

Ben Fulmer

From: Virginia Duquet <virginia_duquet@charter.net> on behalf of Virginia Duquet
Sent: Wednesday, July 05, 2017 6:37 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: St. Lawrence Green Community Gardens

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to let you know that I am thrilled about the new ventures being started in the former “pit of despair”. I think it is great that the people of Asheville are finding ways to use this area and make it a beautiful downtown space not an eyesore. I urge you to support these local community efforts and to prioritize them over development of the site that only benefits corporations and tourists. We do more than enough of that development already! Instead, please allow city water for the Elder and Sage gardens so that these downtown residents can continue to tend and expand their garden space more easily. As a taxpayer, I am happy to see city funds used for this purpose and am not concerned about giving away water to this group and for this purpose. Rather I consider it money well spent. Thanks for your continued support and willingness to consider solutions for this area that help Asheville residents and preserve some of our unique downtown character.

Sincerely,

Virginia Duquet
119 Estes Court
Asheville, 28806

Ben Fulmer

From: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlouncil.com> on behalf of Esther Manheimer
Sent: Wednesday, July 05, 2017 1:35 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; Jaime Matthews; Judith Bicking; gjackson@achevillenc.gov
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence Green

Gary - can you get us some information about the timing of bringing water to the site?

On Wed, Jul 5, 2017 at 1:15 PM Judith Bicking <graphics@bicking.com> wrote:

Please supply water to the St. Lawrence Green, Elder and Sage Community Garden and please save it from development.

This garden truly represents Asheville's character – a caring community coming together to preserve a fragment of nature and to create a much needed respite in a city rapidly losing both nature and character through development.

Sincerely,
J. Bicking

Ben Fulmer

From: Judith Bicking <graphics@bicking.com> on behalf of Judith Bicking
Sent: Wednesday, July 05, 2017 1:15 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence Green

Please supply water to the St. Lawrence Green, Elder and Sage Community Garden and please save it from development.

This garden truly represents Asheville's character – a caring community coming together to preserve a fragment of nature and to create a much needed respite in a city rapidly losing both nature and character through development.

Sincerely,
J. Bicking

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 8:15 PM
To: Joel Burgess
Subject: Fwd: RFP for design on Haywood

...and FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecilbothwell@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 31, 2017 at 5:23 PM
Subject: Re: RFP for design on Haywood
To: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>
Cc: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, Cathy Ball <cball@ashevillenc.gov>, councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>

Meanwhile, as indicated by the park effort recommended by Mayor Manheimer, I think we need to immediately energize multiple efforts in St. Lawrence Green.

If Portland, Oregon could host 162 events last summer, why can't we do the same? Why are we reluctant to have exciting things happen on this property?

What, really, is the reluctance beyond some other goal of selling our City property?

-c

On Mar 31, 2017, at 8:57 AM, Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov> wrote:

We will work it in that way. Thanks for the direction!

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 30, 2017, at 2:28 PM, Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Gary, your suggested process below, first to PED and then to Council, looks like a good one.

On Mar 30, 2017, at 1:08 PM, Cecil Bothwell <cecilbothwell@gmail.com> wrote:

makes sense to me if the RFP is as described in this thread.

thanks

-c

On Mar 30, 2017, at 12:02 PM, Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov> wrote:

Absolutely. My preference too. A month for turnaround would be minimum. Given complexity and workloads, 6-8 weeks is more realistic.

From: Gordon Smith
[mailto:gordonsmith@avlouncil.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2017 11:59 AM
To: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>
Cc: Cathy Ball <cball@ashevillenc.gov>; councilgroup
<AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: Re: RFP for design on Haywood

Thanks, Gary. It would be my preference to move more rapidly.

Gordon

On Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 11:22 AM, Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov> wrote:

Cathy - Thanks for the explanation of what we typically do with RFPs.

Esther - This answers the question about what we typically do unless otherwise directed by action if Council. The key thing to remember here is that staff would, in the next month or two, would be preparing a request for proposals from design and engineering professionals. The request will be for submittals indicating their qualifications and track record of experience to perform the work, as outlined in the documents submitted to Council by the Council appointed task force. The purpose of the RFP process would be to find the best design professionals and firm(s). As with the Comprehensive Plan consultant RFP, the ultimate decision to accept the selection and authorize the contract for services would be made by Council action. This would be months from now. I presume the staff recommendation of the selected firm(s) would make a prelim stop at PED on way to regular agenda.

We have not planned on it but if you wish to add to the typical staff driven process, I concur with Cathy's suggestion for the review to occur at PED prior to full Council presentation. This extra step of policy review, could be intended to confirm staff's plan to structure the RFP - the scope of services, including infrastructure study, design work and expected leadership with community engagement (charette for example).

Gary

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Cathy Ball
<cball@ashevillenc.gov>
Date: March 30, 2017 at 10:39:42 AM EDT
To: Gary Jackson
<GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: RE: RFP for design on Haywood

Gary,

I would note that we typically do not take the RFP back to Council but we have in some cases taken the scope of work to Council or committee for review. We did this in the RFP for the developer of the Park Maintenance property. I am not aware that we have ever informally given it to each member for independent review. This could be a real challenge to resolve the various input on the scope.

I would recommend that if we go get Council input we go to PED and then to full Council. I think we would need clear direction on the scope. (The Mayor's option #3)

Thanks for letting me provide input.

Cathy

From: Gary Jackson
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2017 6:14 PM
To: Cathy Ball <cball@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: Fwd: RFP for design on Haywood

Suggest a response please.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Esther
Manheimer

<esthermanheimer@avlCouncil.com>

Date: March 29,
2017 at 4:15:13 PM
EDT

To: Gary Jackson
<GJackson@ashville.nc.gov>

**Subject: Re: RFP
for design on
Haywood**

What's our normal
protocol for rfps?

On Mar 29, 2017, at
3:03 PM, Gary
Jackson
<GJackson@ashville.nc.gov> wrote:

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On
Mar
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2017,
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Gary
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<GJackson@ashville.nc.gov>

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Ben Fulmer

From: Andrew Fletcher <andrewjfletcher@gmail.com> on behalf of Andrew Fletcher
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2017 10:39 AM
To: Chris Joyell
Cc: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Could you send your powerpoint from last night?
Attachments: Haywood Presentation_ March_28th.pptx

Here's the presentation.

- Andrew

On Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 8:05 AM, Chris Joyell <chrisjoyell@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Gordon,

Andrew has the slideshow, so he can send that along. I've sent everything off to our graphic designer so we should have the completed final report with graphics by next week. Apologies for not having that ready for last night. We were still receiving edits from the team as late as last Friday. Your last sentence does not compute.

Chris

On Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 7:55 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Hey, y'all,

Great job last night.

Could you send over the powerpoint you used last night and/or the Final Report with the images included. A Council Member is saying that nothing that happened last night means there will be anything but a park at the site.

Thanks,

Gordon

--

Chris Joyell, Executive Director
Asheville Design Center
67 Broadway Street
Asheville 28801

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1524
Asheville, NC 28802

Cell: [828.782.7894](tel:828.782.7894)

chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

Ben Fulmer

From: Norman C Wussow <mnpopi@charter.net> on behalf of Norman C Wussow
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 4:48 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Green

GREEN SPACE ONLY, PLEASE!

There are lots of other places for commercial interests!

Norman Wussow
4 Mayflower Drive
Asheville 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Ann McMartin <AnnMcMartin@hotmail.com> on behalf of Ann McMartin
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 3:08 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Green Space

Good Afternoon City Council Members,

I am contacting you today to ask that you design the St. Lawrence vacant space into a Green Space for all of Asheville to enjoy! With so much building downtown it might be nice to have a place where people can go and relax, meet friends, and connect with nature. Downtown is becoming one big massive cement and pavement mass and we need some trees and grass to balance all the recent development. I urge you to vote to make this space a Green space.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely
Ann McMartin

Ben Fulmer

From: Bonnie Cooper <bonniecooperphotography@yahoo.com> on behalf of Bonnie Cooper
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2017 12:26 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Park Space

Please maintain the area around St. Lawrence Church as green space/park space for all of Asheville.

Thank you,
Bonnie Cooper

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:57 PM
To: DrMaxFrontOffice
Subject: Re: Public Park Space in Asheville

Thanks for writing in, Dr. Rouslin. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:35 PM DrMaxFrontOffice <drmaxchiro@bellsouth.net> wrote:
To the Asheville City Council,

I wish to register my opinion as a 20-year resident of Asheville and a past resident of places dealing with rapid business/tourist development. I have also lived on Manhattan and can attest to the vital importance of parks in enhancing the quality of life for residents and attractiveness for visitors. A city like ours will not thrive long-term laid out like a shopping mall, with businesses crowding shoulder to shoulder and a lack of green space and sky. We should take a cue from the success of the Biltmore Property which is enjoyed as much for the gardens as the house.

I am in favor of the City creating a park in the area by the St Lawrence church.

Sincerely,
Dr. Max Rouslin
81 Sheridan Rd.
Asheville 03



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Ben Fulmer

From: DrMaxFrontOffice <drmaxchiro@bellsouth.net> on behalf of DrMaxFrontOffice
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:35 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Public Park Space in Asheville

To the Asheville City Council,

I wish to register my opinion as a 20-year resident of Asheville and a past resident of places dealing with rapid business/tourist development. I have also lived on Manhattan and can attest to the vital importance of parks in enhancing the quality of life for residents and attractiveness for visitors. A city like ours will not thrive long-term laid out like a shopping mall, with businesses crowding shoulder to shoulder and a lack of green space and sky. We should take a cue from the success of the Biltmore Property which is enjoyed as much for the gardens as the house.

I am in favor of the City creating a park in the area by the St Lawrence church.

Sincerely,
Dr. Max Rouslin
81 Sheridan Rd.
Asheville 03



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 6:56 PM
To: akeeneredge@yahoo.com
Subject: Re: Planning Report for the "Pit of Despair"

Thanks for writing in, Mr. Beech. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending by a margin of 16-1, a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. Both the Basilica and Friends of St. Lawrence Green advocates were represented on the Task Force. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 5:52 PM, <akeeneredge@yahoo.com> wrote:

This is an issue where the citizens of Asheville have clearly spoken multiple times through the years and through the most recent election. Our message is clear, the Pit should be transformed to open green space. And I agree with that.

I have an alternative that the Commission seems not to have explored and would like to suggest that if the Council feels that it must have taxable space, why not create a single floor retail space with a green roof with grass shrubs and trees?

This is a plan that Boston has put in place in the "Big Dig" when they suppressed the subways in a large part of town, also the City of New York has used a similar plan for the abandoned subway overheads. It works.

I would hate to see the Council go against the clear will of the people in this matter.

Michael E Beech

111 Ashwood Lane

Asheville, NC 28803

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Ben Fulmer

From: BellaSharpe <starpillows4u@yahoo.com> on behalf of BellaSharpe
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 6:09 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: st. lawrence park

Hello City Council Member

Truly it is time to allow breathing space in downtown Asheville. The tall and empty hotels have blocked the western mountain views.
Do we really need yet another hotel with 50% combined occupancy year round.? I often visit your meetings and always ask myself "where is the vision"?
Asheville HAS the potential to become a futuristic, progressive, clean and self sufficient city, please allow some savings grace to all of the people who live and move here. Vote Green

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 4:01 PM
To: Judith Bicking
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence area

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Bicking. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 3:13 PM, Judith Bicking <graphics@bicking.com> wrote:

I live in Asheville and think that the city-owned property in the St. Lawrence area should become green space.

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 4:00 PM
To: Neil Barrett
Subject: Re: Basilica of St. Lawrence

Thanks for writing in, Neil. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 3:58 PM, Neil Barrett <nemacbar@att.net> wrote:

If New York City was able to allow for a large green space, otherwise known as Central Park, in the center of Manhattan, why is it that the city of Asheville, can't commit to keeping the area in front of the Basilica "green". A park in that area would add tremendously to the character of the city and bring a certain natural beauty that would far outshine more buildings for various retail purposes.

Neil M. Barrett
nemacbar@att.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Judith Bicking <graphics@bicking.com> on behalf of Judith Bicking
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 3:13 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence area

I live in Asheville and think that the city-owned property in the St. Lawrence area should become green space.

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 2:33 PM
To: deemare@juno.com
Subject: Re: Green Space

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Stambaugh. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 2:28 PM, deemare@juno.com <deemare@juno.com> wrote:

Hi,

I'm really concerned about what's going to happen with that little space near St. Lawrence basilica. We really need a green space there where people can sit and relax around trees and plants to get away from the hubbub of the city. If it gets turned into business space, then we'll never have the opportunity to have a green space there again. Green spaces in cities are really important, and the larger Asheville grows, the more we'll need green spaces. It would be like a little jewel showing off another of Asheville's jewels (St. Lawrence basilica). Please turn this site into a green space for the people and to add to the beauty of our special city.

Thanks,

Ruth Stambaugh

Ben Fulmer

From: deemare@juno.com
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 2:28 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Green Space

Hi,

I'm really concerned about what's going to happen with that little space near St. Lawrence basilica. We really need a green space there where people can sit and relax around trees and plants to get away from the hubbub of the city. If it gets turned into business space, then we'll never have the opportunity to have a green space there again. Green spaces in cities are really important, and the larger Asheville grows, the more we'll need green spaces. It would be like a little jewel showing off another of Asheville's jewels (St. Lawrence basilica). Please turn this site into a green space for the people and to add to the beauty of our special city.

Thanks,
Ruth Stambaugh

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:52 AM
To: MARNIE MIKELL
Subject: Re: St Lawrence green

Ms. Mikell,

Thanks for writing in. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 10:47 AM, MARNIE MIKELL <artdept@great-eastern-sun.com> wrote:

Dear City Council,

Please vote to use the city-owned property across from the basilica as a park, not a "business incubator". We certainly have enough other space within city limits for businesses and don't need to sacrifice this area to the Money God. Will this be the Council that finally represents Asheville's residents, instead of the developers?

Respectfully,

Marnie Mikell

Art Director

Great Eastern Sun

artdept@great-eastern-sun.com

828-418-0402



Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:46 AM
To: Jeanine Maland
Subject: Re: St Lawrence area - your vote

Ms. Maland,

Thanks for writing in. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 10:35 AM, Jeanine Maland <jeanine.maland@gmail.com> wrote:
I urge each of you to do the right thing for our Asheville citizens and conscious community.

Many of us view your critical city council vote as a tiny step for Life! on this fragile planet.

Vote for a fully Green Space for the St. Lawrence area. Stiffen-up your spines.

Vote for a beautiful view for the people of St. Lawrence.

Vote for Asheville residents & tourists sitting on the bench talking, discussing, reading, thinking...

Vote for the chatter of the birds; for the blooming flowers; for the variety of new life.

Thanks to each of you for your important service to Asheville - to our present and to our future.

And much gratitude to those of you who have consistently listened to and supported our passion for keeping the St. Lawrence area a FULLY GREEN SPACE.

Sincerely,
Jeanine Maland
Asheville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Schmidt Family <fortunessmiled4@gmail.com> on behalf of Schmidt Family
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:36 AM
To: 'Gordon Smith'
Subject: RE: I believe the city-owned property in the St. Lawrence area should become green space

Thanks for the response.

David Schmidt
255-4753

From: Gordon Smith [mailto:gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:34 AM
To: Schmidt Family
Subject: Re: I believe the city-owned property in the St. Lawrence area should become green space

Mr. Schmidt,

Thanks for writing in. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. Hotel is not among the recommended uses. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 10:30 AM, Schmidt Family <fortunessmiled4@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear City Council,

That area will be hopelessly congested if a hotel is built there. A park is much more valuable in many ways.

We have enough hotels, we want a park.

David Schmidt

73 Evelyn place 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Jeanine Maland <jeanine.maland@gmail.com> on behalf of Jeanine Maland
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:35 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence area - your vote

I urge each of you to do the right thing for our Asheville citizens and conscious community.

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And much gratitude to those of you who have consistently listened to and supported our passion for keeping the St. Lawrence area a FULLY GREEN SPACE.

Sincerely,
Jeanine Maland
Asheville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Shinesign@aol.com
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:34 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence area

Please do not put big business before residents. WE live here and want that space to be used for us, a green space for the population of Asheville as well as the tourist industry to enjoy.

Thank you
Shiner Antiorio

We are Divine enough to ask and we are Important enough to Receive
Wayne Dyer

Ben Fulmer

From: Schmidt Family <fortunesmiled4@gmail.com> on behalf of Schmidt Family
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 10:30 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: I believe the city-owned property in the St. Lawrence area should become green space

Dear City Council,
That area will be hopelessly congested if a hotel is built there. A park is much more valuable in many ways.
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David Schmidt
73 Evelyn place 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:48 AM
To: Keldwyn Teves
Subject: Re: St Lawrence property

Keldwyn,

I hope you'll keep your mind open to the recommendations of the Task Force, which were approved by a vote of 16-1, including members of St. Lawrence Green. Since the park will cost money to create and maintain, there is an argument for having some revenue created on site.

Gordon

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 9:26 AM, Keldwyn Teves <keldwyn@bellsouth.net> wrote:
The overwhelming residential response is to use the entire SMALL space for the people and nature. There really is no reason to build more commercial buildings other than greed. Please listen to us
Keldwyn

On Mar 27, 2017, at 9:22 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 9:19 AM, Keldwyn Teves <keldwyn@bellsouth.net> wrote:
Please please please listen to the thousands of residents who have let you know over and over and over that we need and want this to be a Green space.
Our downtown is overdeveloped with hotels, stores, etc.

Last summer I tried to go downtown on a Tuesday at 1:30 to watch a film at the Fine Arts and there was not one parking space in the entire downtown area. I drove around for over 35 minutes, and finally had to come home.

Our city is no longer resident friendly during tourist season. Are we ONLY a tourist destination or do those who live here deserve some amenities we can use and enjoy? Is developer money the only thing you listen to and care about? Please listen to us. Give us this very small parcel of land for beauty and respite from the towering hotels.

With hope
Keldwyn Teves

|

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:47 AM
To: Anne Slatton
Subject: Re: St Lawrence Green Space

Ms. Slatton,

Thanks for writing in. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 9:34 AM, Anne Slatton <aslatton@unca.edu> wrote:

Dear City Council:

Please consider using the undeveloped area by St. Lawrence as a green space for our city. The downtown area does not need another development in that small area, but we could use some more trees!

Thanks for your time,

--

Anne Slatton

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:23 AM
To: healing@billwalz.com
Subject: Re: St Lawrence Greenspace

Bill,

Thanks for reaching out. The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 9:20 AM, <healing@billwalz.com> wrote:

If NYC can allow trillions of dollars of potential commercial property and tax revenue to be devoted to Central Park, the same with San Francisco and Golden Gate Park, with Chicago and Lincoln Park, Boston and the Charles River Park - and the list goes on, city after city recognizing the value of green space, supposedly higher consciousness Asheville can give up one block to the aesthetics and refinement of a small park sitting opposite the beauty of St. Lawrence. Do the will of the people not the developers!

**Bill Walz
Asheville**

Ben Fulmer

From: healing@billwalz.com
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:21 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Greenspace

If NYC can allow trillions of dollars of potential commercial property and tax revenue to be devoted to Central Park, the same with San Francisco and Golden Gate Park, with Chicago and Lincoln Park, Boston and the Charles River Park - and the list goes on, city after city recognizing the value of green space, supposedly higher consciousness Asheville can give up one block to the aesthetics and refinement of a small park sitting opposite the beauty of St. Lawrence. Do the will of the people not the developers!

**Bill Walz
Asheville**

Ben Fulmer

From: Keldwyn Teves <keldwyn@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Keldwyn Teves
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 9:20 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence property

Please please please listen to the thousands of residents who have let you know over and over and over that we need and want this to be a Green space.

Our downtown is overdeveloped with hotels, stores, etc.

Last summer I tried to go downtown on a Tuesday at 1:30 to watch a film at the Fine Arts and there was not one parking space in the entire downtown area. I drove around for over 35 minutes, and finally had to come home.

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With hope
Keldwyn Teves

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:58 AM
To: Cynthia Heil
Subject: Re: Green space at St. Lawrence

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:46 AM, Cynthia Heil <cheil17@att.net> wrote:

Please consider making Asheville a city for its residents, not developers, chain businesses, and tourists. They all have quite a chunk of our city now. We would like to keep what little is left for the people who live here, people who have a vested interest in our city, people who VOTE here.

Please consider the downtown residents who want a green space, maybe even a place where they can have a community garden.

Please give the residents a park at the subj. location.

Cindy Heil

Asheville, NC 28806

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:58 AM
To: Maureen Motley
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence Park

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:54 AM, Maureen Motley <maureenmozi@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear city council members,

Please don't disappoint the Asheville voters who elected you. We don't need another commercial development in downtown Asheville. We need a lovely green space for residents and tourists to enjoy.

Please vote for a Nother green space to enrich our fair city.

Sincerely ,
Maureen Motley Zitin

Sent from my iPhone
Responses may be abbreviated

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:56 AM
To: Susan Eggerton
Subject: Re: greenspace

Susan,

The Task Force was made up of all sorts of representatives from the community, and the composition was unanimously decided by City Council. I hope you'll be open to their findings, representing a year-long deep dive into the site issues, financial issues, and study of placemaking.

Gordon

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:53 AM, Susan Eggerton <s.eggerton52@roastedgarlic.net> wrote:
Great but let's skip the commercial elements....

On Mar 27, 2017, at 8:19 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:10 AM, Susan Eggerton <s.eggerton52@roastedgarlic.net> wrote:
I am strongly in favor of making the lot across from St. Lawrence a park or greenspace. Our city is changing rapidly. The taller buildings are and will make the downtown darker, colder. Please do the right & forward-looking thing of not developing that site. Make St. Lawrence green!

