

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY

MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2004

MOUNT HOLLY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & RESCUE HEADQUARTERS STATION

The Work Session of the City Council of Mount Holly was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Bryan Hough. The following were present:

Mayor Bryan Hough
Mayor Pro-Tem Michael Helms
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris
Councilman Jim Hope
Councilwoman Pat Hubbard
Councilman Frank McLean
*Councilman David Moore
City Attorney Kemp Michael

City Manager David Kraus
Assistant to the City Manager Jamie Guffey
Assistant to the City Manager Danny Jackson
Police Chief Bence Hoyle
Public Utilities Director Don Price
Street and Solid Waste Director Mike Santmire
Community Development Planner Greg Beal
Communication Director Megan Hanks

** Councilman Moore had been appointed at the regular meeting of the City Council on Monday, December 8, 2003. He was sworn in at the regular meeting of the City Council on Monday, January 12, 2004. He participated in this work session but did not vote.*

The Invocation was led by Councilman Hope.

Item #1 on the Agenda – To Discuss New Regulations on Family Care Homes and Coexisting Uses.

Mr. Beal presented information on the City's current policies on family care homes and coexisting uses. This presentation was given for Council's information.

Item #2 on the Agenda – To Discuss Items for the Retreat Agenda

Mr. Kraus asked if any Member of Council had a specific item to be added to the retreat agenda next weekend. Council discussed the format of the retreat.

Councilwoman Hubbard MOVED that Council adjourn to attend the visitation of friends for Mrs. Mary Ann Ponder, mother of former City Manager Phil Ponder, Jr. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hope and was approved unanimously.

Council went into recess at 7:14 pm.

Mayor Hough called the meeting into order at 8:00 pm.

Item #3 on the Agenda -- *Presentation by Lucy Penegar on Historic Preservation.*

Tabled until later in the meeting.

Item #4 on the Agenda -- *Presentation by Ron Morgan on Visioning for A&E Building.*

Mr. Morgan presented information on the potential development of the A&E Building. He stated that the City stands to benefit \$500,000-\$1 million from this building. He discussed how the appearance of this building is essential to the image of the City's gateway. He proposed three ways he could assist the City with this process:

- a. assist in nominating the mill as an historic landmark and prepare all tax credit applications;
- b. work with Council and community leaders to craft a vision for the A&E Building which will be responsive to community values and maximum usefulness; and
- c. formulate a tax credit strategy which will generate between \$500-\$750,000 of cash for the development of the project.

Mr. Morgan recommended forming a a small taskforce, no more than 20 people, who would assist with this process.

Mr. Morgan presented a slideshow of other historic mills with which he has helped restore.

Councilwoman Hubbard asked if a lease situation/buy back program would be more complicated since we already own the building?

Mr. Morgan responded that he did not know. This could be problematic and we would have to research legalities.

Mr. Kraus confirmed that we have closed on this building. The City owns the building.

Mayor Hough thanked Mr. Morgan for his presentation.

Item #5 on the Agenda -- *Presentation by Tripp Muldrow on Comprehensive Planning.*

Mayor Hough introduced Mr. Muldrow as someone who may answer our questions about how the City could move forward into a possible master/comprehensive plan.

Mr. Muldrow introduced Mike Bunce, an urban designer and master planner from Rock Hill

Mr. Muldrow presented pictures of several of his projects. He is familiar with Ron Morgan's work in his hometown of Greenville, SC.

Mr. Muldrow presented: *The Development of a Great Community, A True Story* on PowerPoint.

Mr. Muldrow discussed similarities between Cary, NC and Greer, SC.

Mr. Muldrow discussed the following downtown strategies he has implemented:

- The Heart of Greer (promoting spirit of pride among residents)
- The Historic Village (historic collection of buildings)
- A 21st Century Marketplace (a way to look at the demographics of the city)
- A Kids Village (children's theatre, fountain downtown)
- The Uptown Lifestyle
- The Investment Strategy (long term issues—office space, parking provisions, streetscape improvements)

Mr. Muldrow stated that South Carolina has tax increment bonding. North Carolina does not have this opportunity. He stated that this would be highly beneficial to the City of Mount Holly.

Mr. Muldrow discussed retail strategies, including:

- Retail catalyst
- Preservation of ground floor retail spaces
- Marketing/promotions/recruitment

Mr. Muldrow discussed the Greer Development Corporation that is dedicated to community wide economic development and industrial recruitment.

Mr. Muldrow also discussed Albemarle/Stanly County, NC, Leesburg, VA, and Blacksburg, VA.

Mayor Hough opened the floor to public comment.

Jefferson Fortner recommending following a similar process for the development of the A&E Building.

David Jordan agreed that the City needs to work on informing the general public, specifically outside of Mount Holly, about the growth in our City.

Mike Kahre recommended that the City have one comprehensive plan to bring all the groups together and to push the image of the City into its future.

Leslie McCarty liked the idea of a strategy board, which would organize the input from Council, the community, and city staff.

Councilwoman Hubbard liked the idea of the image. She stated that Mount Holly currently does not have an image and we need to figure out what our primary image should be so we are all focused and on one page. We could incorporate the river as part of a City logo.

Mr. Muldrow stated that you have to create an image that is true to the community so that outsiders will buy into that image. He stated that the way to use your image to get people into your downtown is to create a fresh new image—or reinvent what's already in use—into a way to direct people into downtown.

Jefferson Fortner stated that maybe we need to move forward with getting a new city slogan.

Mr. Muldrow emphasized that the City needs to be proactive with development standards, instead of being reactive to whatever a developer brings to the City.

Jefferson Fortner stated that the downtown district needs to be broader than what it currently is thought to be.

Buzz Elliott asked what do we do to take advantage of our surrounding area, especially with I-485 opening soon?

Mr. Bunce stated that this is when land-use planning takes a major role.

Mayor Hough recognized Lucy Penegar.

Mrs. Penegar said she is thrilled that the City is considering adding historic preservation as a part of our master planning. She said that the small towns around Charlotte are what make this region unique. She said that you get 40% back of your investment in historic buildings in tax credits.

Mrs. Penegar stated that one option for historic preservation is to have a local historic register. The City could set guidelines such as restricting changes to the front of a building.

Mrs. Penegar stated that there are three main options for historic preservation:

- Individually
- Local district
- National district

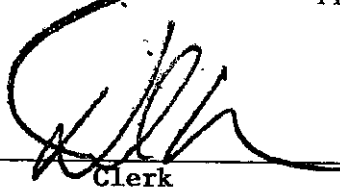
Mrs. Penegar stated that the City should consider becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG), if we determine that Mount Holly cannot ride on Gaston County's CLG license.

Mayor Hough thanked Mrs. Penegar for attending the City Council meeting and for sharing her expertise and insight with Mount Holly.

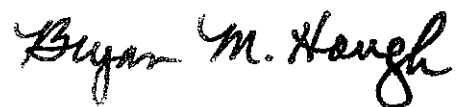
Councilmen Hope read Proclamation 01-06-04 A (attached).

Councilman Hope MOVED that to approve the proclamation. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Harris and was approved unanimously.

Councilwoman Harris MOVED to adjourn at 9:18 pm. The motion was seconded by Councilman McLean and was approved unanimously.



Clerk



Mayor