arts Collective) spoke about the McGuffey Art Center and an art show "Water, The Agony and Ecstasy of the Black Experience", running from 2/5-3/28
2. Carmelita Wood, representing Fifeville Neighborhood Association, spoke in support of the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan.
3. Nathan Walton, city resident and Executive Director of Abundant Life Ministries, spoke in support of the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan.
4. Tadrin Washington, city resident, spoke about impacts of the events of August 12, 2017, and living with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome. She asked for help from the city.
5. Sarah Malpass, city resident, Secretary of Fifeville Neighborhood Association and member of the Cherry Avenue Think Tank, spoke in support of the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan.
6. Colette Blount spoke about Council policies and replacing gender roles with neutral terms.
7. Robin Hoffman, city resident, spoke about Covid-19 vaccinations and oversight of outsourced agencies.
8. Mary Bauer, city resident and Chair of the Human Rights Commission (HRC), followed up on a letter sent to City Council earlier in the day on behalf of the HRC. The letter requested hiring the Executive Director of Human Rights and expressed concern about 1) the limitation of meetings; 2) adoption of an ordinance without providing additional resources; and 3) and the process for revising and adopting the recent ordinance on February 1. She highlighted concerns of individuals influencing the ordinance after the work done by the HRC.
9. Elizabeth Stark, city resident, spoke in support of the Housing Plan on the agenda. She also asked Council to divert funds from the Police Department to community-based programs for mental health, , domestic violence program support, food and housing. She asked for release of a detailed police department budget.
10. Don Gathers, city resident, spoke about signage for approved honorary street designations. He advised that he was not notified regarding his request. He spoke in support of the Housing Plan on the agenda.
11. Tanesha Hudson advised of the need to address temporary housing vouchers for residents. She spoke about targeting of Mayor Walker and about contracts.

12. Joy Johnson, city resident, speaking as a member of Charlottesville Low Income Housing Coalition (CLIHC), spoke of changes needed to address inequities in the housing crisis.
13. Jacquana Mason spoke about challenges with finding affordable housing in the City of Charlottesville and the application process. She also spoke about challenges with parents working long hours and not being able to spend needed time with children in order to pay for housing.
14. Matthew Gillikin, city resident, suggested creating a document to explain details of the police budget and using some police funds toward studying initiatives for new ways of policing.
15. Nancy Carpenter, city resident, spoke in support of other comments related to CLIHC. She echoed points made about the police budget, housing vouchers and affordable housing.
16. Almas Abdulla, law student, shared sentiments of earlier comments regarding affordable housing, and made additional comments about disparities in affordable housing and the need for inclusionary zoning.

The meeting recessed at 8:29 and reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

RESOLUTION*: Charlottesville Affordable Housing Plan – Endorsement Request

Alex Ikefuna, Deputy Director of Neighborhood Development Services, shared a summary of related Council actions, and introduced the Housing Plan consultants for the current phase of the project.

Project Manager Jennifer Koch, Associate Principal, Rhodeside-Harwell, shared background of "Cville Plans Together" efforts and introduced additional presenters from HR&A Advisors: Phillip Kash, Partner, and Sarah Kirk, Director.

From the project Executive Summary: "The recommendations within the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Plan are built with three guiding principles in mind: racial equity, regional collaboration, and a focus on a comprehensive approach. These guiding principles inform the design and implementation of recommended strategies and will enable the City to track the impacts of its affordable housing activities. Aligning the City's affordable housing policies, programs, and investments with these guiding principles will help the City to more effectively address the affordable housing needs of its residents and workers."

Mr. Ikefuna advised that the affordable housing component would influence other components of the Comprehensive Plan and zoning rewrite. Consultants answered a variety of questions from Council. Mr. Kash advised of the Top three priorities: 1) staff time to execute the plan, 2) commitment to getting through the Land Use rewrite including inclusionary zoning without

stalling; and 3) how program guidelines are written will determine how the funds are deployed and whether equity emerges as a priority.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Payne, Council by a vote of 4-0 (Ayes: Hill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none; Absent: Magill) APPROVED the resolution in support of the Affordable Housing Plan.

**RESOLUTION
TO ENDORSE AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN FOR THE CITY**

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville engaged the planning firm Rhodeside and Harwell to assist the City as necessary with an update of the City's Comprehensive Plan and to revise the City's zoning ordinance; and

WHEREAS, Rhodeside and Harwell, at the City's request, have studied existing housing conditions in Charlottesville, have reviewed studies and information previously assembled by City staff, conducted community engagement through a steering committee of local stakeholders, and met with the Planning Commission and City Council, all to prepare a robust strategy to promote the development of affordable housing within the City; and

WHEREAS, this City Council is asked to endorse the Affordable Housing Plan strategy presented to Council at its March 1, 2021 regular meeting, so that the strategies and recommendations set forth within the plan can be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Update; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Charlottesville City Council hereby endorses the Affordable Housing Plan presented at Council's March 1, 2021 regular meeting.