Susan Eggerton
207 Pearson Drive
28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Bev O <theschlag@aol.com> on behalf of Bev O
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:54 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: GREENSPACE

Please do not waste anymore time deciding this. The city NEEDS to provide green space downtown and the St. Lawrence property is the perfect place for it. DO THE RIGHT THING NOW!
Truly,
Bev Ohler

Ben Fulmer

From: Cynthia Heil <cheil17@att.net> on behalf of Cynthia Heil
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:46 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Green space at St. Lawrence

Please consider making Asheville a city for its residents, not developers, chain businesses, and tourists. They all have quite a chunk of our city now. We would like to keep what little is left for the people who live here, people who have a vested interest in our city, people who VOTE here.

Please consider the downtown residents who want a green space, maybe even a place where they can have a community garden.

Please give the residents a park at the subj. location.

Cindy Heil

Asheville, NC 28806

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:42 AM
To: DONALD HARLAND
Subject: Re: St Lawrence Park

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:41 AM, DONALD HARLAND <ddharland@bellsouth.net> wrote:
The City owned property in St. Lawrence should be green space. We do not need more buildings, hotels, or retail outlets in this area.

Donald Harland
Candler, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: DONALD HARLAND <dharland@bellsouth.net> on behalf of DONALD HARLAND
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:41 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Park

The City owned property in St. Lawrence should be green space. We do not need more buildings, hotels, or retail outlets in this area.

Donald Harland
Candler, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:40 AM
To: juli Fleur
Subject: Re: RE St Lawrence Green

The good news is that City Council unanimously approved a Task Force to identify how to move forward with the site. That Task Force is returning its findings, after a year-long intensive examination of the site and its possibilities/challenges. It's my understanding that the Task Force is recommending a combination of passive civic space, active civic space, and some commercial elements. I look forward to hearing their presentation on Tuesday.

Thanks for your input,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:38 AM, juli Fleur <jewelfleur@hotmail.com> wrote:

To whom it may concern,

I believe the green area should be reserved only for a park. We have enough building happening in Asheville - more green space is always a good thing. Spaces to sit and reflect and take a rest whether you are a tourist or local are needed - sometimes its hard to decide where to eat and you need a place to sit and think about it. Or maybe your cranky kid needs to run free for a bit. Im sure there are many good reasons to create a green space in that spot.

Juli Hoyer

Asheville Resident

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Ben Fulmer

From: juli Fleur <jewelfleur@hotmail.com> on behalf of juli Fleur
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:38 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: RE St Lawrence Green

To whom it may concern,

I believe the green area should be reserved only for a park. We have enough building happening in Asheville - more green space is always a good thing. Spaces to sit and reflect and take a rest whether you are a tourist or local are needed - sometimes its hard to decide where to eat and you need a place to sit and think about it. Or maybe your cranky kid needs to run free for a bit. Im sure there are many good reasons to create a green space in that spot.

Juli Hoyer

Asheville Resident

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Ben Fulmer

From: Claire S <claire28803@yahoo.com> on behalf of Claire S
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:20 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Green Space Attn: J. Mayfield

Now that we have so many new hotels, surely there is enough tax revenue to create green space across from St Lawrence. Please don't let the citizens of Asheville down on this.

Also I understand that Julie Mayfield is the council member most involved with directing funds collected from the hotel tax. PLEASE devote some of these funds to fixing the sidewalks in Biltmore Village used everyday by visitors to our city. It is only a matter of time before the city is sued for these unsafe walkways.

*Thank you,
C.V. Schnedler*

Ben Fulmer

From: maryahecker@aol.com
Sent: Monday, March 27, 2017 8:18 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Please place only a park at St Lawrence Green

Please show Western North Carolina that our local governments care more about the physical and emotional well being of its people than real estate greed.

I was born in NC 55 years ago and I firmly believe that real estate greed has about destroyed Asheville, Hendersonville and the natural environment of NC. If

Asheville is a GREEN city it does not need business at this site. If its officials were forward thinking they would recognize that a GREEN SPACE on this site

will make it more attractive to tourist, residents, and business. Have they heard that some of the most attractive, expensive built communities now include

a real organic garden in the middle. St Louis has several worthwhile parks and a Botanical Garden. Asheville has a minuscule Botanical Garden and small

city parks. The Green Space will also allow one of Asheville's most beautiful historic landmarks to be highlighted. People can go to other cities and states to

shop at the type of businesses or live in the condos some want to put on this site. If you will allow it to exist only in

Asheville will people be able to relax and

meditate in St. Lawrence Green.

Please Give Western NC this GREEN SPACE.

Mary A. G. Hecker

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2017 8:07 AM
To: Chris Joyell
Subject: Re: Julie Nelson Haywood St. Advisory Task Force

On Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 7:25 PM, Chris Joyell <chrisjoyell@gmail.com> wrote:
Will do.

On Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 7:16 PM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
Please share with the Mayor

G

On Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 6:47 PM Chris Joyell <chrisjoyell@gmail.com> wrote:
Thanks. I have a response drafted that will go out tomorrow morning after I've had a good night's sleep--I doubt she'll be sharing that with yall.

On Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 5:52 PM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Julie <mountainsbeach@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 3:25 PM
Subject: Julie Nelson Haywood St. Advisory Task Force
To: <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, <gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com>, mailto:[Cecil Bothwell](mailto:Cecil.Bothwell@braveulysses.com)
<cecil@braveulysses.com>, <brianhaynes@avlcouncil.com>, <juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com>,
<gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>, <keithyoung@avlcouncil.com>

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Council Members,

I am forwarding this email with attachment to each of you as an example of what I have personally had to do for 9 months to get to the truth of what is going on in these task force meetings (and maybe more importantly) in between the meetings. Chris Joyell has not responded to my questions as of the writing of this email.

The questions I am asking Chris are not because I have missed a meeting or failed to take notes at a meeting, it is because this task force seems to be operating on its own and I am trying to find out why.

I have not missed one task force meeting in 9 months. In addition to task force meetings, we had subcommittee meetings- in which I missed one. I attended both City Council meetings in which we presented the temporary installation ideas and the recent public presentation of the draft vision on 3/8/17. I have notes from every meeting, emails, photos, tape recordings, etc. that document my deep concerns about the processes that have lead to the "draft" vision and ultimately will lead to what will be presented to you on 3/28/17 as the "final" vision.

I have nothing personal to gain financially, politically or otherwise from serving on this task force and I serve on no other boards or commissions. I am simply an Asheville resident who has given freely and generously of my time as a volunteer on behalf of the greater good of the residents of Asheville and have been burnt in the process.

Let's not let Councilman Bothell's letter detract from the real story here. I, as a volunteer on a council appointed citizen task force, during meetings, have been publicly bullied, belittled and silenced with no intervention from the paid group facilitator Chris Joyell or chairman Andrew Fletcher.

Dean Pistor calls me a bitch during a meeting and he explains it away by calling it " a poor choice of words for a friendly exchange..." Respect for another task force member is not demonstrated in this way and it was in no way friendly.

In addition, the minutes of the meetings never reflected these outbursts of Dean or other members of the task force. When I phoned Chris to ask him why, he simply stated that he "did not want to throw anyone under the bus."

Although I was at all times in favor of a park- (as the representative for the Friends of St. Lawrence Green and the 5,000 residents who signed petitions asking council to preserve the city owned property for future use as a public green space and opposing the sale of the property for commercial development), if the majority of citizen input reflected differently I was committed to delivering those findings. That's what a democratic process looks like, and it's NOT what happened... Findings were altered or discarded, words were added, input totals & tabulations misrepresented, the city online survey dismissed, meeting minutes left out what happened, were re-worded in a positive light or totally misquoted was actually said, etc.

Task Force members, supported by facilitator Chris Joyell, feel empowered to come to their own decision and NOT act as a representative group. The charts & bubble diagram shown

in the public presentation on 3/8/17 were not created by consensus of the task force members nor did they accurately depict publicly derived input.

It saddens me to have to watch this citizen task force process being hijacked. Nine months of time and effort, in my estimation, wasted.

It is my duty to inform, only you can do something about it and it is my sincere hope that you do so.

Sincerely,

Julie Nelson

Asheville City Resident

Haywood Advisory Task Force Member

Attachments area

--

Chris Joyell, Executive Director
Asheville Design Center
67 Broadway Street
Asheville 28801

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1524
Asheville, NC 28802

Cell: [828.782.7894](tel:828.782.7894)

chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

--

Chris Joyell, Executive Director
Asheville Design Center
67 Broadway Street

Asheville 28801

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1524
Asheville, NC 28802

Cell: 828.782.7894

chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 5:52 PM
To: Andrew J Fletcher; Chris Joyell
Subject: Fwd: Julie Nelson Haywood St. Advisory Task Force

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Date: Wed, Mar 15, 2017 at 3:25 PM
Subject: Julie Nelson Haywood St. Advisory Task Force
To: <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, <gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com>, mailto:[Cecil](mailto:Cecil@braveulysses.com) Bothwell
<cecil@braveulysses.com>, <brianhaynes@avlcouncil.com>, <juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com>, <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>, <keithyoung@avlcouncil.com>

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Sincerely,

Julie Nelson

Asheville City Resident

Haywood Advisory Task Force Member

Attachments area

Ben Fulmer

From: Julie <mountainsbeach@gmail.com> on behalf of Julie
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 3:25 PM
To: esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com; gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com;mailto:Cecil Bothwell;brianhaynes@avlcouncil.com;juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com;gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com;keithyoung@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Julie Nelson Haywood St. Advisory Task Force
Attachments: March 12 questions to Chris.docx

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Council Members,

I am forwarding this email with attachment to each of you as an example of what I have personally had to do for 9 months to get to the truth of what is going on in these task force meetings (and maybe more importantly) in between the meetings. Chris Joyell has not responded to my questions as of the writing of this email.

The questions I am asking Chris are not because I have missed a meeting or failed to take notes at a meeting, it is because this task force seems to be operating on its own and I am trying to find out why.

I have not missed one task force meeting in 9 months. In addition to task force meetings, we had subcommittee meetings- in which I missed one. I attended both City Council meetings in which we presented the temporary installation ideas and the recent public presentation of the draft vision on 3/8/17. I have notes from every meeting, emails, photos, tape recordings, etc. that document my deep concerns about the processes that have led to the "draft" vision and ultimately will lead to what will be presented to you on 3/28/17 as the "final" vision.

I have nothing personal to gain financially, politically or otherwise from serving on this task force and I serve on no other boards or commissions. I am simply an Asheville resident who has given freely and generously of my time as a volunteer on behalf of the greater good of the residents of Asheville and have been burnt in the process.

Let's not let Councilman Bothell's letter detract from the real story here. I, as a volunteer on a council appointed citizen task force, during meetings, have been publicly bullied, belittled and silenced with no intervention from the paid group facilitator Chris Joyell or chairman Andrew Fletcher.

Dean Pistor calls me a bitch during a meeting and he explains it away by calling it “ a poor choice of words for a friendly exchange...” Respect for another task force member is not demonstrated in this way and it was in no way friendly.

In addition, the minutes of the meetings never reflected these outbursts of Dean or other members of the task force. When I phoned Chris to ask him why, he simply stated that he “did not want to throw anyone under the bus.”

Although I was at all times in favor of a park- (as the representative for the Friends of St. Lawrence Green and the 5,000 residents who signed petitions asking council to preserve the city owned property for future use as a public green space and opposing the sale of the property for commercial development), if the majority of citizen input reflected differently I was committed to delivering those findings. That's what a democratic process looks like, and it's NOT what happened... Findings were altered or discarded, words were added, input totals & tabulations misrepresented, the city online survey dismissed, meeting minutes left out what happened, were re-worded in a positive light or totally misquoted was actually said, etc.

Task Force members, supported by facilitator Chris Joyell, feel empowered to come to their own decision and NOT act as a representative group. The charts & bubble diagram shown in the public presentation on 3/8/17 were not created by consensus of the task force members nor did they accurately depict publicly derived input.

It saddens me to have to watch this citizen task force process being hijacked. Nine months of time and effort, in my estimation, wasted.

It is my duty to inform, only you can do something about it and it is my sincere hope that you do so.

Sincerely,

Julie Nelson

Asheville City Resident

Haywood Advisory Task Force Member

Attachments area

Ben Fulmer

From: DEROTHEA WILLIAMS <derotheawilliams@att.net> on behalf of DEROTHEA WILLIAMS
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2017 10:34 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Fwd: Deeply flawed process

Gordon:

Thank you. I will see you soon.

Regards,

Dee

Dee Williams, President
Dee Williams and Company, Inc.
136 Wyoming Rd.
Asheville, NC 28803
Phone: 828-275-6217

" Civil rights without economic clout is a borrowed event - they can be taken away at any time." Joshua Smith, CEO, the Maxim Corporation

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>
To: "gordonsmithasheville@gmail.com" <gordonsmithasheville@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 7:46 AM
Subject: Fwd: Deeply flawed process

Please be aware of Mr. Bothwell's intention to smear, divide, distort, dismiss, and reduce. See below.

Gordon

"This is an unsettling age of political demagogues who seek division and discord, even one on our own City Council." - Gordon Smith

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 2017 at 3:08 PM
Subject: Deeply flawed process
To: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>

Fellow Council members:

I attended two meetings of the Haywood Street Visioning Task Force, as an observer. I feel I need to inform you all about what I witnessed at their workshop on Saturday, Feb. 18. This was a full morning meeting, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., aimed at creating their vision presentation for Council. "Ground Rules" were posted on the wall, starting with a requirement that participants respect each other (and reportedly posted at each meeting).

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supposedly over) and other people including Joyell had left, Pistor and Ruth Summers apparently added "Residential" to the uses listed.

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To represent results as agreed upon by the entire group when they are altered helter-skelter, and clumped according to someone's biases, is fraudulent.

Finally, and very troubling to me, is that at least one e-mail to the entire Task Force, includes the apparent intent of Joyell to violate public records law. He wrote:

"THIS INFO IS FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY--PLEASE DO NOT DISTRIBUTE THIS INFO BEYOND THE TEAM. PLEASE RESPECT YOUR COLLEAGUES' WORK AND THE PROCESS WE HAVE UNDERWAY. THIS IS ONLY A DRAFT, AND I WANT THE TEAM TO REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT THEY CAN CARRY OUT THEIR WORK WITHOUT THE FACEBOOK PEANUT GALLERY MUDDYING THE WATERS."

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Perhaps we need to see all of the e-mails related to this Task Force?

Cecil Bothwell
cecil@braveulysses.com
cecilbothwell.com
828-713-8840
POB 1877
Asheville 28802

Ben Fulmer

From: Julie Mayfield <juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Julie Mayfield
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2017 1:54 PM
To: Gordon Smith;Gwen Wisler
Subject: Fwd: Council minutes
Attachments: Haywood Mins 3.8 & 12.8.pdf

FYI - Minutes of our Haywood street discussions.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sarah Terwilliger <sterwilliger@ashevillenc.gov>
Date: March 10, 2017 at 10:25:40 AM EST
To: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov>, Julie Mayfield <juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com>
Cc: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: RE: Council minutes

Attached please find the 3/8/16 and 12/8/15 minutes regarding the Haywood Street property. The 3/8 mins reference a 12/12/15 meeting, however I could not find these mins- I believe it should be the 12/8/15 meeting, attached here.

Thank you,

Sarah Terwilliger
Deputy City Clerk
City of Asheville
(828) 259-5839

-----Original Message-----

From: Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, March 10, 2017 6:16 AM
To: Julie Mayfield <juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com>
Cc: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>; Sarah Terwilliger <sterwilliger@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: Re: Council minutes

Julie, problem with out website right now. Should be fixed by early next week. Sarah can send you what you need. Thanks, Maggie

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 9, 2017, at 9:51 PM, "juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com"
<juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

I can't find the minutes from our December 2015 meeting or march meeting when we discussed the Haywood street property and the stakeholder process. In fact, I can't find our 2015 or 2016 agendas and minutes online at all. They aren't in the archives and I get an error message when I search. Am I doing something wrong or looking in the wrong place?

In any event, can you send the minutes for the March meeting when we passed the resolution creating the task force and whichever other earlier meeting in December or January when we discussed the path forward on it?

Thanks

Julie

Sent from my iPad

Ben Fulmer

From: Kate Pett <kate.pett@acsgmail.net> on behalf of Kate Pett
Sent: Wednesday, March 08, 2017 5:30 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Deeply flawed process

Yuck! Sorry that you are swimming in that!

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 7:46 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
Please be aware of Mr. Bothwell's intention to smear, divide, distort, dismiss, and reduce. See below.

Gordon

"This is an unsettling age of political demagogues who seek division and discord, even one on our own City Council." - Gordon Smith

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 2017 at 3:08 PM
Subject: Deeply flawed process
To: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>

Fellow Council members:

I attended two meetings of the Haywood Street Visioning Task Force, as an observer. I feel I need to inform you all about what I witnessed at their workshop on Saturday, Feb. 18.

This was a full morning meeting, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., aimed at creating their vision presentation for Council. "Ground Rules" were posted on the wall, starting with a requirement that participants respect each other (and reportedly posted at each meeting).

Twice during the morning, Dean Pistor (appointed as a representative of the Recreation Board), came to whisper in my ear. Gesturing at Julie Nelson he said, "Why did you appoint that bitch? She is f-ing everything up." Then again, with something like the same wording "I can't stand that bitch" etc. What Nelson was doing was quietly representing her view as representative of the Friends of St. Lawrence Green, and referring to the list of preferences expressed by citizens in the various surveys conducted over the past several months.

I suggested that he was telling me more about himself than about Nelson. When I spoke to Nelson about it afterward she told me that his actions over the course of the work had reflected the same attitude, with him calling her down on at least 2 other meetings to the extent that other task force members were uncomfortable. Chris Joyell never stopped him

or corrected him during the meetings. This type of behavior thwarts others on the task force from speaking their minds for fear of attack or reprisal. When she discovered that these outbursts and on many occasions other members comments were not recorded in Chris Joyell's minutes of the meetings, Joyell told her that he didn't want to throw anyone under the bus.

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But further, and this is something that reflects a deeper problem, we appointed Pistor in his capacity as a member of the Recreation Board, which certainly suggested to me that he was there to represent the perspective of that body. However, at that meeting and at a subsequent meeting I attended on March 3, he insisted on parking, private development, sale of the property, etc. and etc. None of which, to my understanding is in the purview of the Rec Bd. (Perhaps his real estate office location at 1 Page has something to do with his perspective on the site.)

Again, I have learned that this has been his viewpoint from the first meeting and throughout the process.

Nor is this my only concern about the Task Force effort. I have combed through the data provided on Dropbox and compared it to Summary Reports and found that language has morphed, that unrelated ideas have been lumped so that multi-use becomes mixed-use, food trucks and farmers markets called "retail" as if they were the same as store fronts, and etc. As a specific example from the March 3 meeting, after the group had reached agreement on a sort of consensus "bubble diagram" and after I left the meeting (which was supposedly over) and other people including Joyell had left, Pistor and Ruth Summers apparently added "Residential" to the uses listed.

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To represent results as agreed upon by the entire group when they are altered helter-skelter, and clumped according to someone's biases, is fraudulent.

Finally, and very troubling to me, is that at least one e-mail to the entire Task Force, includes the apparent intent of Joyell to violate public records law. He wrote:

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Perhaps we need to see all of the e-mails related to this Task Force?

Cecil Bothwell
cecil@braveulysses.com
cecilbothwell.com
[828-713-8840](tel:828-713-8840)
POB 1877
Asheville 28802

--

Kate Pett
Executive Director



Asheville City Schools Foundation, PO Box 3196, Asheville, NC 28802 (828) 350-6174 www.a

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[Celebration of Champions Tickets](#)



Ben Fulmer

From: Dean Pistor <Dean@realtyworldmarketplace.com> on behalf of Dean Pistor
Sent: Wednesday, March 08, 2017 5:03 PM
To: esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com
Cc: gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Haywood Street Visioning Task Force

Mayor Manheimer, et al

It has been brought to my attention that Cecil has emailed a complaint about the process of the Haywood St Visioning Committee including my concerns expressed to him in confidence within a question.

I first want to say I have enjoyed the process and think it has tremendous value in representing many different views and understandings. With that being said there has been one committee member that consistently worked against the grain, obstructing the meetings and overwhelmingly taking control of timetables spelled out in the agendas. During the workshop on Sat. Feb 18th while in groups working on bubble diagrams Cecil sat directly in eye sight of Julie Nelson the member of concern and watched her every action in such a way as to be backing a stance she was to be standing on. While providing this stability to Julie it was clear that she was being obstructive in our group, derailing the process to the point students from Clemson University giggled at the grid lock only our table was experiencing. While the others groups had nearly completed, our table had yet be able to agree on one bubble.

On two other occasions during regular meetings I had asked Julie to please allow the meeting to move on and stop stalling the process. In this instance she was not stalling the whole meeting, just our group. At one point I stepped away from the table and whispered in Cecil's ear, asking him "where did you find that bitch"? This was only heard by Cecil and was a question, he ignored me. Receiving no comment I whispered back in Cecil's ear "You know she has been F...ng up this process at every possible moment, are you witnessing this? He said something to the effect that I was telling him more about me than Julie was.

I assure you there was no lunging across a table, in fact we stood above a large piece of paper in order to point and describe the location of bubbles. I leaned on my left hand in order to point with my right hand across the table, pointing out the effect of connectivity and location of bubbles I wished to be shown, describing uses within uses.

My appointment as a member of the Recreation Board, is to represent the perspective of that body, however a vote by the recreation board was not taken for my representation position, there had been several discussions about initial costs, maintenance, security, and the experiences we have had with Pritchard Park that indicated additional expansion of the park system was not something that could be accomplished easily with the current status of the budget and the current back log of maintenance. Conversations about public private partnerships including private sector investments into greenspace and the maintenance thereof had popular approval. Further allowing full private sector development with requirements of greenspace in my opinion had the most favorable comments.

I apologize that my in confidence whispered question to Cecil has been made public and furthermore want to be sure Julie's feeling are not hurt by Cecil's attempt to derail the focus of the committee. I will personally apologize to her, Julie has worked very hard for her constituents and she is a very good advocate no matter what it takes. I however feel that if someone has stepped out of the line of an agenda or is wasting other volunteer's time to further a certain agenda, I am likely to call that out and ask to move forward and stay focused on the task.

Sorry to feel the need to respond to this attack but it was imperative you understand my question to Cecil was exactly that, a question, it seemed obvious Julie was affected by his presence and was acting in an even more than normally strong stance to derail the process.

Yours in service,

Dean Pistor
Broker / Owner
Realty World Marketplace
One Page Ave Ste 109
Asheville NC 28801
Located in the Historic Grove Arcade
Office - 828.251.2507
Cell - 828.230.4422

From: **Cecil Bothwell** <cecil@braveulysses.com>

Date: Tue, Mar 7, 2017 at 3:08 PM

Subject: Deeply flawed process

To: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>

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Cecil Bothwell
cecil@braveulysses.com
cecilbothwell.com
[828-713-8840](tel:828-713-8840)
POB 1877
Asheville 28802

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, March 08, 2017 9:50 AM
To: Sandra Brooks
Subject: Re: Pit of Despair

I'm open to all sorts of things. We'll see what's suggested. The group has been diving deep into the positive and negative ramifications of various choices.

Gordon

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 9:47 AM, Sandra Brooks <sandra@mymosaicrealty.com> wrote:
[Pebble or cedar walkways](#)

Sandra Brooks, Broker
MOSAIC Community Lifestyle Realty
828-333-2500

Want to Search Asheville by Neighborhood? [CLICK HERE](#)

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 9:37 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
As we've seen with Roger McGuire Green, keeping grass on a heavily trafficked space is very difficult and expensive! I look forward to hearing what the Task Force has determined!

Gordon

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 9:34 AM Sandra Brooks <sandra@mymosaicrealty.com> wrote:
[Don't you have quite a say in who bullies who? Who actually makes the decision on what to do with this land? And why is a simple green space so extreme???](#)

Sandra Brooks, Broker
MOSAIC Community Lifestyle Realty
[828-333-2500](tel:828-333-2500)

Want to Search Asheville by Neighborhood? [CLICK HERE](#)

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 8:57 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
Well, I'm hoping that no one extreme ideological position bullies its way to dominance. I'm guessing this dedicated group of 17 individuals who love Asheville have spent the last year working on this in a thoughtful, considerate way. I look forward to learning more about their findings.

Gordon

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 8:48 AM, Sandra Brooks <sandra@mymosaicrealty.com> wrote:
Yes, but that task force was after other polls, group meetings, etc. that have extended back way before it was formed. Think Marc Hunt. His extreme attitude about this park is what made me NOT vote for him the next time.

The meeting is tonight BTW.

Sandra Brooks

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 8:38 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
Thank you for taking the time to write to us, Ms. Brooks.

City Council unanimously created a Task Force made up of citizens to work together on solutions for the land on Haywood Street. The composition and membership of the group were also decided unanimously. I haven't heard what they've come up with, because Council Members ought to steer clear of undue influence on task forces once they've been given their charge.

It's my understanding that a public meeting is coming soon. I hope you'll attend and offer your input!

All the best,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Mar 8, 2017 at 8:36 AM, Sandra Brooks <sandra@mymosaicrealty.com> wrote:
How long will you do studies and ask for opinions about this? It has been clear for years that most residents want a simple green park to break up the starkness of downtown concrete and provide a safe buffer for St. Lawrence. Please do what is right and vote this way.

Sandra Brooks, Broker

Ben Fulmer

From: Sandra Brooks <sandra@mymosaicrealty.com> on behalf of Sandra Brooks
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Subject: Pit of Despair

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To: gordonsmithasheville@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: Deeply flawed process

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Gordon

"This is an unsettling age of political demagogues who seek division and discord, even one on our own City Council." - Gordon Smith

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 7, 2017 at 3:08 PM
Subject: Deeply flawed process
To: Esther Manheimer <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com>, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>

Fellow Council members:

I attended two meetings of the Haywood Street Visioning Task Force, as an observer. I feel I need to inform you all about what I witnessed at their workshop on Saturday, Feb. 18.

This was a full morning meeting, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., aimed at creating their vision presentation for Council. "Ground Rules" were posted on the wall, starting with a requirement that participants respect each other (and reportedly posted at each meeting).

Twice during the morning, Dean Pistor (appointed as a representative of the Recreation Board), came to whisper in my ear. Gesturing at Julie Nelson he said, "Why did you appoint that bitch? She is f-ing everything up." Then again, with something like the same wording "I can't stand that bitch" etc. What Nelson was doing was quietly representing her view as representative of the Friends of St. Lawrence Green, and referring to the list of preferences expressed by citizens in the various surveys conducted over the past several months.

I suggested that he was telling me more about himself than about Nelson. When I spoke to Nelson about it afterward she told me that his actions over the course of the work had reflected the same attitude, with him calling her down on at least 2 other meetings to the extent that other task force members were uncomfortable. Chris Joyell never stopped him or corrected him during the meetings. This type of behavior thwarts others on the task force from speaking their minds for fear of attack or reprisal. When she discovered that these outbursts and on many occasions other members comments were not recorded in

Chris Joyell's minutes of the meetings, Joyell told her that he didn't want to throw anyone under the bus.

As I watched the process on Feb. 18, in which the Task Force was divided into three groups to create "bubble diagrams), I watched Pistor lunge across the table aggressively when Nelson was speaking, putting his fist down. In my view, completely unacceptable.

But further, and this is something that reflects a deeper problem, we appointed Pistor in his capacity as a member of the Recreation Board, which certainly suggested to me that he was there to represent the perspective of that body. However, at that meeting and at a subsequent meeting I attended on March 3, he insisted on parking, private development, sale of the property, etc. and etc. None of which, to my understanding is in the purview of the Rec Bd. (Perhaps his real estate office location at 1 Page has something to do with his perspective on the site.)

Again, I have learned that this has been his viewpoint from the first meeting and throughout the process.

Nor is this my only concern about the Task Force effort. I have combed through the data provided on Dropbox and compared it to Summary Reports and found that language has morphed, that unrelated ideas have been lumped so that multi-use becomes mixed-use, food trucks and farmers markets called "retail" as if they were the same as store fronts, and etc. As a specific example from the March 3 meeting, after the group had reached agreement on a sort of consensus "bubble diagram" and after I left the meeting (which was supposedly over) and other people including Joyell had left, Pistor and Ruth Summers apparently added "Residential" to the uses listed.

Meanwhile, the survey done via the City Web site was so ambiguous that not only could respondents imbue whatever meaning they liked to the 20 photos, but the interpretation of answers results in pretty much any set of "facts" one wishes to derive. (If for example you lump tailgate market, park benches, and plaza as requests for mixed-use you can use the data to support development. If you add them to the request for green space and shade you can derive an entirely different preference for open space and multi-use. Given the dozens of different views expressed in the survey it would seem that a glossary defining terms would have provided a better starting point.)

To represent results as agreed upon by the entire group when they are altered helter-skelter, and clumped according to someone's biases, is fraudulent.

Finally, and very troubling to me, is that at least one e-mail to the entire Task Force, includes the apparent intent of Joyell to violate public records law. He wrote:

"THIS INFO IS FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY--PLEASE DO NOT DISTRIBUTE THIS INFO BEYOND THE TEAM. PLEASE RESPECT YOUR COLLEAGUES' WORK AND THE PROCESS WE HAVE UNDERWAY. THIS IS ONLY A DRAFT, AND I WANT THE TEAM TO REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT THEY CAN CARRY OUT THEIR WORK WITHOUT THE FACEBOOK PEANUT GALLERY MUDDYING THE WATERS."

I refer you to the law:

§ 132-1. "Public records" defined.

(a) "Public record" or "public records" shall mean all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data-processing records, artifacts, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions. Agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions shall mean and include every public office, public officer or official (State or local, elected or appointed), institution, board, commission, bureau, council, department, authority or other unit of government of the State or of any county, unit, special district or other political subdivision of government.

Perhaps we need to see all of the e-mails related to this Task Force?

Cecil Bothwell
cecil@braveulysses.com
cecilbothwell.com
828-713-8840
POB 1877
Asheville 28802

Ben Fulmer

From: Chris Joyell <chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org> on behalf of Chris Joyell
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2016 8:05 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Cc: Chris Joyell
Subject: Re: Major concerns with report on Haywood St. Advisory Group
Attachments: Meeting_Record_08_01_16.pdf

I guess I'll respond item by item, but I'm more concerned with how Cecil is receiving his info. He's welcomed to attend the meetings, but he has not been present at the past two or three. And he has not brought these concerns directly to me--rather I find out about this via emails like yours or thru Facebook. Nonetheless, before rumors start to fly...

1. Tom's interviews are meant as background info for the AT for the very reason that they are subjective. They were conducted in confidence, and they were not recorded. Tom started by interviewing all 18 AT members and direct stakeholders (neighbors to the H/P properties). AT members then recommended others he should meet with. A list of all interviewees was provided to AT members, as well (attached here). Yet, because that process is susceptible to bias, I'm not including it in the grand package of "public input" that will be available for public inspection.

2. Visual Preference Surveys are not Activity Preference Surveys. The latter were conducted at the BB&T and I pulled the plug on it because it focused on the final form, vs activities. The Activity Survey is still being tweaked. We asked for feedback from the AT, and have responded (we struck the old people dancing, we found a better image of "co-working" so that it doesn't look like a university library, etc). I'm sending out the second draft to the AT and City staff today. We want it to go up on Open City Hall next week. Only one AT member objected to the idea of survey takers describing the activity in the image--the rest felt it would be informative to see how people interpreted the images and described the activities therein.

3. My guess is he is hearing this from one AT member and that others would disagree.

4. Again, we had a well-organized agenda for our last meeting, but one AT member chose to blow it up by focusing on ADA accessibility in the gravel lots and wouldn't let it go. There are minutes kept for the meetings. They haven't received August's minutes yet because I haven't had a chance to check them against the audio recording we keep of every meeting. And I have no idea what the last comment is about. There was no vote to prohibit--they work by consensus. And the question was already posed to Alan G., so what did I do? Demand that Alan unhear the question? I think the group will be taking their request to PED, and I think that's a good thing.

5. The AT is fully aware that they won't be in position to make a recommendation by December. We've already reserved the Grove Arcade conference room into March. The group is taking time to gel, as expected, but I'd say 17 of the 18 members appear ready to work together.

If this were a binary decision, then yes, it could be put to a public vote. And if you desire only one outcome for the property, and are unwilling to collaborate with others to come up with a solution that truly meets the needs of the City, I suppose you could run a tight campaign to ensure your outcome gets chosen. But this is a design process where we're not supposed to know the outcome until we get there. Apparently some folks are still in campaign mode, and that's unfortunate.

Rather than just leaving it with this email response, I'll reach out to Cecil so he can hear it from the horse's mouth. Thanks for passing this along.

Chris

On Tue, Sep 20, 2016 at 11:36 PM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cecil Bothwell** <cecilbothwell@gmail.com>

Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Subject: Major concerns with report on Haywood St. Advisory Group

To: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov>, councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>

I am even more troubled now than I was when I first read the report from Todd Okoliochany and Alan Glines. An overarching concern is that the members of the Advisory Group were NOT GIVEN COPIES of the information, and HAD NO PART IN THEIR PREPARATION.

Throughout the process ADC Director Chris Joyell has assured the Advisory Group that THEY are the architects of their report. That was certainly my understanding when we formed this task force. Staff is to assist with information, not announce "progress."

1. The 100 interviews

I have spoken to some of the people interviewed and to some members of the Advisory Group. The interviewer did not take notes or record the interviews. The interviewer **CHOSE** the persons to interview - how can selected interviewees be interpreted as a meaningful cross-section? Particularly when the interviewer has expressed strong opinions about the property?

Furthermore, the Advisory Group was told that the interviews in question **WOULD NOT BE** part of their work - but were simply being pursued as "informational" - and as a project of interest to the interviewer.

Now the 100 interviews are presented to us as part of the "public input.

2. Over 123 visual preference surveys completed

Have any of you taken the survey? (It hasn't even been posted publicly yet, so no telling who had access - again a skewed sample.) I did get a link to a version (no telling if it is the final version, and the Advisory Group has been told **IT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO SEE THE FINAL SURVEY BEFORE IT IS POSTED PUBLICLY**).

Really? That doesn't sound like they are being consulted at all.

Furthermore, the survey is totally nuts. it consists of a series of unlabeled pictures of various activities. It asks what you think the activity is and then whether it is a good activity. One picture is elderly people dancing in what could be a retirement home dining area. How does that relate to a public use of public space?

Another picture appears to be students in a public library or college library (though no books are present) who have laptops open. Or another that might be a college class or continuing education class in what might be a plaza or a park.

All extremely ambiguous, and the survey takes at least 20 minutes to complete. I would challenge any statistician to derive any meaningful information from such a survey in which respondents both define an ambiguous picture and then say if it is a good activity. For where? In what circumstances? It's like a pictorial Rorschach test, and the length will really limit the number of people who respond.

3. The report on the results of the subcommittee meetings does not comport with the experience of the Advisory Group members who participated.

4. The meetings are reportedly poorly organized and no minutes are being prepared for the members, so there is no way for members to correct minutes or for any who might have missed a meeting to see what's going on. Further still, at the last meeting an Advisory Group member made a motion for taking a question to Council and Joyell prohibited a vote. Huh?

5. The report says that the Advisory Group will have a report for Council in December. That is news to the Advisory Group members. They have expressed to me that very little progress has been made to date and expect to ask for an extension of time in order to complete anything like the work they were asked to achieve.

I'm really upset about what I'm hearing and about the process.

The potential of bias in the interviews and surveys to date is enormous, no matter in which direction that bias might lean.

We paid for a public opinion survey for the Bond Referendum. Perhaps it is time to hire a firm to conduct a public opinion survey on the future of the Haywood property.

Sorry for the length, but I deem this to be very, very serious.

-c

--

Chris Joyell, Executive Director
Asheville Design Center
67 Broadway Street
Asheville 28801

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1524
Asheville, NC 28802

Cell: 828.782.7894

chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org
www.ashevilledesigncenter.org

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2016 11:07 AM
To: Brian Haynes; Cecil Bothwell - Email; Esther Manheimer; Gordon Smith; Gwen Wisler; Julie Mayfield; Keith Young
Subject: Haywood Street Advisory Team
Attachments: Haywood St Advisory Team - Contact Info.xlsx

Per Vice-Mayor Wisler's request, attached is the Haywood Street Advisory Team (minus Council's 3 at-large appointments to be made May 17).

Thanks,
Maggie

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Maggie Burleson
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2016 8:21 AM
To: Brian Haynes; Cecil Bothwell - Email; Esther Manheimer; Gordon Smith; Gwen Wisler; Julie Mayfield; Keith Young
Subject: May Vacancies for City Boards & Commissions
Attachments: bdapptments1.doc

Please circulate as much as possible.

Thanks,
Maggie

Maggie Burleson, MMC, NCCMC
City Clerk
City of Asheville
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802
828-259-5601 (phone)
828-259-5499 (fax)

Ben Fulmer

From: Gwen Wisler <gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gwen Wisler
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 6:49 PM
To: mary hugenschmidt; Esther Manheimer; Gordon Smith; Keith Young; Brian Haynes; Julie Mayfield; Cecil Bothwell
Subject: Re: At-Large Nomination, Asheville Design Center's Committee, Haywood Street Property

Thank you, Ms Hugenschmidt. We appreciate your input.
Best,
Gwen Wisler

On 4/6/2016 5:41 PM, mary hugenschmidt wrote:

My husband and I have been residents of Asheville for over forty years and clearly remember the dismal, lifeless downtown area with its empty, boarded up buildings. It had few public spaces, and no places with trees or plants or spots for people to sit and enjoy the city. As urban trends turn to accessibility, healthy environments, the function of natural elements in city design, and respect for historic places, incorporating green areas has risen in importance to both a city's health and to its appeal.

I am also a volunteer with the Buncombe County Extension Master Gardeners. **Gary Anderson**, one of my fellow volunteers has applied to be an at-large member on the committee led by ADC to determine the use for the vacant property on Haywood Street across from the Civic Center and the historic St. Lawrence Basilica. As you can see from his application, Gary has a significant amount of experience working with public projects. I would like to strongly encourage you to vote for him as one of the at-large members. The bullets below describe how both the city of Asheville and the Extension Master Gardeners can benefit from Gary's contributions to the committee.

The city of Asheville could benefit from participation of EMGVs in the following ways:

1. The creation of a vibrant green space would not only reflect the beauty of the city but would provide residents and visitors a living interaction site maintained by trained volunteers sharing research-based gardening knowledge and information through four seasons.
2. There are over 100 Buncombe County Master Gardeners with decades of proven commitment willing to use their varied backgrounds and education to design, plant, and maintain a downtown garden site.
3. Gardens that combine horticulture with art, education, and design that would be available to residents and visitors of all ages and all backgrounds, integrating and showcasing the efforts of local entities in the arts, such as museums, libraries, the symphony, schools, etc.

The Extension Master Gardener Volunteers would benefit in the following ways:

1. A way to further the Master Garden mission which is to provide research-based urban horticulture education and gardening support to city and county residents.
2. A demonstration garden geographically convenient in a downtown location for many master gardeners to support.
3. An opportunity to interact with local gardeners and gain insights on their current gardening questions in order to adapt the EMG programs in a way that best serves the community.
4. Increasing the reach and visibility of the EMG program by working with arts councils, museums, landscape architects and local artists.

Thank you for your consideration of **Gary Anderson** as an **at-large member of the Asheville Design Center's Committee** on ways to develop the Haywood Street Property.

,

Mary Hugenschmidt
437 Beaverdam Road
Asheville, 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: mary hugenschmidt <hugenmb@gmail.com> on behalf of mary hugenschmidt
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 5:41 PM
To: Esther Manheimer;Gwen Wisler;Gordon Smith;Keith Young;Brian Haynes;Julie Mayfield;Cecil Bothwell
Subject: At-Large Nomination, Asheville Design Center's Committee, Haywood Street Property

My husband and I have been residents of Asheville for over forty years and clearly remember the dismal, lifeless downtown area with its empty, boarded up buildings. It had few public spaces, and no places with trees or plants or spots for people to sit and enjoy the city. As urban trends turn to accessibility, healthy environments, the function of natural elements in city design, and respect for historic places ,incorporating green areas has risen in importance to both a city's health and to its appeal.

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,

Mary Hugenschmidt
437 Beaverdam Road
Asheville, 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecilbothwell@gmail.com> on behalf of Cecil Bothwell
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 2:38 PM
To: Michael Lewis
Cc: councilgroup
Subject: Re: "The Park"

Hi Mike,

I figure different folks might have different facts. Seems to happen a lot these days, at least on the national and state levels.

A while back the City Economic Development Department estimated that a potential big structure there would generate \$60,000 a year in property taxes.

An alternative view is that parks always increase property values in surrounding parcels. So it is arguable that the tax benefits even out, though in hard to quantify ways.

(A further alternative is that the immediate neighbors of the Haywood property include significant nonprofit/tax exempt properties. But taxing churches is not on the City's immediate agenda.)

The best way other cities prevent what you call "a mess" is to activate the spaces. (The national solution is, obviously, to raise the minimum wage and enact a national infrastructure strategy to put people back to work.) Pritchard is deemed a problem due to several interlocking issues. There isn't anything to "do" there, other than to hang out ... except when there are activities like the drum circle, when pretty much no one out of earshot views as a problem.

It is the closest park to the homeless service providers downtown, and when those facilities are closed during the day their clientele congregate in Pritchard and present a visual "mess" whether or not the people present are actually a "problem."

St. Lawrence Green (or whatever name) would be similarly positioned in terms of geography.

One solution to the "mess" issue is to have the space "activated" with installations and activities that draw more "regular" citizens into the mix.

Another is to relocate homeless services out of downtown. (I note that the reason our homeless services are where they are is because Downtown was depressed and cheap. Now it is upscale and rising. I would guess that the service providers will move out of downtown as the real estate market offers fiscal incentives to relocate.) The big picture, as mentioned above, is to disrupt the greed economy, raise the minimum wage, fund infrastructure repairs/improvements ... but I'm sure you're voting for Sanders (with me) so that will solve that.

Many of us have worked toward a public space in front of the Civic Center and Basilica for more than a decade. The DTMP appendices suggest that this location is ideal for a public park.

I think we can make something great happen.

Cheers,

-C

> On Jan 27, 2016, at 10:48 AM, Michael Lewis <mlewis6956@charter.net> wrote:

>

> Looks like the debate over what to do with the property across from the basilica is coming to an end. I probably should have brought this up a long time ago, since I have been thinking about it for a while. Like most issues these days, both sides have their arguments regarding what should be done with the property, but neither side seems to have given a well-rounded presentation to support its position.

>

> Some folks want to sell the property to a developer and see the City reap the tax revenue from whatever structure goes up there. The other side wants to see a greenspace put there. However, nobody seems to have offered an estimate of the tax revenue a structure would generate. Likewise, nobody on the other side has offered a plan to keep the proposed greenspace from becoming a mess like Pritchard Park has become.