RESOLUTION*: Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan

Matt Alfele, City Planner, introduced the item and thanked several planning process participants, noting over thirty public engagement events. He gave special thanks to Nick Morrison for over two years of continuous engagement and presence at all outreach events. The adoption of this plan would have an immediate impact on how the Zoning Code is rewritten.

Nick Morrison presented a summary of community engagement efforts including:

- Cherry Avenue Think Tank
- Open House Events
- Focus groups

- Front porch discussions
- Fifeville Neighborhood Association meetings.

He shared the neighborhood vision and presented recommendations for next steps.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council by a vote of 4-0 (Ayes: Hill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none; Absent: Magill) APPROVED the resolution in support of including the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan in the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

**RESOLUTION
TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY
OF CHARLOTTESVILLE (2013) TO INCLUDE THE
CHERRY AVENUE SMALL AREA PLAN**

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021, after notice was given as required by law, the Charlottesville Planning Commission and Charlottesville City Council conducted a joint public hearing on a proposed amendment to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Charlottesville (“Comprehensive Plan”), to include the contents of the proposed Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution recommending approval by the City Council of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and certifying a copy of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Council for its consideration; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Charlottesville City Council hereby approves and adopts the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan certified to this Council by the Charlottesville Planning Commission (February 2021) as an amendment to the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

RESOLUTION*: Honorary Street Designation requests and Policy Discussion

Councilors agreed to table the honorary street designation policy discussion to a future agenda to allow time for staff to develop recommendations for revisions to the policy.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Payne, Council by the following vote APPROVED the honorary naming of Gregory Swanson Way: 3-1 (Ayes: Hill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: Walker; Absent: Magill). Mayor Walker commented on the desire to honor individuals with more local presence.

**RESOLUTION
TO APPROVE HONORARY STREET NAME DESIGNATION**

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville City Code Section 28-4 reserves to City Council the authority to modify the names of City streets;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia THAT:

3rd Street N.E. (between East High Street and East Main Street) shall temporarily be given the honorary name “Gregory Swanson Way” until such time as the Commonwealth of Virginia can mark the location of this historically significant court case with a permanent state marker.

GENERAL BUSINESS

REPORT: City Manager presentation of the Proposed FY 2022 City Operating and Capital Improvement Budget

City Manager Boyles introduced the Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed City Budget. He thanked staff for their work on the budget and the award-winning budget presentation for the 19th consecutive year. Of note, the Covid-19 pandemic had immediate and severe impact on economic activity in the city, particularly in the restaurant, retail and hospitality industries. He noted the following budget themes based on Council priorities:

- affordable housing
- equity
- workforce development and economic development
- safety and security
- investing in employees

Ryan Davidson and Krisy Hammill, Senior Budget and Management Analysts, presented details of the budget proposal and advised that upcoming work sessions would address specific areas.

After clarifying questions and comments from Council, staff noted that upcoming work sessions would address affordable housing, outside agency allocations, general revenues and expenses, the Capital Improvement Program, and the police department budget, among other topics.

Councilors expressed interest in seeing more detailed departmental budgets and narratives for departmental programmatic priorities.

REPORT: Charlottesville City Schools FY 2022 approved Budget presentation

Lisa Torres, School Board Chair, introduced the FY2022 Schools Budget and shared Charlottesville City Schools rankings as well as other accomplishments and priorities.

Dr. Rosa Atkins, Superintendent, reviewed changes from FY2021 to FY2022.

Kim Powell, Assistant Superintendent, shared additional information about revenues, expenses, enrollment and recommendations.

Council asked clarifying questions and shared feedback.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other business items.

MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

Brad Slocum, city resident, spoke about Charlottesville Police Department accountability and budget transparency, and shared ideas for reduction of funds.

Chris Schopper spoke about the Affordable Housing Plan and asked Council to consider adverse impacts of zoning changes. He also spoke about downtown parking, housing demands, and making the smaller project development process easier.

Tanisha Hudson spoke about budget transparency and unnecessary spending, requesting that all departments be treated equally regarding transparency.

The meeting adjourned 12:37 a.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Clerk of Council, Kyna Thomas