>

> Without betraying your hand before the vote, can you tell me the facts? Briefly?

>

> Mike

>

> --

> Michael N Lewis

> 48 Gracelyn Rd.

> Asheville, NC 28804

> 828-252-3684

> mlewis6956@charter.net

>

Ben Fulmer

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecilbothwell@gmail.com> on behalf of Cecil Bothwell
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2016 7:41 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Fwd: For PED: people's park planning
Attachments: People's Park Wilmington.doc; People'sParkposter.jpg; People'sParkquestionnaire.jpg

Begin forwarded message:

From: Cecil Bothwell <cecilbothwell@gmail.com>
Subject: For PED: people's park planning
Date: January 19, 2016 at 7:39:52 AM EST
To: Gwen Wisler <gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com>

Sorry I didn't get these to you earlier, but the PED meeting snuck up on me.

I hope we can discuss process for St. Lawrence Green at the Council Retreat. My belief is that we need to make macro decisions early: Where will the streets be in 20 years? What do the people want to see there in 20 years? Do we sell 33 and 35 Page or demolish them and include them in the public green space? Do we encourage interim uses (for example for the gravel pit, after the hotel staging is over)? Do we authorize the ADC to hold design charrettes? Etc.

The attachments are sample documents from the planning process for a People's Park in Wilmington, Del. They used both online questionnaires and physical displays during several months of planning.

Ben Fulmer

From: Eloise Brinson <brinsonell@gmail.com> on behalf of Eloise Brinson
Sent: Thursday, January 07, 2016 10:34 AM
To: Cecil
Bothwell;esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com;keithyoung@avlcouncil.com;gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com;juliemayfield@avlcouncil.com;brianhaynes@avlcouncil.com;gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Re: Park at Basilica

You're Welcome.

On Thu, Jan 7, 2016 at 9:43 AM, Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com> wrote:

My mistake. I see that it is a Presbyterian undertaking.

And thanks for letting me know about your concerns.

-c

On Jan 6, 2016, at 6:17 PM, Eloise Brinson <brinsonell@gmail.com> wrote:

Oh I didn't know it was a Catholic Charity Group. I was under the impression that it was National Church Residences out of Ohio. At least that's who I worked for as a Volunteer downstairs in the central office. I'm not Catholic. I'm not going to get into an argument with you Mr. Bothwell. I live here. I know what goes on. It has to do with Citizen Rights and the people that live in this building are not only Citizens of the Great City of Asheville, NC but also of the Great State of North Carolina and the The Greater United States of America. We have have rights. Even people with Mental Illness. I have that as well (Mental Illness). We get that no one regulates absolutely anything that happens at Battery Park. It is an unfortunate testament to the misunderstood discrepancies of the people of this area. One I thought after all my years of work and service I would not be subject there with.

What I do want to emphasize is that my Opinion on the Public Park has shifted. My votes in the Fall election were based on that opinion. We are in desperate need of affordable parking in Downtown Asheville. We have two Parks currently. From my Understanding the Police Department is having a difficult time maintaining one of them and that costs Tax Payer dollars. I was and still am one of them, A Taxpayer. I like the idea of green space but in reality we are surrounded with it and when I really want to be a part of it I go to the Forest. With the current situation between Battery Park and Vanderbilt I realize that opening a park in this area would open the door for these dejected Smokers to facilitate and fellowship however Non Smokers would probably be a offended. Not to mention maintenance. There is more. I was totally in favor of it but as time goes by I see a side of it that no longer appeals to me. I am from Raleigh and have watched the growth that occurred there over the past 30 years. 10 of which I lived and worked in. I was raised in the country (Wilson County, NC). I came to Asheville like so many others to start over. Find and make my dreams here. For a while that looked like a very real possibility however after the divorce and death of my Late Husband I have been forced into a very bitter reality. This city is not kind to some people. Just like other cities some of us get lost between the cracks. Yet many of these people continue to vote and support Environmental efforts the best way they can. All deserved to be heard.

I understand and appreciate your stance. We are both Peacemakers and have those Wonderful Peace T Shirts from On a Roll. At least that is where mine was purchased. However this is a matter that I feel is shifting into the wrong direction.

I just want to state my opinion. That's your job from the way I understand it. I help elect you with my vote and then possibly you listen to my concerns. Is that a problem Councilman Bothwell ? By the way. You are one of the people I have voted in the past.

I have contacted Dr. Mumpower and N.A.M.I. concerning this situation because it is in my belief that the person concerned in this matter does not have the ability to advocate for her own rights. If it would have been myself I would be doing the same thing that I am doing now . The Bible I read, though not Catholic teaches me that the number one Golden Rule of all time is to "LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF". Just attempting to express a little of that.

Thank you so much for your concern and that of the remaining Council Members. I would love to hear some of their feedback as well.

Sincerely,

Lori
Eloise L. Brinson

On Wed, Jan 6, 2016 at 3:25 PM, Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com> wrote:

Ms. Brinson,

The allocation of apartments in the Battery Park Apartment building is not in any way controlled by the City of Asheville.

If decisions about those apartments are unfair, I am sad to hear it. But that is a matter for the Catholic charity group that owns the building, not the City.

-C

On Jan 6, 2016, at 2:18 PM, Eloise Brinson <brinsonell@gmail.com> wrote:

The Woman that resided in the Roof Garden Apt. Still resides at Battery Park however she was forced to give up her Apt. so and move to the third floor. The Apt. was repaired and then instead of moving the former tenant back in Ms. Hanrahan. When I spoke to the Resident that previously had the apartment today she told me she had not choice in the matter. That's not fair. If the park is a private matter then perhaps it is time to remove it from Public Debate. I for one and sick and tired of listening to it. Especially in light of current Political Shifts.

Thank you,

Lori
Eloise L. Brinson

On Wed, Jan 6, 2016 at 2:10 PM, Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com> wrote:

Ms. Brinson,

My information is that apartment assignments in the Battery Park building are based on tenure and a waiting list. While I am not familiar with details of any particular apartment assignment, I would have to guess that Clare Hanrahan

had put in a request at some point and gradually moved up the list.

As for the City spending millions, it is our hope that development of St. Lawrence Green will be principally funded through private donations.

Best regards,

-c

> On Jan 6, 2016, at 2:02 PM, Eloise Brinson <brinsonell@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hello Mayor Manheimer and Respective Council Members,

>

> As I write I am very angry and frustrated. I live at Battery Park. As of today Clare Hanrahan, the Activist fueling much of the Park decision in this area, is being moved to the Roof Garden Apartment at Battery Park. The person that had her new apartment was possibly Mentally Ill and FORCED to give her apartment up. That is not fair.

> I am no longer in favor of the Park Development movement across from Basilica. What I see happening is the City spending Millions of dollars to develop an City Public Ashtray or a space of Hippies, Environmentalists and or Potheads. Not something that would be environmentally sound. It is unfortunate. I did not feel this way at first but base on what I am seeing occur I simply do not agree.

>

> I voted of you currently seated. I know that doesn't really mean anything but at 300 plus lbs. I wanted to weigh in.

>

> Thank you so much,

>

>

>

>

Lori
Eloise L. Brinson

Ben Fulmer

From: kseltzercreations@gmail.comkseltzercreations@gmail.com
<kseltzercreations@gmail.com> on behalf of
kseltzercreations@gmail.comkseltzercreations@gmail.com
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 5:03 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;+PARC+
Subject: St. Lawrence property

Please do not build on this beautiful land . Keep it green and a park for all to enjoy !
Thank you!!

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon and Eleanor <gordonandeleonor@charter.net> on behalf of Gordon and Eleanor
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 2:41 PM
To: gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com
Subject: PROPERTY ACCROSS FROM THE BASILICA

September 11, 2012

Respectfully:
To All City Council Members

As residents and Taxpayers of Asheville for 25 years we would like to voice our strong Support for the vacant property across from St. Lawrence Basilica to be sold to the church and have their plan for the development taken under consideration for approval.

The Basilica is of course an Architectural Masterpiece as everyone knows and can never be repaired or duplicated.

Some Green space is desperately needed so everyone can enjoy that part of our city!

What better place than across from and showcasing OUR BASILICA!

Shop Keepers and Apartment owners (noted in the Church's Plan) would be permanent and local, giving pride and permanence to our city

We have seen what your approval of The Aloft Hotel has done for Downtown.

We have The Indigo - reaching ABOVE other Landmarks.

The Renaissance Hotel Across from and Overshadowing The Thomas Wolfe House.

Having used funds to build A Reception building before adequately adding important up to date Sprinkler Systems to the house itself.

Condos that are out to and above sidewalks.

OK these are a done deal!!! Let us not compound this by adding yet another HIGH PRICE HOTEL that many FAMILIES CAN NOT AFFORD.

Sincerely,

Gordon and Eleanor Rasmussen

Ben Fulmer

From: Alicia McNabb <mcnabblovewnc09@yahoo.com> on behalf of Alicia McNabb
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 4:45 PM
To: mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com; jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Please Read this in Regards to Basilica
Attachments: Dear City Asheville City Council Members and residents of Asheville.docx

Thank you for your time
Please read the attached word document voicing my opinion about the fate of the Basilica!

* In case it doesn't open**

Dear City Asheville City Council Members and residents of Asheville,

Hello everybody, my name is Alicia McNabb. I am a current resident of Asheville as well as an Asheville Native, which seems to be growing increasingly rare these days. Over the past several years, I have seen the unique face of Asheville transform into what resembles the cookie cutter skyline of Tampa, Newark, and New York (just to name a few). Asheville is prized for its eclectic restaurants, friendly people, artistic atmosphere, and antique architecture. Unfortunately, in recent years architectural craftsmanship has been brushed aside for the favor of modern infrastructure from large corporations like Hotel Indigo and Aloft Hotel. Both similar to structures you might find in Las Vegas or Miami.

I am addressing you today on the subject of the fate of the vacant property across from The Basilica of St Lawrence. The Basilica is exceptionally special, not only to the followers of Christianity, but also history and architecture & Asheville lovers alike. The Basilica was designed by Rafael Gustavino, who came to Asheville to work on the Biltmore Estate, and was completed in 1909. The Basilica of St Lawrence has the largest free standing elliptical dome in North America as well as the **ONLY** Basilica in Western North Carolina. St Lawrence is listed in the **National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)**, classified by the Federal Government as a structure deemed worthy of preservation. In 1993, Pope John Paul II classified the Basilica as a Minor Basilica.

I am not Catholic, nor would I consider myself a particularly religious woman. My opinion is based on my grounded roots in Asheville, and my genuine concern with the direction my city is headed. I feel as though many of the infrastructural decisions made recently have been generated with only the interests of tourists in mind, not long term residents and tax payers. I will agree that the vacant building in front of the Basilica is unappealing, but I can guarantee you yet another Hotel would not make that land more attractive. Asheville does need more jobs (as does every city these days) but I do not believe minimum wage, seasonal jobs cleaning up after tourists are the answer. Many of the hotels in existence today are rarely booked to capacity, and several of the older more affordable hotels downtown are struggling to compete. Another hotel would only flood the market more. Minimum wage jobs would not help the residents who live here full time, especially because the cost of living in Asheville has sky rocketed over the last ten years.

Another hotel and one towering over the precious Basilica is a disaster waiting to happen. Not only could the fragile domes be damaged or ruined, but a tall building shadowing the 103 year old treasure could ruin the view of the majestic establishment from those who aren't paying for the view. I am not completely against growth but I believe there are plenty of other properties suited for a modern hotel that won't damage the longevity of the extraordinary Church. Many times I have seen history brushed aside to cater to the 'needs' of the Tourists who visit here. What I whole heartedly believe is that the vacant property across from The Basilica of St Lawrence needs to correspond to the history at its 'doorstep', not deteriorate it.

I think a park with native flora, paths and green space is integral for downtown and a safe corridor to the Grove Arcade. There are a couple parks down town but not enough for all the nature enthusiasts who flock here- especially because they all centralize around concrete and manmade establishments - Not nature and the wildlife that makes Western North Carolina unique to all other locations in the world. I know revenue is always an issue, so an architecturally fitting retail space and/or restaurants where the park is the focal point would be an exceptional alternative to more concrete and high-rises a hotel or apartments would bring.

Please consider my plea to keep the face of Asheville unique and original like it deserves. We must be the voice for this distinctive city and colorful residents, not just the tourists who are in and out. We must protect the Basilica for future generations. We want to preserve the intricate architecture of the past while also creating a prosperous future for our city. We must keep the preservation of Asheville in mind when making decisions for the future of our UNIQUE city. It must be remembered that folks from near and far DON'T visit Asheville because it is just like any other city. They visit Asheville because of the irreplaceable and beautiful art, architecture, scenic vistas and citizens.

Please keep people like ME in mind when making a decision- People who are ACTUALLY FROM ASHEVILLE. Born and Raised.

Sincerely,
Alicia McNabb

Ben Fulmer

From: Bethany Dellinger <bethanydellinger@gmail.com> on behalf of Bethany Dellinger
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 3:48 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: support the plaza

Dear City Council,

Please support the St. Lawrence Piazza Plaza proposal today. A European-style plaza would bring much needed class to that area of downtown, as well as provide a lovely view of our historic Basilica. Who doesn't long for beauty and the sense of community a historically-in-tune plaza would provide, verse the utilitarian commercialism of yet another hotel? Think of St. Marco Square in Venice. Why can't Asheville have a hip and welcoming spot to linger before or after one of the many performances at the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium?

Greenville, SC has done a wonderful job of highlighting the Reedy River which runs through downtown by creating a green park and multiple community gathering spots along the way, making it a downtown with a "destination." Can't a plaza such as the one proposed by St. Lawrence's be Asheville's own stand-out destination?

Let's give Asheville an artistic landmark worthy of the mountains that draw locals and visitors to our city in the first place.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bethany Dellinger

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:21 PM
To: 'Doug Abernethy'
Cc: Gordon Smith
Subject: RE: Public park

Doug

I've worked the last 6+ years for a nonprofit land conservation organization getting lots of great protection done and spent years as chair of the city's Greenway Commission. I think our worst environmental challenge is sprawl development. I appreciate the desire to see as much space be green as possible. After much study, I have come to feel that we need to take pressure of the rural landscape (forest, farms, streams, in their natural states) by focusing development in already-developed areas. I think a park could be nice here, but we can be much more effective for the environment by focusing resources in the rural landscape.

Marc

From: Doug Abernethy [mailto:asheville@me.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:06 PM
To: Gordon Smith; AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Re: Public park

Think of it this way. Would you all have the courage to do the right thing and save land for say... The parkway or a national park if it came up today? Maybe the park will not reap the financial benefits you seek, but aren't there some things much more important? Please reconsider your stand on a park. Just saving the land for a green public park would be noble. Heck, we will plant the grass! Take a progressive stand for your citizens and the powerless.

Doug Abernethy

Sent from iPad

On Sep 10, 2012, at 9:42 PM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Thanks, Doug, for your interest in this issue. Downtown development brings out strong opinions, and I've heard a lot of them regarding the Haywood Street property. Everyone involved cares about the future of the city, and everyone wants an outcome we can be proud of for generations to come. Please forgive the length of this message. There's a lot of information to cover!

Current conditions and opportunities

We know that the current situation is undesirable for everyone. Surface parking and dilapidated buildings create dead space in our city center. It's blight, and the city should not support it.

The process of putting city-owned land up for sale began in 2005 as a way to support affordable housing in Asheville, and Asheville continues to have an acute affordable housing crisis.

Proceeds from a land sale could go immediately to the city's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). The AHTF loans money at low interest to builders who will help create affordable housing in our city limits. The great thing about these loans is that the money comes back to the fund, where it can be reallocated again and again. AHTF funds can immediately begin building hundreds of affordable housing units for working people in Asheville.

This will create construction jobs, and the resulting buildings will add to our city's tax rolls, allowing additional investments in parks, police, and transportation. Affordable housing and corridor density are crucial to making our local economy stronger and more sustainable over the long term.

Further, it is only through building on that site that we're going to connect Haywood Street and the Grove Arcade via the Civic Center and beautiful Basilica of St. Lawrence for residents and visitors alike.

In response to some of the many ideas out there:

-- Leaving the area as surface parking would continue the current dead space problem without helping with affordable housing needs or pushing towards creation of a plaza.

-- Creating another city park would (1) postpone the series of river parks and greenways currently underway; (2) create no property tax revenue or fulfill other economic development goals; (3) leave affordable housing needs unmet; (4) be financially impossible without a broad partnership that is currently not being contemplated by anyone; (5) be very costly in a time when parks budgets are stretched to the max.

-- I have enormous respect for the people who attend the Basilica of St. Lawrence, and I fear they may not know all of the facts about what's been going on. The Basilica was one of nine entities that were deemed qualified, along with the McKibbin Group, back in 2007. The Basilica did not submit a proposal when the process was open. Matt Mores, who was representing the Basilica at the time, was interested in seeing a nine-story hotel on the site.

Earlier this year, after an initial letter demanding that the City take or leave an offer less than half of what was being offered by The McKibbin Group, the Basilica representatives began broadcasting urgent warnings of dire consequences. In response to these concerns, the Asheville Design Center offered to mediate discussions between McKibbin and Basilica representatives. A different Basilica representative, Lou Bisette, was brought to the table. These discussions were fruitful, producing six agreed-upon design principles. Then the Basilica abruptly withdrew from these talks and released Mr. Bisette, bringing back their original spokesman, Matt Mores. The McKibbin Group and the Asheville Design Center remain open to resuming those discussions.

The Basilica does not have a contract with the Kessler Group, whom they suggest will do their building, and my understanding is that they do not have the necessary funding to bring a project to completion.

Changes in representation, walking away from negotiations about design principles, shifting desires for what should be built, the lack of a firm agreement with a developer, and the lack of capital – All of these things lead me to having less confidence in the Basilica's ability to achieve a desirable outcome in a reasonable time frame.

Protecting the integrity of the Basilica

When the city sells this property, we will be able to sculpt a development agreement with the buyer. Any development agreement should include requirements for seismic monitoring and consultation with a geotechnical engineer. If integrity of Basilica is threatened, then construction must stop until a solution is reached.

There must be a significant buffer space between any new building and the architectural treasure of the Basilica in order to assure its structural integrity. That buffer space can take the form of a world-class plaza/piazza if all of the parties involved will cooperate to make it happen. The Basilica will have to be the lead entity in doing so, because they already own the necessary land. We can reroute the roads, make a safer intersection, and create a lovely plaza. It will require cooperation, and I'm hopeful we can get there.

Further, any proposed building would be the first under new design guidelines we approved in 2010 after a lengthy public Downtown Master Plan process. The new guidelines were described by the Asheville Citizen Times as embodying a compromise between development interests and critics of new downtown construction.

Aesthetic tastes vary wildly, but no matter your opinion of Aloft or Indigo, built under the old rules, every building built from now on will fall under the new design guidelines. Also, the proposed building would be shorter than the historic apartment buildings on either side of it and would use brick facades to correspond with the surrounding structures.

Lastly, I am open to all suggestions about how we can further improve any development agreement in order to arrive at the best possible outcome.

In conclusion

The McKibbin Group is prepared to invest more than \$25 million into our downtown. As people cry out for economic relief, it would be folly to reject this investment. The property tax revenues will help all of our citizens in perpetuity.

The \$2.3 million sale price of the land can go directly to creating affordable housing in our community. I will not vote for the project unless Council agrees to dedicate money to this purpose.

The decision will neither create nor prohibit a park/plaza. We need a welcoming space to join Haywood to Grove Arcade and to complement the Basilica and Civic Center. There can be a plaza, and step one will be the Basilica saying they want it and being willing to either build it or partner with others who want to do so.

We need to do away with the urban blight that exists there now.

Our new design guidelines coupled with a development agreement will ensure the highest quality building and protection of the structural integrity of the Basilica.

I hope this information is helpful,

Gordon Smith

On Sat, Sep 8, 2012 at 9:21 AM, Doug Abernethy <asheville@me.com> wrote:
Please consider the public park solution for the land across from the Basilica We need a
balanced approach to our city's growth. Leave our children a better place.

Doug Abernethy

Sent from iPad

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:03 PM
To: Leonard Carrier
Subject: Re: McKibbon's folly

Thanks, Mr. Carrier, for your interest in this issue. Downtown development brings out strong opinions, and I've heard a lot of them regarding the Haywood Street property. Everyone involved cares about the future of the city, and everyone wants an outcome we can be proud of for generations to come. Please forgive the length of this message. There's a lot of information to cover!

Current conditions and opportunities

We know that the current situation is undesirable for everyone. Surface parking and dilapidated buildings create dead space in our city center. It's blight, and the city should not support it.

The process of putting city-owned land up for sale began in 2005 as a way to support affordable housing in Asheville, and Asheville continues to have an acute affordable housing crisis.

Proceeds from a land sale could go immediately to the city's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). The AHTF loans money at low interest to builders who will help create affordable housing in our city limits. The great thing about these loans is that the money comes back to the fund, where it can be reallocated again and again. AHTF funds can immediately begin building hundreds of affordable housing units for working people in Asheville.

This will create construction jobs, and the resulting buildings will add to our city's tax rolls, allowing additional investments in parks, police, and transportation. Affordable housing and corridor density are crucial to making our local economy stronger and more sustainable over the long term.

Further, it is only through building on that site that we're going to connect Haywood Street and the Grove Arcade via the Civic Center and beautiful Basilica of St. Lawrence for residents and visitors alike.

In response to some of the many ideas out there:

-- Leaving the area as surface parking would continue the current dead space problem without helping with affordable housing needs or pushing towards creation of a plaza.

-- Creating another city park would (1) postpone the series of river parks and greenways currently underway; (2) create no property tax revenue or fulfill other economic development goals; (3) leave affordable housing needs unmet; (4) be financially impossible without a broad partnership that is currently not being contemplated by anyone; (5) be very costly in a time when parks budgets are stretched to the max.

-- I have enormous respect for the people who attend the Basilica of St. Lawrence, and I fear they may not know all of the facts about what's been going on. The Basilica was one of nine entities that were deemed qualified, along with the McKibbin Group, back in 2007. The Basilica did not submit a proposal when the process was open. Matt Mores, who was representing the Basilica at the time, was interested in seeing a nine-story hotel on the site.

Earlier this year, after an initial letter demanding that the City take or leave an offer less than half of what was being offered by The McKibbin Group, the Basilica representatives began broadcasting urgent warnings of dire consequences. In response to these concerns, the Asheville Design Center offered to mediate discussions between McKibbin and Basilica representatives. A different Basilica representative, Lou Bisette, was brought to the table. These discussions were fruitful, producing six agreed-upon design principles. Then the Basilica abruptly withdrew from these talks and released Mr. Bisette, bringing back their original spokesman, Matt Mores. The McKibbin Group and the Asheville Design Center remain open to resuming those discussions.

The Basilica does not have a contract with the Kessler Group, whom they suggest will do their building, and my understanding is that they do not have the necessary funding to bring a project to completion.

Changes in representation, walking away from negotiations about design principles, shifting desires for what should be built, the lack of a firm agreement with a developer, and the lack of capital – All of these things lead me to having less confidence in the Basilica's ability to achieve a desirable outcome in a reasonable time frame.

Protecting the integrity of the Basilica

When the city sells this property, we will be able to sculpt a development agreement with the buyer. Any development agreement should include requirements for seismic monitoring and consultation with a geotechnical engineer. If integrity of Basilica is threatened, then construction must stop until a solution is reached.

There must be a significant buffer space between any new building and the architectural treasure of the Basilica in order to assure its structural integrity. That buffer space can take the form of a world-class plaza/piazza if all of the parties involved will cooperate to make it happen. The Basilica will have to be the lead entity in doing so, because they already own the necessary land. We can reroute the roads, make a safer intersection, and create a lovely plaza. It will require cooperation, and I'm hopeful we can get there.

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Aesthetic tastes vary wildly, but no matter your opinion of Aloft or Indigo, built under the old rules, every building built from now on will fall under the new design guidelines. Also, the proposed building would be shorter than the historic apartment buildings on either side of it and would use brick facades to correspond with the surrounding structures.

Lastly, I am open to all suggestions about how we can further improve any development agreement in order to arrive at the best possible outcome.

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We need to do away with the urban blight that exists there now.

Our new design guidelines coupled with a development agreement will ensure the highest quality building and protection of the structural integrity of the Basilica.

I hope this information is helpful,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Sep 6, 2012 at 3:23 PM, Leonard Carrier <lcarrrier@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Members of the Asheville City Council,

It should be a no-brainer that if only 13% of Asheville's taxpayers prefer a hotel on City land adjoining the Basilica of St. Lawrence, then City Council is not representing its constituents if they vote for the latest McKibbon-Kessler boondoggle to hit the drawing board. I simply cannot understand why City Council members, duly elected by Asheville City residents, do not simply follow the Will of the People.

I have written to all of you before, at one time or another, regarding the fallacy of kneeling down to Mammon when it comes to protecting one of Asheville's treasures. The argument that the City "can't afford" a park in front of the Basilica is fallacious. Grass and trees are cheap compared to the cost of building a hotel on that spot. Council Members should look to what's good for our community as a whole, not just what's good for some wealthy investors.

So please, Esther Mannheim, Gordon Smith, Chris Pelly, and Marc Hunt. Think of the legacy you will be leaving if you vote for another hotel requiring huge expenditures that will impact City taxpayers-- just like the millions of dollars that the City had to sink into the foundation of "Aloft" -- the high-flying venture that really benefited only the vulture capitalists. Please, Jan Davis, don't personal differences with other Council Members blind you to the reality of turning Downtown Asheville into a concrete jungle instead of wide, green spaces. And finally, please Mayor Bellamy, do what your constituents expect of you in leading City Council to some *rapprochement* between PARC and the Catholic Diocese so that our children and our children's children can enjoy a leisurely walk in the park. It goes without saying that visitors to our Fair City will enjoy that, as well.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 9:48 PM
To: jkh1929@aol.com
Subject: Re: Development near the Basilica

Thanks, Mr. and Mrs. Heid, for your interest in this issue. Downtown development brings out strong opinions, and I've heard a lot of them regarding the Haywood Street property. Everyone involved cares about the future of the city, and everyone wants an outcome we can be proud of for generations to come. Please forgive the length of this message. There's a lot of information to cover!

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I hope this information is helpful,

Gordon Smith

On Sat, Sep 8, 2012 at 8:29 PM, <jkh1929@aol.com> wrote:

Council Members: Please do not waste a once in century opportunity to beautify and enhance a pivotal location in downtown Asheville. If you succumb to the immediate lure of tax income, the image of our city will be diminished forever. Neither proposed plan is eye grabbing though the Basilica plan is far superior to the plan that offers another sterile downtown hotel. How about declaring a recess, and going back to the drawing board to insure some attractive green space and openness for our city posterity?

Jim and Caryl Heid Black Mountain

Ben Fulmer

From: Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> on behalf of Leonard Carrier
Sent: Thursday, September 06, 2012 3:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: McKibbon's folly

Dear Members of the Asheville City Council,

It should be a no-brainer that if only 13% of Asheville's taxpayers prefer a hotel on City land adjoining the Basilica of St. Lawrence, then City Council is not representing its constituents if they vote for the latest McKibbon-Kessler boondoggle to hit the drawing board. I simply cannot understand why City Council members, duly elected by Asheville City residents, do not simply follow the Will of the People.

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Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 11:17 PM
To: Leonard Carrier
Subject: Re: Basilica

I understand your perspective.

Gordon

On Wed, Aug 29, 2012 at 2:54 PM, Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> wrote:

Nonsense, Gordon. First of all, there are not "many who feel differently." That's ungrammatical. You should have said that they feel *different* about the matter. But as a former academician, I offer you my considered opinion that the PARC poll was extremely reliable. Apparently, you are being duped, my friend. Judging from your reply, I think I might even appreciate Asheville more than you do.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier, PhD
Emeritus Professor of Philosophy
University of Miami, FL
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

----- Original Message -----

From: [Gordon Smith](#)
To: [Leonard Carrier](#)
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 8:06 AM
Subject: Re: Basilica

Thanks again, Mr. Carrier. While I understand that many people feel the way you do, please understand that there are also many who feel differently. The PARC poll was not, in my opinion and in the opinion of academicians, a reliable one. I will continue to work towards the best solution, and I appreciate your care for the city.

Gordon

On Tue, Aug 28, 2012 at 2:57 PM, Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for your reply. I feel that I must remind you that Asheville is on the cusp of having a really great Downtown area--or else falling prey to developers who simply want to make their money and run. I'm not running, Mr. Smith. I am a City taxpayer, and I believe that when 78% of Ashevilleans do NOT want another hotel near their most treasured landmark, then their wishes should be honored.

Why don't you show a little creativity, in the way that the City of Greenville, SC did? Greenville made the most of its natural setting and created a wonderful area for its citizens to enjoy, and also to attract tourism.

We already have Hotel Indigo close to the Basilica, and we have Aloft at the other end of town; plus we have the Royal Bohemian in Biltmore Village. Across the Smoky Park Bridge we also have the wonderful Crowne Plaza Resort and Spa. So we already have the wherewithal to accommodate tourists. What we need are attractions to draw them here. if you can't see that, then you are not serving the interests of most of my fellow Ashevilleans.

Here are some concrete recommendations designed to meet your worries about the City's not having enough resources to do what PARC has recommended: (1) Fire the City Manager. He is being reactive, rather than pro-active; (2) Approach large corporations the way Greenville did, to partner with the City; (3) Listen to your constituency and not to your wallet. Do those things and you'll get to "the promised land." Fail to do them and you will leave a legacy of failure for all of us.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

----- Original Message -----

From: [Gordon Smith](#)

To: [Leonard Carrier](#)

Sent: Tuesday, August 28, 2012 8:14 AM

Subject: Re: Basilica

Mr. Carrier,

Thank you for writing in. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines. The recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. In order for this to happen, it will require the voluntary cooperation of the Basilica for the land. It will also require a broad financial partnership, because the City of Asheville simply can not afford to build and maintain another downtown park on its own. The City just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars and recognize that there are a lot of goals we've been asked by the voters to achieve.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site. The proposals I've seen so far are all shorter than the nearby historic apartment buildings.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 27, 2012 at 8:23 PM, Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Members of City Council,

Do you really represent the taxpaying citizens of Asheville? It's hard to say. One thing I do know, which is that only 13% of your electorate favor building a hotel on the City-owned property adjoining St. Lawrence Basilica. That means that 87% favor something else. That 87% is divided

between the PARC proposal of a green space, and the Catholic Church offer, which would also protect Guastavino's master work and our most famous landmark.

I find the solution to be a simple one. Why doesn't City Council ditch the offer of McKibbon and Kessler? Instead, negotiate a compromise between the Church and PARC. I can't imagine why anyone hasn't thought of this.

But, please, please, don't vacillate and conduct another study. Either do your business or get off the Council and make way for those who will look after those who elected you. Otherwise, you will be remembered for simply bleating like baby sheep--poor little lambs who have gone astray.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Dr.
Asheville 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 12:07 PM
To: Susan Sihler
Subject: Re: Haywood/Page site

Ms. Sihler,

Thank you for writing in. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's (DMP) Design Guidelines. The recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville. The Aloft Hotel was not subject to the DMP rules.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. In order for this to happen, it will require the voluntary cooperation of the Basilica for the land. It will also require a broad financial partnership, because the City of Asheville simply can not afford to build and maintain another downtown park on its own. The City just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars and recognize that there are a lot of goals we've been asked by the voters to achieve.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site. The proposals I've seen so far are all shorter than the nearby historic apartment buildings.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Aug 29, 2012 at 11:47 AM, Susan Sihler <ssihler@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear City Council Members:

I am writing to plead with you not to let the McKibbin group build another hotel in Asheville and especially not on the Haywood/Page site.

In my opinion they have already "defaced" our beautiful downtown architecture with the ugly and out-of-place Aloft Hotel.

We have a city filled with very interesting and historic buildings, one of which is the treasured Basilica of St. Lawrence. It behooves us to

think of developing space on the Haywood/Page site that not only enhances the Basilica, but also provides some green space in downtown Asheville.

Both tourists and residents of Asheville will benefit. There is more to consider here than the income and tax revenue and "pleasing" the developers who are getting more than due consideration from City Council and the City Planning. How about some planning that will help to preserve and enhance our unique city?

Thank you!

Susan Sihler

17 Wisteria Drive
Asheville, N.C. 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Susan Sihler <ssihler@yahoo.com> on behalf of Susan Sihler
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 11:48 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Robert Phillips
Subject: Haywood/Page site

Dear City Council Members:

I am writing to plead with you not to let the McKibbon group build another hotel in Asheville and especially not on the Haywood/Page site.

In my opinion they have already "defaced" our beautiful downtown architecture with the ugly and out-of-place Aloft Hotel.

We have a city filled with very interesting and historic buildings, one of which is the treasured Basilica of St. Lawrence. It behooves us to think of developing space on the Haywood/Page site that not only enhances the Basilica, but also provides some green space in downtown Asheville.

Both tourists and residents of Asheville will benefit. There is more to consider here than the income and tax revenue and "pleasing" the developers who are getting more than due consideration from City Council and the City Planning. How about some planning that will help to preserve and enhance our unique city?

Thank you!

Susan Sihler
17 Wisteria Drive
Asheville, N.C. 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> on behalf of Leonard Carrier
Sent: Monday, August 27, 2012 8:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Basilica

Dear Members of City Council,

Do you really represent the taxpaying citizens of Asheville? It's hard to say. One thing I do know, which is that only 13% of your electorate favor building a hotel on the City-owned property adjoining St. Lawrence Basilica. That means that 87% favor something else. That 87% is divided between the PARC proposal of a green space, and the Catholic Church offer, which would also protect Guastavino's master work and our most famous landmark.

I find the solution to be a simple one. Why doesn't City Council ditch the offer of McKibbon and Kessler? Instead, negotiate a compromise between the Church and PARC. I can't imagine why anyone hasn't thought of this.

But, please, please, don't vacillate and conduct another study. Either do your business or get off the Council and make way for those who will look after those who elected you. Otherwise, you will be remembered for simply bleating like baby sheep--poor little lambs who have gone astray.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Dr.
Asheville 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: Cheryl Hemmer <cdhemmer@gmail.com> on behalf of Cheryl Hemmer
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 10:04 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: opposed to hotel in front of St. Lawrence

Thanks for the response Gordon. I am sorry to hear that the city cannot afford the upkeep of more green space, but I guess I am not surprised.

Cheryl Hemmer

On Tue, Aug 14, 2012 at 8:13 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlouncil.com> wrote:

Ms. Hemmer,

Thank you for writing in. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines.

The City of Asheville just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. Without raising revenues, I do not see a way to support another park. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. Recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 13, 2012 at 10:04 PM, Cheryl Hemmer <cdhemmer@gmail.com> wrote:

I am an Asheville resident and I am opposed to the city selling the property in front of St. Lawrence to a developer of a hotel. I would much rather see a public park that would do more to enhance the charm and aesthetic of our city and benefit all citizens.

Thanks,
Cheryl Hemmer
10 Hampshire Circle
Asheville, NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: beth searles <b_searles@yahoo.com> on behalf of beth searles
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:19 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Cc: ashevillencouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Re: St Lawrence Plaza

Mr. Hunt,

Thank you very much for your response and the helpful information provided below. It is encouraging to read that you see the value of the Basilica's rendering/plans thus far, and its pedestrian-friendly, aesthetic and long-term strengths for the community.

I've seen the McKibbon Group's hotel renderings recently, and I am relieved that they have come up with something more acceptable than was probably originally conceived. It would be short-sighted, though, to assume it is automatically, now, the best choice over the Plan you have admitted has merit.

NOtice that the 6 levels of the rendered St. Lawrence Plaza have a tiered effect, and the effect is far more open and site-line-friendly, than the solid levels that the Hotel would include, even with a fountain/plaza segment. The St. L. Plaza is commercially viable and is multi-use and is a more dynamic use of the space from the viewpoint of the community, and tourists. It is aesthetically superior to McKibbon Group's design, it can be argued, and is more far-sighted in its benefits to Asheville overall. Hotel developers come and go, and other hotel sites can and will be available, but this site has a unique situation relative to a historical treasure, as well as being part of an active downtown corridor. Another hotel is just not the wisest decision in the big scheme, I would have to agree with those making that argument.

There still does remain the issues of fairness about opening up the RFP process after such a dated proposal by the McKibbon Group. I can't and don't speak for the Basilica, of course, but I suspect that the desire to have a shot at controlling development stems from the same issue you appear to have - not completely trusting that the other will do the job exactly as wanted or needed. Your concerns about the Basilica owning the site and developing it seem to be a red herring, though, since anyone developing that site has to answer to the City's requirements, correct? Negotiations can still be hammered out I would assume. The question comes down to the development that will end up on that site....which is the best long-term choice for the Basilica and the community/city?

It seems wrong to suggest that the BASilica with its selected (and proven) developer/architect fails to qualify as a valid competitor for the site at least as much as the McKibbon Group.

The Basilica is squarely and definitively a part of Asheville, and has been for over a hundred years. It would act in the interest of itself, of course, AND in the interest of the community and city - all of which are intertwined in a way that the McKibbon Group is not. The Basilica plan has already compromised on key issues that the city has indicated and would obviously remain amenable to such issues. It should not, of course, be given short shrift in any serious consideration of development that so directly affects its own well-being. I hope and fully suspect the Council is sensitive to that.

The Basilica has of course made its intentions known that it has no long-term interest in being in the development business, beyond what's necessary for the issue at hand, but has found a developer it trusts, a proven developer not unknown to Asheville; and it has architects and consultants who are intimately acquainted with the unique aspects of the Basilica's construction and architecture. That is entirely a plus, and in the case of such an old structure, with a worrisome defect, it seems to be a necessity. NO matter how forward-thinking McKibbon Group may be, (and as a customer of the Chapel Hill Aloft Hotel, I happen to like the hotel, in general) they are not invested in this area or in the Basilica in quite the same way. In fact, up to the time of the

revealing of their plan , I understand they had made no real attempt to talk with anyone involved with the Basilica re development. That may be revealing.

At the end of the day, though, I sense and am encouraged that there's far more sensitivity and trending toward common ground between all parties than was originally apparent. I would hope that ongoing discussions are fruitful, but I believe the Basilica should have the respect it deserves and be given a fair opportunity to bid for ownership and development of the site , according to city wishes, and to help develop that property with the best possible intentions for the Basilica and the whole community.

That is ultimately the biggest concern for the Basilica and its supporters.

Again, I thank you very much for your response, Mr. Hunt, and your intentions to remain open to the best solutions, and I am happy to see that you are open to the merits of the Basilica's St. Lawrence Plaza plan. I hope that whatever happens, the current sensitivity to "doing right" by the historical Basilica and the community continues.

Sincerely Beth Searles

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>

To: 'beth searles' <b_searles@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, August 5, 2012 11:37 AM

Subject: RE: St Lawrence Plaza

Ms Searles

Thanks for writing me regarding the future of the city-owned parcel across from the US Cellular Center and the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate your concern. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

- From a design and quality standpoint enhances and adds to the vibrancy of that portion of downtown and especially complements that Basilica, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
- Ensures that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica.
- Includes a public plaza / open space
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.
- Activates improved use and function of the US Cellular Center.

The short clip here is provided by official representatives of the Basilica and Diocese of Charlotte as their vision for the site, and it is consistent with a site plan and structures that would meet my hopes for the site. It features a six-story structure and open plaza area separating the building from the Basilica: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As former chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space in this community. Some are avidly promoting the idea of a stand-alone green park here as being a simple choice, but I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone park. I do think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. As for the key issue of funding, note that the effort

to build nearby Pack Square Park, while very successful in many ways, so far is more than \$ 1.5 million short of its initial fundraising goal. The City is also falling well short of the \$600k annually required to operate and maintain that park according to the initial vision for it as a “signature park”. Given Asheville’s overly limited fiscal resources, the struggle to fund what we currently have, a price-tag for a stand-alone park project on this site that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown. I do feel that significant public space as a plaza in conjunction with a smart real estate development project can work and be aesthetically great, so I am advocating for that.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbon Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbon’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. There is no downside to seeing this process through, and I support the City’s completing its discussions with McKibbon before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbon if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbon. I am open to the idea of a well-designed high-quality hotel (not an imposing ugly one) because that might best activate use of the US Cellular Center while also protecting the interests of the Basilica and the rest of the neighborhood. While some segments of the hotel/motel market in the region are struggling, I have recently been hearing that there does seem to be healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel choices. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the notion that we have too many hotels downtown already. As for design, note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). Many in the community seem to fear a “high-rise” development. I can only support a project that would be limited and fit height-wise between the neighboring Vanderbilt Apartments and Battery Park Apartments.

City-Led or Basilica-Led Development? - Parishioners of the Basilica have done a great job helping City leaders understand the importance of great design and implementation for the site, and that is indeed resulting in the commitment to a quality outcome by the City. The Asheville Design Center was recently facilitating collaborative design efforts among official Diocese/Basilica representatives, McKibbon, and City officials. I was disappointed when, on July 5th, the Diocese/Basilica representatives unilaterally withdrew from those productive discussions, declaring that the only acceptable outcome would for the Diocese to own the site and plan/control its future development. The City owns the property and should negotiate directly with a developer to ensure a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to make sure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. The Diocese of Charlotte and parishioners of the Basilica have proposed that the City sell the land to the Diocese and allow the Diocese to negotiate with a developer for design and implementation. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Note that representatives of the Basilica say they fully intend to sell the property to a developer just as the City might, a point that does not seem to be well understood in the community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza, not a hugely different outcome than what the City is currently negotiating for.

Economic and Fiscal Considerations – Downtown character and function are enormously important to our regional economic development. Getting a well-designed and highly functional development outcome for the site is critical. The City must be fairly compensated in selling the site, and given the City’s serious fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbon to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should be completed within a few weeks – perhaps by late September. Council will simply review progress at its August 14th meeting.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that political crossfire and stalemate along with limited willingness of key stakeholders to negotiate for shared benefits in the outcome will halt progress. If that happens, the site would likely devolve to an uninspiring surface parking lot for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: beth searles [mailto:b_searles@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2012 2:58 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: basilica@bellsouth.net
Subject: St Lawrence Plaza

July 12, 2012

To members of Council,

My husband and I wish to eagerly voice our support for the Basilica's impressive development plans for the Haywood St. property across from Basilica. It strives, in good faith, to work with the City and compromise on several key issues, and most importantly, protects the interests of the Basilica, and, we believe, the interests of many Asheville citizens who are weary of decisions that inflate commercial interests over vision and aesthetics for the city of Asheville.

To ignore a perceived groundswell on this issue is unwise and short-sighted. The rancor is destined to grow significantly I suspect, but that is one issue of many.

This plan effectively compromises by offering both significant revenue and a far more aesthetic and tourist-friendly plan. On reviewing the proposal (at www.stlawrenceplaza.com) my husband and I find these plans to be highly dynamic and forward-thinking for the area in question, and the addition of Kessler as a reputable developer offers a sophisticated direction. I should add that my husband is not without business acumen in this area, as he has experience as a real estate agent and commercial real estate investor and developer on a small scale.

The old business adage that one must take care of the goose that lays the golden egg, if you wish to continue receiving golden eggs, is appropriate here. The golden egg for Asheville, you certainly know, is primarily tourism - a tourism based on a city that has earned high marks for its unique appeal architecturally, geographically and historically, among other factors. Inappropriate hotel development chosen purely for the revenue at the expense of aesthetics, vision and respect for historical value is objectionable - particularly for a city like Asheville.

To fail to consider the Basilica's plan versus an out-of-town developer who specializes in contemporary high-rise hotels with minimalist (block-y) exteriors, (when that hotel can surely be built in a more appropriate location, not to mention the questionable need for another hotel in this area) is purely lacking wisdom and vision. To remain inflexible and rigid in the face of this proposal and to cling to an old proposal by McKinnon group is a choice that veers into questionable ethics, as well. One can argue it is boiling down to greed versus vision.

I believe the majority of this Council is totally capable of recognizing these points, and I hope and pray the Council seriously considers this plan , and respects the voice of the venerable Basilica, and its community supporters. It is , quite simply, the right thing to do.

Thank you for your consideration of our points, and for your service to the city and your constituents,
Elizabeth and Mark Searles

b_searles@yahoo.com

Ben Fulmer

From: Jean Ann Wheelock <jeanann.wheelock@gmail.com> on behalf of Jean Ann Wheelock
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 10:31 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: property across from Basilica

Mr Smith,

I appreciate your thoughtful response. I am no stranger to working within budgetary restrictions, as my husband and I are small business owners. However, I also know that sometimes you have to go out on a limb with the faith that expenses incurred in the short term are right for long term goals. Allowing a building to go up in a place where a park is preferable just because you don't think you can afford the better option is a decision you can't undo later.

Kind regards,
Jean Ann Wheelock

On Tue, Aug 14, 2012 at 9:40 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Thank you for writing in, Mr. and Mrs. Wheelock. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines.

The City of Asheville just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. Without raising revenues, I do not see a way to support another downtown park. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. Recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 13, 2012 at 10:16 AM, Jean Ann Wheelock <jeanann.wheelock@gmail.com> wrote:

Respectfully submitted to all Council members:

After seeing all the proposals and hearing from all sides, we still prefer that the city-owned property across from the Basilica of St Lawrence and our civic center and library be put to its best and highest use as a green, family-friendly, public space.

Very sincerely,

Russ and Jean Ann Wheelock

22 Hibriten Drive
Asheville, NC 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Mary Evers <mdevers03@yahoo.com> on behalf of Mary Evers
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 9:55 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Proposed construction in the St. Lawrence Church area

Councilman Smith: Thank you for your courteous and prompt response. In the event that a park is not in the future for this area our second choice is that the land be sold to the Basilica for their development. While this may generate less, in terms of revenue, we believe that the Church will be a better guardian of the land than a private developer. We see few signs that development of the Indigo Hotel was in keeping with the area (or has been particularly successful) and the "subsidized" development of the current McKibbin Hotel/Parking Deck on Biltmore Ave. is also not an architectural gem given its marquis location. We cannot argue about the need for parking in the downtown Biltmore area but if the city is short of money, maybe you should look at the budget for that development. We in the neighborhoods adjacent to downtown, such as Kenilworth, are vitally concerned with the sustainable and quality development of Asheville. We regard downtown Asheville's survival, in its current form, as largely an accident. We remember the plan proposed to flatten several square blocks between I-240 and College Street to build a "mall" as well as Coleman's recent assault on Pack Square Park. We are well aware of our "city planners" mistakes and short sighted decisions, like the one that prevented the Federal Bldg. from having its own multi-story parking deck (apparently out of concern that the City Decks would be less than full). Where are we with that decision now & who was held responsible? We would like to leave a city to our children that they can take pride in--but not "by accident". Again, thank you for your consideration. Dave & Mary Evers

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>
To: Mary Evers <mdevers03@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 8:53 AM
Subject: Re: Proposed construction in the St. Lawrence Church area

Thank you for writing in, Mr. and Mrs. Evers. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines. I also hope to improve the road situation as part of the process.

The City of Asheville just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. Without raising revenues, I do not see a way to support another downtown park. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. Recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site. I have yet to see a formal proposal from the Basilica. Their frequent changes in representation have made it difficult to know what to expect.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 13, 2012 at 1:19 PM, Mary Evers <mdevers03@yahoo.com> wrote:

Honorable Mayor and Council Persons: As 32 year residents of Asheville we ask that you support either a park or the sale of the land to the Church as per their plan for a plaza and residential construction. The least appealing plan is the McGibbon Hotel Plan, and we totally oppose it. Downtown needs more green areas and the intersection in front of the Church is in dire need of fixing to reduce the number of streets intersecting there. More congestion and traffic in this area is NOT needed. Thank you for your consideration. David & Mary Evers, 24 Finalee Ave., Asheville NC 28803-2544

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 9:33 AM
To: PARC
Subject: Re: Poll: No hotel in front of Basilica

Thank you for writing in, PARC. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines.

The City of Asheville just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. Without raising revenues, I do not see a way to support another downtown park. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. Recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being engaged in our community and for your willingness to fairly approach people of different viewpoints.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 13, 2012 at 10:01 AM, PARC <ashevilleparc@gmail.com> wrote:

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Contact

City Council
Asheville Citizen-Times
Mountain Xpress
Asheville PARC

BILLBOARD TREE CUTTING



This type of clear-cutting is going to be commonplace along North Carolina's roads. The bill that passed last year was S 183 - The Selective Vegetation Removal Act. This bill was a giveaway to the

billboard industry, and it was the public's trees that got given!

And it's not just tree-cutting ... it's sometimes using highly toxic herbicides to simply kill the trees since it's cheaper and less work.

If you want to speak out on the new rules in person, you have that opportunity on Monday, August 13 at 7 pm, City of Asheville Public Works Building, Room A-109, 161 Charlotte St.

Wondering what to say? Here are some key points:

Residents favor to the church,



A new poll releases that most Asheville the city-owned p of St. Lawrence.

40% favored a public p
church, 13% favor a h

- The DOT needs to assess the fair market value of the trees to be cut and have the billboard companies reimburse the state. DOT has said that 70,000 trees will be cut with a value of 56 million dollars, yet the cost benefit analysis shows zero benefit to the billboard industry.

- The billboard companies should pay DOT's administrative costs for implementation of this law.

- DOT rules should protect our stream banks and local environmental ordinances.

- Allow local governments to have notification, input, and right of appeal.

Now that you've got that down, there's no time like the present to have your say.

You can also make comments by phone, fax, and mail to:

Fax at 919-733-9105

Phone at 919-707-2800

Online:

<https://apps.dot.state.nc.us/ContactUS/PostComment.aspx?Unit=Rules>

Mail: APA Coordinator, 1501 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1501

Thanks for speaking up!

We contacted all the members of City Council to ask if there would be a vote at the meeting. Some said maybe, some said no. Three said that if there was a motion and a second then there would be a vote.

The meeting is at 5PM at the City Building.



Lawrence Green would park where people are coming from the Civic Church, the Grove Arca Pack Memorial Library, Battery Park, and the Vanderbilt.



impression that the Ch
that is not the case. [Cli](#)

It is open greenspace t
St. Lawrence, and gree
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experience for Asheville

City Council will discus
tomorrow night, Tuesd
moment to let them kn

[Write to City Council](#)

[Write to the Citizen-Times](#)

[Write to the Mountain Xpress](#)

[Click to see the methodology](#)

--from the folks at PARC.



PARC • PO Box 4093 • Asheville, NC 28805

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Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 8:50 AM
To: SchreiberE@aol.com
Subject: Re: Please make the area a park!

Thank you for writing in, Mr. and Mrs. Schenck. There are a lot of different opinions about how that parcel ought to be developed, and everyone wants something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come. It's a notable location, and anything that happens there ought to complement surrounding uses, preserve the integrity of the Basilica, and comport with the Downtown Master Plan's Design Guidelines.

The City of Asheville just took on maintenance of Pack Square Park, and there are several other park areas in and around downtown that we are currently struggling to maintain due to budgetary pressures. We are working to create a series of French Broad River Parks as well that incorporate multimodal transportation options. Without raising revenues, I do not see a way to support another downtown park. While I very much enjoy our parks, I must also be responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Any design that comes forward will need to have a sufficient open space to allow for a buffer between the proposed building and the Basilica. The open space will also invite foot traffic from Haywood Street and from the Grove Arcade to turn the corner and admire that architectural gem. Recently passed design guidelines will ensure sufficient setbacks and complementary building materials. Further, I expect City Council will urge any builder to go above and beyond those guidelines since this is a marquis location for the citizens of Asheville.

I am looking forward to learning more about the proposals and working with Council members to ensure responsible building on the site.

I hope this is helpful. Thank you again for being an engaged member of our community.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Aug 13, 2012 at 2:12 PM, <SchreiberE@aol.com> wrote:

We badly need more open space in down town for people to enjoy. Downtown traffic and congestion is bad now. Please don't allow development of the area across from the Basillica and Civic Center.

St. Lawrence Green would put a park where people are: going and coming from the Civic Center, the Church, the Grove Arcade, Pack Memorial Library, the Battery Park, and the Vanderbilt.

Thank you!

Betty Anne and Gary Schenk
Weaverville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Mary Evers <mdevers03@yahoo.com> on behalf of Mary Evers
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 1:19 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Proposed construction in the St. Lawrence Church area

Honorable Mayor and Council Persons: As 32 year residents of Asheville we ask that you support either a park or the sale of the land to the Church as per their plan for a plaza and residential construction. The least appealing plan is the McGibbon Hotel Plan, and we totally oppose it. Downtown needs more green areas and the intersection in front of the Church is in dire need of fixing to reduce the number of streets intersecting there. More congestion and traffic in this area is NOT needed. Thank you for your consideration. David & Mary Evers, 24 Finalee Ave., Asheville NC 28803-2544

Ben Fulmer

From: Jean Ann Wheelock <jeanann.wheelock@gmail.com> on behalf of Jean Ann Wheelock
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:16 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: property across from Basilica

Respectfully submitted to all Council members:

After seeing all the proposals and hearing from all sides, we still prefer that the city-owned property across from the Basilica of St Lawrence and our civic center and library be put to its best and highest use as a green, family-friendly, public space.

Very sincerely,

Russ and Jean Ann Wheelock
22 Hibriten Drive
Asheville, NC 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 10:58 AM
To: 'Christopher Pratt'; 'Esther Manheimer'
Cc: 'Cecil Bothwell'; 'Chris Pelly'; 'Gordon Smith'; 'Jan Davis'; 'Mayor Bellamy'; 'Maggie Burleson'; paula@mckibbonhotels.com
Subject: RE: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

Dr. Pratt

We have exchanged emails before, and I think you know my general take on the situation, but I wanted to share my updated view which I provide to folks who write.

Thank you for being in touch.

Marc Hunt

+++++

Thanks for writing me regarding the future of the city-owned parcel across from the US Cellular Center and the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate your concern. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

- From a design and quality standpoint enhances and adds to the vibrancy of that portion of downtown and especially complements that Basilica, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
- Ensures that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica.
- Includes a public plaza / open space
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.
- Activates improved use and function of the US Cellular Center.

The short clip here is provided by official representatives of the Basilica and Diocese of Charlotte as their vision for the site, and it is consistent with a site plan and structures that would meet my hopes for the site. It features a six-story structure and open plaza area separating the building from the

Basilica: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As former chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space in this community. Some are avidly promoting the idea of a stand-alone green park here as being a simple choice, but I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone park. I do think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. As for the key issue of funding, note that the effort to build nearby Pack Square Park, while very successful in many ways, so far is more than \$ 1.5 million short of its initial fundraising goal. The City is also falling well short of the \$600k annually required to operate and maintain that park according to the initial vision for it as a “signature park”. Given Asheville’s overly limited fiscal resources, the struggle to fund what we currently have, a price-tag for a stand-alone park project on this site that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown. I do feel that significant public space as a plaza in conjunction with a smart real estate development project can work and be aesthetically great, so I am advocating for that.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbon Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbon’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. There is no downside to seeing this process through, and I support the City’s completing its discussions with McKibbon before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbon if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbon. I am open to the idea of a well-designed high-quality hotel (not an imposing ugly one) because that might best activate use of the US Cellular Center while also protecting the interests of the Basilica and the rest of the neighborhood. While some segments of the hotel/motel market in the region are struggling, I have recently been hearing that there does seem to be healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel choices. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the notion that we have too many hotels downtown already. As for design, note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). Many in the community seem to fear a “high-rise” development. I can only support a project that would be limited and fit height-wise between the neighboring Vanderbilt Apartments and Battery Park Apartments.

City-Led or Basilica-Led Development? - Parishioners of the Basilica have done a great job helping City leaders understand the importance of great design and implementation for the site, and that is indeed resulting in the commitment to a quality outcome by the City. The Asheville Design Center was recently facilitating collaborative design efforts among official Diocese/Basilica representatives, McKibbon, and City officials. I was disappointed when, on July 5th, the Diocese/Basilica representatives unilaterally withdrew from those productive discussions, declaring that the only acceptable outcome would for the Diocese to own the site and plan/control its future development. The City owns the property and should negotiate directly with a developer to ensure a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to make sure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. The Diocese of Charlotte and parishioners of the Basilica have proposed that the City sell the land to the Diocese and allow the Diocese to negotiate with a developer for design and implementation. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Note that representatives of the Basilica say they fully intend to sell the property to a developer just as the City might, a point that does not seem to be well understood in the community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza, not a hugely different outcome than what the City is currently negotiating for.

Economic and Fiscal Considerations – Downtown character and function are enormously important to our regional economic development. Getting a well-designed and highly functional development outcome for the site is critical. The City must be fairly compensated in selling the site, and given the City’s serious fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbon to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should be completed within a few weeks – perhaps by late September. Council will simply review progress at its August 14th meeting.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that political crossfire and stalemate along with limited willingness of key stakeholders to negotiate for shared benefits in the outcome will halt progress. If that happens, the site would likely devolve to an uninspiring surface parking lot for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

+++++

From: Christopher Pratt [mailto:christopher.jimmie.pratt@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2012 11:12 AM

To: Esther Manheimer

Cc: Dr. Christopher Pratt; Cecil Bothwell; Chris Pelly; Gordon Smith; Jan Davis; Marc Hunt; Mayor Bellamy; Maggie Burleson; paula@mckibbonhotels.com

Subject: Re: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

Dear Councillor Manheimer, Asheville City Council, Mayor Bellamy,

Thank you for your reply, however, isn't it time our City Council stops playing games with this process. Why is Council ignoring the facts? One might wonder if this isn't SOP for our City government. We all know that:

- the Basilica also submitted a bit in the first RFQ and it was acknowledged in writing by the City, and
- that the Basilica's proposal should be given full consideration first as it is rightfully due through the historical private state statute arrangement (G.S. 160A-266) with the city for the development of the Haywood site.

One might ask Is someone withholding information from the Council, and if so why, or is it that the Council is choosing to ignore the record.

Your email and the McKibbon invitation forwarded by the City regarding an August 7 design presentation, and also to the public announcement of the same in the Asheville Citizen-Times on July 30 convey misleading and apparently false information which one could only imagine you and your colleagues and McKibbon knew. Did you not?

The reference in the publicity regarding McKibbon meeting with the Basilica is misleading and should be publicly retracted. There is no approved relationship or collaboration between the

Basilica and either the McKibbon Group or the Asheville Design Center. No such engagement was ever approved and the Basilica is not aware of, let alone were they consulted about any designs that they may be presenting or you may be considering.

The St. Lawrence Plaza web site presents the only approved messaging from the Basilica. The Basilica's stand has always been to support a developer only if and when the Basilica has been granted a historical private state statute arrangement (G.S. 160A-266) with the city for the development of the Haywood site.

There is no authorized support from the Basilica for the 2007 McKibbon RFQ, moreover, there is vigorous objection from the Basilica to any hotel being built on this Haywood site. Please refer to the letter from the Basilica counsel on May 24, 2012 written to the city, available via a link on the web site. That is the only direction approved by the Basilica.

We understand that the city staff's desire is to keep this five year RFQ alive, but this is not

a position we support.

However, it is also then incumbent on the City to keep the Basilica proposal alive and give it all consideration due to it first as it is rightfully due through the historical private state statute arrangement (G.S. 160A-266) with the city for the development of the Haywood site.

At this time, the Basilica has not authorized any Basilica representatives who will be attending the August 7th presentation. This is the first we are hearing about that meeting and any supposed collaboration with the Basilica.

I believe the Basilica Pastor/Rector will be responding more formally with a letter to John McKibbin. The only engagement to date with a developer by the Basilica is with the Kessler Development Group for a plaza with residential retail and commercial, and this will go forward only when the city approves private negotiations with the Basilica.

We believe ONLY the Basilica will be able to draw world class architectural design expertise to this project and ensure that the Basilica is protected during construction. This is a liability we believe no developer should undertake without full approval and support of the Basilica.

Please let's stop wasting taxpayer money and time and acknowledge what is the crux of this matter that:

- the Basilica also submitted a bid in the first RFQ and it was acknowledged in writing by the City, and
- that the Basilica's proposal should be given full consideration first as it is rightfully due through the historical private state statute arrangement (G.S. 160A-266) with the city for the development of the Haywood site.

If you have not already, please view the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza online at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

and the Petition supporting the St. Lawrence Plaza at:

[**http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte**](http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte)

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Pratt and Mrs. Jimmie Cochran Pratt, MPA

Chairmen, New Generations of Global Entrepreneurs

120 Norwood Avenue
Asheville, NC 28804-3618 USA
+828-253-8158
christopher.jimmie.pratt@gmail.com

On Wed, Aug 1, 2012 at 9:35 AM, Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com> wrote:

Mr. Pratt: I believe McKibbon is, on its own initiative, holding this public meeting. Anyone can reserve the space and make their own presentation. I would certainly welcome Kessler to do the same.

Thank you for the email.

-Esther Manheimer

From: Christopher Pratt [mailto:christopher.jimmie.pratt@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 31, 2012 9:03 PM
To: Maria Mason; Bud Hansbury; PARC; AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Carmen Ramos-Kennedy; Anne Fitzgerald Smith; Briggs Sherwood; Jane Whitman; Sue & Jim Donato; Bob Long - Musician; Will Teller -Musician; Thomas Nelson -Musician; Blaine Greenfield; Charlie Thomas; Allison Biddix; John Bascom -Musician; Alex Burch -Musician; Bill & Marleen Hutt; Frank Kirkland
Subject: Re: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

Did the McKibbon group develop this plan “Through meetings with the Basilica” as this email states?

And when will the Kessler Group be given the same opportunity?

Chris

On Tue, Jul 31, 2012 at 5:46 PM, Maria Mason <mariamaso@gmail.com> wrote:

EXCELLENT, Dr. Pratt.

Hey, everyone: PASS THIS ON!!!

Respectfully yours,

Maria Mason

Begin forwarded message:

From: Christopher Pratt <christopher.jimmie.pratt@gmail.com>

Date: July 31, 2012 4:35:59 PM EDT

To: "Dr. Christopher Pratt" <christopher.jimmie.pratt@gmail.com>

Subject: Fwd: FW: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Maggie Burleson <MBurleson@ashevillenc.gov>

Date: Tue, Jul 31, 2012 at 3:04 PM

Subject: FW: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

To: Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com>, Chris Pelly <chrispelly@avlcouncil.com>, Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com>, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>, Jan Davis <jandavis@avlcouncil.com>, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>, Mayor Bellamy <mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com>

City Council is invited to the following:

McKIBBON HOTEL GROUP TO PRESENT FIRST DESIGN DRAWINGS FOR HAYWOOD STREET PROPERTY

Public invited to preview plans for mixed-use hotel, plaza/piazza, restaurant and retail development

(ASHEVILLE, NC –07/31/12) **McKibbon Hotel Group, Inc.** will present the first design drawings for their proposed development of the city-owned Haywood Street site, across the street from the Basilica of St. Lawrence and the U.S. Cellular Center on **Tuesday, August 7 at 5:30 p.m.** at the **U.S. Cellular Center Banquet Room, 2nd floor, 87 Haywood Street, Asheville.** The meeting is open to the public, and **doors will open at 5:00 p.m.** for seating and preview of site renderings.

“Through meetings with the Basilica, the Asheville Design Center and City representatives, we are prepared to develop a property that will enhance the neighborhood and complement the Basilica, which is such an important historic landmark for our city,” explained **John McKibbon**, Chairman of McKibbon Hotel Group. McKibbon will lead the 30-minute presentation, and will ask for public comment at the meeting’s conclusion.

In addition to the presentation of new site renderings, the meeting will include:

✍ McKibbon Company History, Previous Urban Projects and Company Involvement in Asheville Community – John McKibbon, Chairman

✍ Overview of the Haywood Project – Architects Buck Lindsay and Chad Roberson, Lindsay Pope Brayfield Clifford and Associates

✍ Precautions That Will Be Taken to Protect Surrounding Buildings During Construction – Jill Heimburg, PE, AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Asheville, NC

About McKibbon Hotel Group, Inc./McKibbon Hotel Management, Inc.

McKibbon Hotel Group, Inc., based in Gainesville, Georgia, is a privately owned enterprise that has grown into an award-winning premier real estate developer and owner of nationally franchised hotel brands for Marriott, Hilton, Starwood and Hyatt hotels. McKibbon is proud to be a recognized leader for over 87 years in the hospitality industry, and McKibbon Hotel Management, Inc., based in Tampa, Florida, currently operates over 65 mid and upscale brands in 8 states throughout the Southeast. The company has a rich history and culture that promotes a family oriented environment, while holding true to its core values of honesty, integrity and loyalty. For more information, visit www.mckibbon.com.



Paula MacDonald | Director of Communications

McKibbon Hotel Management, Inc.

5315 Avion Park Drive, Suite 120 | Tampa, Florida 33607

p: [813.472.7390](tel:813.472.7390) | f: [813.241.2389](tel:813.241.2389) | c: [813.545.1009](tel:813.545.1009) | www.mckibbon.com | www.facebook.com/mckibbonhotels



11 North Market Street, Asheville, NC 28801 | [828-258-2991](tel:828.258.2991) | FAX [828-255-0255](tel:828.255.0255)

422 South Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792 | [828-697-6196](tel:828.697.6196) | FAX [828-693-3999](tel:828.693.3999)

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Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Lauterer <mplauterer@aol.com> on behalf of Maggie Lauterer
Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 3:36 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Thank you

Mr. Smith, thank you for your response about my concern about the property across from the Basilica. I know no plans are on the table at present. My concern is for the future which includes health of the church's structure since there is a serious crack in the dome, as well as pedestrian travel in that area.

I understand about money concerns.

Just hoping your esteemed council will consider possibilities should you receive a windfall, (and it could happen), of open space, especially at the civic center where there is so much foot traffic.

Thank you again,

Maggie

On 7/31/2012 10:46 AM, Gordon Smith wrote:

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Lauterer. We're endeavoring to ensure that the city-owned property meets a lot of needs. The integrity of the Basilica, the vibrancy of the Civic Center, the thriving retail scene along Haywood and in the Grove Arcade, and more. It's a lot to work through. I'm quite certain we don't have the budget to create another park within downtown, especially since we've just assumed maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park while eating a couple of million dollars that was promised from the Conservancy.

I'm hoping to see some open space between any new structures and the Basilica, and I'm advocating for a reissuance of the RFP in order to achieve the ends outlined above.

I hope this is helpful.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jul 30, 2012 at 12:00 PM, Maggie Lauterer <mplauterer@aol.com> wrote:

Good servants of the city of Asheville,

Since the early 1980's when I moved to Asheville, I thought that the best use of that ugly parking space across the street from St. Lawrence and the civic center would be a park - so many people come to the civic center, and to have a space of green would speak volumes about our city's sense of presence in the mountains and their nature.

Now I hear that the cathedral is suffering fragility in its dome - and that pretty much speaks volumes about the need for a park.

Thank you for considering that need for future plans.

Sincerely,

Maggie Lauterer

Ben Fulmer

From: Tom Downing <TDowning@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Tom Downing
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2012 5:15 PM
To: councilgroup
Subject: Letter to Mayor and Council from Basilica Requesting Consideration at Aug 14 Agenda -- Requests Dismissal of McKibbon RFP and Designation of Basilica and Diocese as a Partner with City to Develop Haywood Street Property
Attachments: Very Rev. Wilbur Thomas -- Basilica of St. Lawrence -- Requesting Dismissal of McKibbon RFP and Designation of Basilica and Diocese as a Partner -- 7-27-12.pdf

Mayor Bellamy and Council members,

Please see the attached letter, which was received in the Mayor's Office this afternoon.

Thanks,

Tom Downing
Administrative Assistant
City Manager's Office
828-259-5604

70 Court Plaza
PO Box 7148
Asheville, North Carolina 28802
TDowning@ashevillenc.gov



Think Green! Please do not print this e-mail unless necessary

The Asheville Way: Continuous Improvement, Integrity, Diversity, Safety and Welfare, and Excellent Service

Ben Fulmer

From: Maggie Lauterer <mplauterer@aol.com> on behalf of Maggie Lauterer
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2012 12:00 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: concern about the civic center area

Good servants of the city of Asheville,

Since the early 1980's when I moved to Asheville, I thought that the best use of that ugly parking space across the street from St. Lawrence and the civic center would be a park - so many people come to the civic center, and to have a space of green would speak volumes about our city's sense of presence in the mountains and their nature.

Now I hear that the cathedral is suffering fragility in its dome - and that pretty much speaks volumes about the need for a park.

Thank you for considering that need for future plans.

Sincerely,

Maggie Lauterer

Ben Fulmer

From: Helen Toms <helenet@charter.net> on behalf of Helen Toms
Sent: Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:45 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Native In Favor of Basilica Purchase and Green-Space

Dear Asheville City Council,

As a native of Asheville and current resident I'd like to weigh in on the Haywood St. property across from St. Lawrence. I believe that the Basilica should be given the contract for purchase for several reasons; First, I am concerned for the safety of the Basilica, a local and national treasure. Also, having a smaller building and some green space would be best for the city's economy. Other cities we compete with such as Greenville SC, Wilmington and Knoxville have designated historical districts and beautiful parks and green spaces. In order to compete we must strive to do the same. A small park-like setting would serve all the citizens all seasons instead of a few tourists coming only part of the year. In this case the long range interests of the city are better served with open space and a multi-use smaller building rather than another high rise hotel. Let's remember past near-misses when we saved the South Lexington Avenue area and City County Plaza from developers and a high-rise hotel. Please listen to the citizens you serve.

Sincerely,

Helen Toms
11 Parkview Dr.
Asheville, NC 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: Peter Brezny <pb@purplecat.net> on behalf of Peter Brezny
Sent: Thursday, July 05, 2012 2:43 PM
To: 'City Council'
Subject: Development near the cathedral

Dear City council,

I've written to you about this before, but I believe the importance of making the city owned property across from St. Lawrence Cathedral to be of great enough importance to ask for your time again.

I have heard back from some of you and I've been told that the city doesn't have the resources to maintain another park.

Although this may be true, I find it a poor excuse. Somehow we had enough revenue to spend Five million dollars for the basement rights to the property on Biltmore Avenue, which had a tax value of less than \$1million.

Now the city is left with that debt for another 25 years. Perhaps you can get Pat Whalen to mow the grass across from the Basilica for you. In all seriousness though, I'd ask that poor financial decision making not be used as an excuse for appropriate development of public space and historic preservation.

People don't come to Asheville to see new hotels with designs that belong in Miami. We have a historic city center, which has survived almost in spite of devastating planning decisions and near misses (remember the plan to turn all of Lexington Avenue into a mall?)...Imagine how different (dead) North Lexington would be today had that plan gone through.

I ask that in your consideration of options for the city owned land across from the Basilica, you look forward and 'think preservation' first. Our small city is losing its charm with every national chain store and eyesore hotel that's pops up in the city limits. Green space across from the Asheville Civic Center has been a long absent need in that area of town--a place where the public can congregate and comfortably relax under trees after a concert or event.

It's a beautiful, underserved location in town that you have the power to really do something wonderful with.

If nothing else, think how you would like to be remembered for your service on council? Do you want to be another Mayor Charles Wallmart, or even a Scott (staples) Shuford... The McKibbin 5?

Think Preservation.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Peter Brezny

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Sunday, July 01, 2012 10:04 PM
To: Jon
Subject: Re: Too late for the green St. Lawrence Basilica?

Jon,

Yes to preserving the integrity of the Basilica.

Also, I wanted to mention that it was not the City of Asheville that got into the issue with the property adjoining Pack Square. The Buncombe County government made that sale.

Gordon

On Sun, Jul 1, 2012 at 11:45 AM, Jon <anderson2118@bellsouth.net> wrote:
Dear Mr. Smith -

Thank you for the prompt response, and extensive information on the project.

What I don't understand is how the city continues to get itself into these property use issues AFTER a property has been sold. The Coleman property at city county plaza is another recent example. Maybe it's the fact that there is turnover due to elections - but I believe the manner in which "the people's lands" are sold and determined for use, may be at the heart of the issue.

At this point, let's solve one issue at a time, and please continue to work to find the best use of this property, while preserving the beauty of the Basilica.

Thank you, Jon

Sent from my iPad

On Jun 26, 2012, at 12:14 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Mr. Anderson,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to

determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 25, 2012 at 10:10 PM, Jon <anderson2118@bellsouth.net> wrote:

Dear City Council -

The landmark of EVERY small town in Europe is a duomo and a plaza. Wouldn't that be the coolest thing for our great city? I'm not certain a strict green space is what we need, as we all know it will be more certain to attract homeless versus commerce.

Please work with the hotel group or the Basilica to create the best environment for this beautiful landmark in our city. To hide it or hurt it would be a crime.

Jon Anderson
Asheville, NC

Sent from my iPad

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 8:13 AM
To: Shinesign@aol.com
Subject: Re: McKibbon

Shiner,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures. Parks are wonderful, but they have a cost and don't generate revenue.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Jun 28, 2012 at 1:49 PM, <Shinesign@aol.com> wrote:

I do not support the proposal to have a Georgia hotel chain in front of the St Lawrence Basilica.

This would make a wonderful Green Space that supports residents as well as those visiting the city.

Shiner Antiorio

Peace isn't an experience free of challenges, free of rough and smooth, it's an experience that's expansive enough to include all that arises without feeling threatened.

~Pema Chodron~

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 8:08 AM
To: Vicki Nichols
Subject: Re: Basilica Park

Mr. Nichols,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Jun 28, 2012 at 6:59 PM, Vicki Nichols <vnichols1@earthlink.net> wrote:

Asheville City Council -

I simply cannot understand how the City of Asheville can even entertain the idea of a high rise or even low-rise hotel on the site in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence!!

Do you not understand what a treasure that building is? It is an architectural gem that attracts the interest of religious persons and non-religious persons. I take all visitors to Asheville to the Basilica as part of an architectural tour of Asheville, and always feel I have to apologize for its unsightly setting. It is just a beautiful

building inside and out, and currently sits in a nightmare of a bad intersection and an ugly parking lot and abandoned building.

A park on that property across from the Basilica would not only improve the tourist experience of visiting the building, but it would add much needed green space in the downtown area. While the Pack Place and City Hall park area is nice, it is not really close to the heart of Downtown, where there is a desperate need for more green space. A park in front of the Basilica would be the perfect solution.

I am not a city limits resident, but I work Downtown, I dine, shop and enjoy entertainment Downtown very often. So the quality of the Downtown experience means a lot to me. I can guarantee that any elected official who votes for putting up an unsightly and definitely un-needed hotel or other commercial enterprise on the site in front on the Basilica will never receive and support (financial or otherwise) from me for any future election for any office.

Thank you for your considered attention to this matter.

Vicki Nichols

17 Auburndale Drive

Asheville, NC 28806

828-665-8908

Vnichols1@earthlink.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 8:07 AM
To: Mike Walker
Subject: Re: St Lawrence Basilica "Park"

Mr. Walker,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Fri, Jun 29, 2012 at 5:58 AM, Mike Walker <walkmex@yahoo.com> wrote:

I strongly support establishing the land across from the Basilica as a green space. I am resident of 21 Battery Park and pay a lot of taxes to the city. Asheville could be a much better city than it is but it takes strong leadership & a vision to make it so. Please stand back and decide what you want Asheville to be and stop letting it evolve based on special interests.

Michael Walker
21 Battery Park Ave Suite 404

Ben Fulmer

From: Mike Walker <walkmex@yahoo.com> on behalf of Mike Walker
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 5:58 AM
To: City Council;PARC
Subject: St Lawrence Basilica "Park"

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Michael Walker
21 Battery Park Ave Suite 404

Ben Fulmer

From: Vicki Nichols <vnichols1@earthlink.net> on behalf of Vicki Nichols
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 6:59 PM
To: 'City Council'
Subject: Basilica Park

Asheville City Council -

I simply cannot understand how the City of Asheville can even entertain the idea of a high rise or even low-rise hotel on the site in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence!!

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Thank you for your considered attention to this matter.

Vicki Nichols
17 Auburndale Drive
Asheville, NC 28806
828-665-8908
Vnichols1@earthlink.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Shinesign@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 1:50 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: MccKibbon

I do not support the proposal to have a Georgia hotel chain in front of the St Lawrence Basilica.

This would make a wonderful Green Space that supports residents as well as those visitng the city.

Shiner Antiorio

Peace isn't an experience free of challenges, free of rough and smooth, it's an experience that's expansive enough to include all that arises without feeling threatened.

~Pema Chodron~

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 10:47 PM
To: susankokora@charter.net
Subject: Re: a park

Susan and John,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Jun 27, 2012 at 2:16 PM, Susan Kokora <susankokora@charter.net> wrote:

Dear City Council,

I love the idea of a park across from the St. Lawrence Basilica.

Our beautiful city would do well to have more green areas both for tourists and residents.

A park would be an area of aesthetic beauty for our city. As our climate continues to warm, it would be a desired retreat for visitors.

I am traveling abroad this summer and I have found many of the parks in Europe to be stunning "draws" for people...areas of culture (ie. visiting musicians, bands, symphonies), places of relaxation to sit and relax, spots where nature can find a nook, ie. birds, squirrels, gardens, trees, etc. I would love to see Asheville provide more parks/green spaces downtown.

It would sadden me to see another parking deck and high rise across from the Basilica.

I appreciate the work you do for our city.

Susan Kokora & John Combs
19 Melrose Ave.
Asheville, NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Susan Kokora <susankokora@charter.net> on behalf of Susan Kokora
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 2:17 PM
To: City Council;PARC
Subject: a park

Dear City Council,

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I appreciate the work you do for our city.

Susan Kokora & John Combs
19 Melrose Ave.
Asheville, NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Robert Eaton Kelley <reatonkelley@charter.net> on behalf of Robert Eaton Kelley
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 8:21 AM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Mr. Smith,

Thank you for the response.

Robert Kelley

On Jun 26, 2012, at 8:16 AM, Gordon Smith wrote:

Mr. Kelley,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design. You'd be surprised at how many different opinions I've heard from the citizenry about what they'd like to see happen on the property.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Tue, Jun 26, 2012 at 7:11 AM, Robert Eaton Kelley <reatonkelley@charter.net> wrote:
Listen to the Citizenry: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Ben Fulmer

From: Robert Eaton Kelley <reatonkelley@charter.net> on behalf of Robert Eaton Kelley
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 7:12 AM
To: City Council;PARC
Subject: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Listen to the Citizenry: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Robert Kelley
28803

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 12:15 AM
To: rsternberg1@bellsouth.net
Subject: Re: Land in front of St. Lawrence'

Ms. Sternberg,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 25, 2012 at 5:14 PM, Rachel Sternberg <rsternberg1@bellsouth.net> wrote:

Dear Council Members~

I'm writing to **STRONGLY** urge you to reserve the land in front of the St. Lawrence Basilica for a **GREEN SPACE** - such as a park that would enhance downtown immeasurably, provide an inviting face to visitors, and serve **ALL** the people in the Asheville community.

We have enough hotels. We definitely do not need another, high priced hotel in the downtown area. But we have only Pritchard Park downtown and another green space to provide a place for rest would be the best use of that land. And, with the Basilica such a lovely and important feature of the Asheville landscape, it would be a crime to "hide it" behind a large building. The Basilica is a natural accompaniment to a beautiful green space.

Please do not let outside interests and corporate greed influence your decision. That land should be for **ALL**

the PEOPLE.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rachel Sternberg

Ben Fulmer

From: Jon <anderson2118@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Jon
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 10:11 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;info@ashevilleparc.org
Subject: Too late for the green St. Lawrence Basilica?

Dear City Council -

The landmark of EVERY small town in Europe is a duomo and a plaza. Wouldn't that be the coolest thing for our great city? I'm not certain a strict green space is what we need, as we all know it will be more certain to attract homeless versus commerce.

Please work with the hotel group or the Basilica to create the best environment for this beautiful landmark in our city. To hide it or hurt it would be a crime.

Jon Anderson
Asheville, NC

Sent from my iPad

Ben Fulmer

From: Rachel Sternberg <rsternberg1@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Rachel Sternberg
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 5:14 PM
To: City Council;PARC
Subject: Land in front of St. Lawrence'

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Please do not let outside interests and corporate greed influence your decision. That land should be for **ALL** the **PEOPLE**.

Thank you for your consideration.
Rachel Sternberg

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 3:01 PM
To: Ruby D. Moore
Subject: Re: st. lawrence

Ms. Moore,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 25, 2012 at 2:26 PM, Ruby D. Moore <rubydhaliwal@yahoo.com> wrote:
Hello City Council,

I am writing to advocate that the area in front of the St. Lawrence Basilica not be sold for a hotel. I'm not sure that Asheville downtown needs another hotel and I definitely don't think so in that area.

Having just visited Greenville, SC last night, we were very impressed with the open areas in the downtown there. Inviting, clean, GREEN-I think that your foresight is necessary in making sure our city is a great place to live, work, and play for its citizens-this will automatically make it more appealing for tourists and their dollars.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,
Ruby Moore

| North Asheville resident

Ben Fulmer

From: Ruby D. Moore <rubydhaliwal@yahoo.com> on behalf of Ruby D. Moore
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 2:26 PM
To: City Council;PARC
Subject: st. lawrence

Hello City Council,

I am writing to advocate that the area in front of the St. Lawrence Basilica not be sold for a hotel. I'm not sure that Asheville downtown needs another hotel and I definitely don't think so in that area.

Having just visited Greenville, SC last night, we were very impressed with the open areas in the downtown there. Inviting, clean, GREEN-I think that your foresight is necessary in making sure our city is a great place to live, work, and play for its citizens-this will automatically make it more appealing for tourists and their dollars.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,
Ruby Moore
North Asheville resident

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 1:21 PM
To: Pat McKee
Subject: Re: Basilica property

Pat,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Jun 21, 2012 at 12:04 PM, Pat McKee <PMcKee@carolinaehs.com> wrote:

I urge you to vote against selling the property across from the St. Lawrence Basilica to McKibbon Properties. This land belongs to the citizens of Asheville and should be put to use for the benefit of all, not for the wealthiest among us. Another green space in this city would offer enjoyment to residents and to visitors.

Pat McKee

25 Brookwood Road

Asheville NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 1:20 PM
To: Cunningham, Patricia
Subject: Re: email subject

Ms. Cunningham,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Jun 21, 2012 at 12:38 PM, Cunningham, Patricia <pcunningham@brchs.com> wrote:

| Please designate the area surrounding St. Lawrence Basilica as a green area and protected from development

Ben Fulmer

From: Pat McKee <PMcKee@CarolinaEHS.com> on behalf of Pat McKee
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:05 PM
To: 'City Council'; 'PARC'
Subject: Basilica property

I urge you to vote against selling the property across from the St. Lawrence Basilica to McKibbon Properties. This land belongs to the citizens of Asheville and should be put to use for the benefit of all, not for the wealthiest among us. Another green space in this city would offer enjoyment to residents and to visitors.

Pat McKee
25 Brookwood Road
Asheville NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2012 6:13 PM
To: Lin Brown
Subject: Re: A park not a hotel across from St. Lawrence church

Ms. Brown,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Jun 20, 2012 at 12:10 PM, Lin Brown <linbrown5@yahoo.com> wrote:
Dear Council Members,

My husband and I spend a lot of our time and communications promoting Asheville here and when we are away. Friends even joke we should be with the Chamber of Commerce.

I have a firm conviction that we need to do everything we can to make the tourist experience outstanding and thereby support all the entrepreneurs (restaurants, galleries, shops, etc.) in the downtown. What would preserve and enhance the area around the Civic Center is not another hotel, but rather a park. A green space

that shows off the gem of architecture, St. Lawrence Cathedral, is what is needed not another hotel. In that area there are already the Renaissance, the Sheraton, and the Indigo. Additionally, until we see the effect of the now-being-built hotel on Biltmore Avenue, I don't think the City should rush into permitting another hotel.

As the editorial in the AC-T said today, Asheville is the driving sales tax generator of the county. And the downtown is the place that tourists want to be. Let's do all we can to maintain and enhance that downtown, not destroy it piece by piece. The space across from St. Lawrence is the one remaining space in the downtown where a park could be built. Let's go for it!!

From a very committed booster of Asheville, Lin Brown

Lin Brown
439 Vanderbilt Road
Asheville, N.C. 28803
828-274-0828
linbrown5@yahoo.com
Alternative email= brown@wfu.edu

Ben Fulmer

From: Lin Brown <linbrown5@yahoo.com> on behalf of Lin Brown
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2012 12:10 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: A park not a hotel across from St. Lawrence church

Dear Council Members,

My husband and I spend a lot of our time and communications promoting Asheville here and when we are away. Friends even joke we should be with the Chamber of Commerce.

I have a firm conviction that we need to do everything we can to make the tourist experience outstanding and thereby support all the entrepreneurs (restaurants, galleries, shops, etc.) in the downtown. What would preserve and enhance the area around the Civic Center is not another hotel, but rather a park. A green space that shows off the gem of architecture, St. Lawrence Cathedral, is what is needed not another hotel. In that area there are already the Renaissance, the Sheraton, and the Indigo. Additionally, until we see the effect of the now-being-built hotel on Biltmore Avenue, I don't think the City should rush into permitting another hotel.

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Lin Brown
439 Vanderbilt Road
Asheville, N.C. 28803
828-274-0828
linbrown5@yahoo.com
Alternative email= brown@wfu.edu

Ben Fulmer

From: George Fleming <georgefleming6@yahoo.com> on behalf of George Fleming
Sent: Wednesday, June 13, 2012 3:41 PM
To: 'Gordon Smith'
Subject: RE: St, Lawrence Green

Hi Gordon,

Thank you for your prompt and thoughtful response.

Your fourth option sounds intriguing and I'd love to learn more as options along that path emerge.

Thank you again,

George Flemin

From: Gordon Smith [mailto:gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 10, 2012 9:50 PM
To: George Fleming
Subject: Re: St, Lawrence Green

Mr. Fleming,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Sun, Jun 10, 2012 at 4:23 PM, George Fleming <georgefleming6@yahoo.com> wrote:

I have been amazed that the City has been planning on going ahead with selling the land in front of St. Lawrence and the Civic Center. This is a very, very important decision that requires citizen input as it is selling off one of the last pieces of undeveloped downtown land. Especially when St Lawrence offered a better offer and their proposal provides a much needed green space...and we don't need more hotel rooms.

Bigger and more is the default mantra of an unconscious community and economic system!

Thank you.

George Fleming

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, June 11, 2012 8:00 PM
To: Leonard Carrier
Subject: Re: PARC proposal

Mr. Carrier,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site. As to occupancy rates, the average does not reflect the fact that our hotels are maxed out for a large portion of the year and then more sparsely utilized during the slower "shoulder seasons".

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 11, 2012 at 3:29 PM, Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> wrote:
Dear Council Members,

As an Asheville City taxpayer, I support the plan of PARC to turn the land adjacent to the St. Lawrence Basilica into a green space. I am opposed to having another hotel built anywhere on this property.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805-1464

Ben Fulmer

From: Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> on behalf of Leonard Carrier
Sent: Monday, June 11, 2012 3:30 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: PARC proposal

Dear Council Members,

As an Asheville City taxpayer, I support the plan of PARC to turn the land adjacent to the St. Lawrence Basilica into a green space. I am opposed to having another hotel built anywhere on this property.

Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Drive
Asheville, NC 28805-1464

Ben Fulmer

From: katherine soniat <ksoniat@vt.edu> on behalf of katherine soniat
Sent: Monday, June 11, 2012 2:48 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: In put on St. Lawrence Basilica and proposed Park

Thank you for this info.

Since i moved to Asheville I have always thought the Basilica one of the Star pieces of architecture in Asheville, and then to see how the Expressway slams behind it.

What it must have looked like before that traffic avenue was built!

This church should be considered central to downtown Asheville and shown off with green space for the gem that it is in our mountain community.

Katherine Soniat

best, Katherine
On Jun 11, 2012, at 11:43 AM, Gordon Smith wrote:

Ms. Soniat,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site. As to occupancy rates, the average does not reflect the fact that our hotels are maxed out for a large portion of the year and then more sparsely utilized during the slower "shoulder seasons".

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While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 11, 2012 at 10:24 AM, katherine soniat <ksoniat@vt.edu> wrote:

I would like to state my opposition to a hotel in from of this church.

A park and greenway that would connect downtown is the proper thing to do for this sacred and beautiful Basilica that already has the Expressway at its back door.

Thank you for listening to the tax payers who comment on this subject.

Katherine Soniat
9 Waverly Rd.
Asheville, 28803

Ben Fulmer

From: George Fleming <georgefleming6@yahoo.com> on behalf of George Fleming
Sent: Sunday, June 10, 2012 4:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;'PARC'
Subject: St, Lawrence Green

I have been amazed that the City has been planning on going ahead with selling the land in front of St. Lawrence and the Civic Center. This is a very, very important decision that requires citizen input as it is selling off one of the last pieces of undeveloped downtown land. Especially when St Lawrence offered a better offer and their proposal provides a much needed green space...and we don't need more hotel rooms.

Bigger and more is the default mantra of an unconscious community and economic system!

Thank you.

George Fleming

Ben Fulmer

From: Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com> on behalf of Ellen Clarke
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 4:35 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Support St Lawrence Green

Gordon:

Thanks for your thorough reply regarding our concerns for the property surrounding St Lawrence. Good use and good design that remains true to Asheville and our conservation values: that's what we support.
Ellen Clarke

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 8, 2012, at 8:54 AM, Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms. Clarke and Mr. Byrd,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Tue, Jun 5, 2012 at 12:38 PM, Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com> wrote:

Asheville City Council:

Please vigorously support community-wide efforts to create a green space in front of St Lawrence Basilica. We do not need more hotels in downtown Asheville.

Thanks,

Ellen Clarke and John Byrd

24 Howland Rd

28804

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 10:24 AM
To: AshevilleAnnie@aol.com
Subject: Re: building

Ms. Condie,

I appreciate you writing in, and I'm sorry it's taken me so long to get back to you. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Tue, May 29, 2012 at 5:59 PM, <AshevilleAnnie@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Asheville City Council Members,

A year or so ago there were two articles in the Asheville Citizen-Times that caught my attention and the irony of them. One article featured a photo of a large Roman Catholic church in Charlotte that is now surrounded by tall buildings. It wasn't a pretty

sight. The other article was about McKibbon's plan to build across from Asheville's historical St. Lawrence Basilica.

I said to a friend, "Well, I guess Asheville will have the same look as Charlotte."

As was noted in the Citizen-Times last week: there are too many unfilled hotels in Asheville. Not only do we not need another hotel, we don't need one at the proposed site to dwarf the St. Lawrence Basilica.

Yes, you want to bring in a money-maker. If the "Tripp's" property is available to buy, McKibbon could buy/build there.

******Think green...a green respite with trees, flowers, park benches...a green oasis where tourists can rest and gather energy to shop some more.***

******Think of the air that will be blocked by McKibbon's tall building. The beauty of an open green space out matches a city building any day, in my opinion.***

When I visit a city, one of the memories that stays with me is its green spaces, the shaded areas to "people watch," to rest during a day of walking, to hear the birds sing.

Asheville is known as a happenin' town. Let it also be known for its loveliness. Nothing says ***welcome, I'm glad you're here*** than a place to rest and reflect on the wonderful time they have in Asheville and decide to come back and tell their friends about.

Please, City Council Members, make Asheville beautiful for us who live here and for guests who visit.

You'll always be able to get money for Asheville, but will you ever have another choice space like the one across from the Basilica for a park?

If that space is gone for buildings, it's gone for good.
PLEASE PRESERVE THAT AREA FOR A PARK.

***Sincerely,
Leigh Ann Condie
9 Maplewood Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804***

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 10:16 AM
To: Susan & Dean Presson
Subject: Re: greenspace in front of St. Lawrence

Mr. and Mrs. Presson,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, May 30, 2012 at 9:59 PM, Susan & Dean Presson <4pressons@gmail.com> wrote:

Please don't let the area in front of St. Lawrence be turned into a hotel. I understand that the taxes would be good income for Asheville, but I think the need for plenty of green space vs. development is more important to our mountain city.

susan presson

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 10:12 AM
To: Amy Renigar
Subject: Re: Please make St. Lawrence GREEN

Ms. Renigar,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibbon representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Fri, Jun 1, 2012 at 7:14 AM, Amy Renigar <amyrenigar@gmail.com> wrote:
Dear City Council,

I am asking that you please use the area in front of St. Lawrence Basilica to create a community green space. What makes Asheville attractive to tourists is that it isn't a BIG city. Both local residents and tourists LOVE Pritchard Park, and to have a space with an even more beautiful view would attract even more people.

I realize it all comes down to money, but I know there is a way to work with the public to raise funds needed to make the green space. If you can turn down the big bucks offered from a corporation in support of your

citizens, then we can pull together and make the space green.

Regards,
Amy Renigar
Weaverville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 10:11 AM
To: C. Walgate
Subject: Re: FW: St. Lawrence Green Space

Mr. Walgate,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Fri, Jun 1, 2012 at 12:01 PM, C. Walgate <cwalgate@bellsouth.net> wrote:

From: C. Walgate [mailto:cwalgate@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 11:58 AM
To: 'AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov'; 'PARC'
Subject: St. Lawrence Green Space

As a city taxpayer for over 40 years, I am appalled at council's decision for the property across from St. Lawrence. Do I need to remind you that you are making a decision about taxpayer owner property, and the majority of friends and neighbors want a green space not another monster that blocks the views like Biltmore Ave.

A few more building additions like the Biltmore Ave construction and who wants to walk the streets of Asheville. What are you thinking? You will have your luxury hotels and no occupants. You are elected to work for your constituents not corporate executives. Please think long term and what is best for the majority of our citizens and not the privileged few.

Cathy Walgate

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 10:05 AM
To: Frank Coney
Subject: Re: Proposed McKibben Purchase

Mr. Coney,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibben and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibben hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibben to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

The Basilica has made several offers, but there are, as of now, very few specifics attached to their offers. The Basilica and McKibben representatives are working with the Asheville Design Center to determine what design might best preserve the integrity of the treasured Basilica and open up some public space on the site. I am looking forward to learning more about the outcome of these discussions.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Tue, Jun 5, 2012 at 11:53 AM, Frank Coney <fcms1982@bellsouth.net> wrote:

I urge all those on City Council to approve the proposed purchase of the lot in front of St Lawrence as proposed by the Church. We do not need yet another giant building, particularly a hotel in that location. Can't anyone on Council look at the choice which would benefit most of the citizens of Asheville for perpetuity rather than a choice which will benefit an out of state corporation? A green space in that area would enhance the beauty of the area and serve as a draw for residents and tourists alike. The Church has made a generous offer to the City. I request you approve their offer. If you are intent on building yet another hotel, consider the area on south Coxe Avenue or Buxton Street.

Thank you for considering this request.

Frank D. Coney

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:57 AM
To: Catherine Faherty
Subject: Re: Basilica of St. Lawrence area

Ms. Faherty,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Jun 4, 2012 at 8:55 PM, Catherine Faherty <catina@main.nc.us> wrote:
To Members of Asheville City Council,

PLEASE DO NOT sell our land to McKibbon, hotel chain. We NEED a beautiful green space there! For all, tourists and locals alike to share, enjoy. Please do not sell it!! Please make a green space!

Thank you
Catherine Faherty
Resident and downtown worker since 1984

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:52 AM
To: PARC
Subject: Re: Imagine St. Lawrence Green

PARCfolk,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Tue, Jun 5, 2012 at 11:31 AM, PARC <ashevilleparc@gmail.com> wrote:

6/4/12



Imagine St. Lawrence Green

The City of Asheville is considering selling the land in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence to McKibbon, a Georgia hotel chain. Widespread public opposition has met such plans in the past.

In 2004, the City bought the land, and Mayor Charles Worley pushed for a plan to put a high-rise in front of the Basilica *and* a parking deck wrapped around the Battery Park building.

This was so unpopular that Worley lost his re-election bid, and Council withdrew the plan.

In 2008, Council put forward the McKibbon plan. *This time, residents put a full page ad in the Citizen-Times signed by more than a thousand people asking Council to put a park there.*

In 2009, the Basilica held a demonstration of parishioners and residents to protest the planned high-rise, saying that the proposed hotel would diminish the Basilica and that heavy construction might damage the beautiful hundred-year-old church.

Many residents think the area should be green space. A park would visually connect the Basilica, the Grove Arcade, the library, and the Civic Center. Trees would add shade and a human dimension to the area.

Will Council listen to McKibbon, or to the residents?

Council didn't pay for that land. Your tax money did. Council should take the opinion of Asheville residents into account.

If the aim is to increase tourism, wouldn't a gorgeous spot of trees be more attractive than more concrete and steel?

A luxury hotel would primarily benefit *just one corporation*, which would get one of the most desirable sites in Asheville for a bargain price.

A luxury hotel would be used by just a few, *while a park would serve the needs of ALL the Asheville residents, as well as tourists.*

Too often, our City's decisions support the desires of corporations over the needs of residents. It doesn't have to be this way. You can help.

Please follow the links below and email City Council or write a Letter to the Editor, or download the petition for City Council and collect signatures. *This is a critical time for City Council to hear your opinion.*

Thanks for everything you do,
from the folks at PARC.

[Email City Council](#)

▪ [Download the petition](#)

▪ [Email the Citizen-Times](#)

▪ [Email the Mountain Xpress](#)

PARC • PO Box 4093 • Asheville, NC 28805

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Powered by [MyNewsletterBuilder](#)

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:51 AM
To: Karen Poehlein
Subject: Re: Haywood Street property

Ms. Poehlein,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Jun 6, 2012 at 2:36 PM, Karen Poehlein <karlein@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Council Members,

Asheville is an extremely fortunate city with regard to the architecture of its buildings. At this time there is a great debate going on about the sale of the land on Haywood Street that is across from the Vanderbilt Apartments and faces the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Close to the back of the property are the Grove Arcade and the Battery Park Apartment buildings. It is an extremely rich architectural area within our downtown. Both the Grove Arcade and the

Battery Park Apartment building were built by Edwin Grove in an area of city that could already claim one of our greatest architectural treasures - The Basilica of St. Lawrence. The very fact that Rafael Guastavino was able to create the unsupported dome within the Basilica makes that structure one we should do all we can as citizens of this city to focus on the structure as a great architectural wonder. As an individual working in retail in Asheville, I recommend this area to our visitors when they ask what they should do and what can be seen in Asheville. And how much more beautiful that area would be with a green park for our visitors and residents to relax in when they are in that part of downtown. The park would also provide a space for people to gather for events at the civic center and Thomas Wolfe Auditorium.

We already have hotels in the area with the Haywood Park and the Indigo. When Ivey's Department Store was remodeled and became the Haywood Park Hotel the exterior of the building was not altered extensively which has permitted it to retain the ambiance of downtown. As I drive down Biltmore Avenue past the construction of the multi-use hotel being built by the McKibbin Hotel Group, it strikes me that the building does not support the architecture of downtown Asheville. To have another structure built by them in another part of town will not be an enhancement to our city. Another structure by them reminds me of the Grove Park Inn and the two wings it has added to the hotel. Many of the postcards of the hotel have airbrushed out the new wings so that it appears as the hotel did upon its completion in 1913. Is that what will happen to the area around the Basilica, the Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments and the Grove Arcade? That the potential postcards may need airbrushing to retain the appearance of the area as it was in 2012 by eliminating new construction is an realistic option.

As City Council Members you have the authority to determine the future use of that piece of property. Since the McKibbin Hotel Group has proposed a use for the property, you do have a responsibility to them to hear them out again. But that does not mean you are committed to accepting their proposal. Please consider the uniqueness of our city in the ambience it presents to its city residents, county residents, and visitors. We are a special city in part because of that uniqueness. We have more hotel rooms that we can fill. We have no green space in the area of town being discussed. A green space would be enjoyed by all residents and visitors in that part of town. The Diocese of Charlotte has committed itself to adding shops to the area which will add to our tax base.

The roads in that area at this time are narrow and often congested. What will a potential hotel do to driving patterns in the area?

In my 57 years as a resident of Asheville, I've seen many changes in our city. Some have architecturally enhanced the beauty of this special city surrounded by mountains while other have not. The green space around the Court House has been beautifully done and is a great addition to our city. This area needs similar attention as a green space. It is my hope that the change I will see here will be the sale of the property to the Diocese of Charlotte in support of our efforts to enhance the beauty of our city while retaining and enhancing its treasures.

Sincerely,
Karen Poehlein
June 6, 2012

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:49 AM
To: Harry Woggon
Subject: Re: PLEASE A PARK NEXT TO THE BASICILA OF ST. LAWRENCE

Mr. and Mrs. Woggon,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

The short wrap-up in this: Nothing has been decided. McKibbon and the Basilica are in talks with the Asheville Design Center. There are several options available.

McKibbon hotel group was awarded rights to this property following a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, in which they were the sole applicant. The process was open to all bidders. I favored allowing that RFP to expire, but Council voted to extend it in 2010. The agreement is not complete in that there has not been a development agreement written and signed. This means that, even if Council decided to allow McKibbon to go ahead, there would be specific requirements for any building on the site.

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As to a park, the city is not in a position to make that kind of ongoing investment. Having just taken on maintenance responsibilities for Pack Square Park, the city is stretched to the limit. While we're optimistic about seeing the end of this recession, we must be responsible with our expenditures.

A fourth option is to reissue the Request for Proposals in an effort to have a use for the site that respects the integrity of the Basilica, provides for some public space, and complements all of the surrounding properties. This is direction I'm leaning right now. This process would again be open to any entity that wanted to make a proposal. Council would determine the specific requirements for proposals.

I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Jun 6, 2012 at 4:44 PM, Harry Woggon <hakw@charter.net> wrote:

Please have a park next to the Basicilla of St. Lawrence. They have offered money for the space
We have enough already of hotels downtown.

Let the people add to the funds from the Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, even if it is but a small amount,
it will show our solidarity with the the Spiritual aspects of life and the world.

We need Green Space and trees for all our citizens.

Thank you

Harry and Genelda Woggon

118 Macon Ave, Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:49 AM
To: Jack Clement
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence vs. McKibbon

Mr. Clement,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Jun 6, 2012 at 5:14 PM, Jack Clement <jackclem@aol.com> wrote:
Dear City Council Members,

While I think the St. Lawrence proposal of a green space and mixed use development is preferable to a street front, high rise hotel, I think either would be an improvement over the current vacant eyesore. More importantly, I do not think it is City Council's prerogative to decide what is built where beyond zoning requirements. The land should go to the highest bidder. In the meantime, put the parking spaces to good use by opening them to the public.

Jack Clement

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 9:46 AM
To: jasmin gentling
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence basilica

Ms. Gentling,

I appreciate you writing in. There has been a lot of misinformation going around, and I'm glad for the opportunity to clarify the situation and my stance on it. It's been great to have so much interest and enthusiasm for seeing a good use and good design.

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I hope this is helpful information, and thank you again for the opportunity,

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Jun 7, 2012 at 10:35 AM, jasmin gentling <jgentling@charter.net> wrote:

As a city taxpayer i implore you to not allow a hotel in front of the church.. it is a national treasure and we need to ensure its place in the downtown aesthetics.. if we destroy what we have we will be destroying it for future generations..

please please vote for a green space..

Jasmin Gentling

Ben Fulmer

From: jasmin gentling <jgentling@charter.net> on behalf of jasmin gentling
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2012 10:36 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: St. Lawrence basilica

As a city taxpayer i implore you to not allow a hotel in front of the church.. it is a national treasure and we need to ensure its place in the downtown aesthetics.. if we destroy what we have we will be destroying it for future generations..

please please vote for a green space..

Jasmin Gentling

Ben Fulmer

From: Jack Clement <jackclem@aol.com> on behalf of Jack Clement
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:14 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence vs. McKibbon

Dear City Council Members,

While I think the St. Lawrence proposal of a green space and mixed use development is preferable to a street front, high rise hotel, I think either would be an improvement over the current vacant eyesore. More importantly, I do not think it is City Council's prerogative to decide what is built where beyond zoning requirements. The land should go to the highest bidder. In the meantime, put the parking spaces to good use by opening them to the public.

Jack Clement

Ben Fulmer

From: Harry Woggon <hakw@charter.net> on behalf of Harry Woggon
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 4:45 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: PLEASE A PARK NEXT TO THE BASICILA OF ST. LAWRENCE

Please have a park next to the Basicilla of St. Lawrence. They have offered money for the space We have enough already of hotels downtown.

Let the people add to the funds from the Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, even if it is but a small amount, it will show our solidarity with the the Spiritual aspects of life and the world.

We need Green Space and trees for all our citizens.

Thank you

Harry and Genelda Woggon

118 Macon Ave, Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Karen Poehlein <karlein@charter.net> on behalf of Karen Poehlein
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:36 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;info@ashevilleparc.org
Subject: Haywood Street property

Dear Council Members,

Asheville is an extremely fortunate city with regard to the architecture of its buildings. At this time there is a great debate going on about the sale of the land on Haywood Street that is across from the Vanderbilt Apartments and faces the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Close to the back of the property are the Grove Arcade and the Battery Park Apartment buildings. It is an extremely rich architectural area within our downtown. Both the Grove Arcade and the Battery Park Apartment building were built by Edwin Grove in an area of city that could already claim one of our greatest architectural treasures - The Basilica of St. Lawrence. The very fact that Rafael Guastavino was able to create the unsupported dome within the Basilica makes that structure one we should do all we can as citizens of this city to focus on the structure as a great architectural wonder. As an individual working in retail in Asheville, I recommend this area to our visitors when they ask what they should do and what can be seen in Asheville. And how much more beautiful that area would be with a green park for our visitors and residents to relax in when they are in that part of downtown. The park would also provide a space for people to gather for events at the civic center and Thomas Wolfe Auditorium.

We already have hotels in the area with the Haywood Park and the Indigo. When Ivey's Department Store was remodeled and became the Haywood Park Hotel the exterior of the building was not altered extensively which has permitted it to retain the ambiance of downtown. As I drive down Biltmore Avenue past the construction of the multi-use hotel being built by the McKibbin Hotel Group, it strikes me that the building does not support the architecture of downtown Asheville. To have another structure built by them in another part of town will not be an enhancement to our city. Another structure by them reminds me of the Grove Park Inn and the two wings it has added to the hotel. Many of the postcards of the hotel have airbrushed out the new wings so that it appears as the hotel did upon its completion in 1913. Is that what will happen to the area around the Basilica, the Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments and the Grove Arcade? That the potential postcards may need airbrushing to retain the appearance of the area as it was in 2012 by eliminating new construction is an realistic option.

As City Council Members you have the authority to determine the future use of that piece of property. Since the McKibbin Hotel Group has proposed a use for the property, you do have a responsibility to them to hear them out again. But that does not mean you are committed to accepting their proposal. Please consider the uniqueness of our city in the ambience it presents

to its city residents, county residents, and visitors. We are a special city in part because of that uniqueness. We have more hotel rooms that we can fill. We have no green space in the area of town being discussed. A green space would be enjoyed by all residents and visitors in that part of town. The Diocese of Charlotte has committed itself to adding shops to the area which will add to our tax base.

The roads in that area at this time are narrow and often congested. What will a potential hotel do to driving patterns in the area?

In my 57 years as a resident of Asheville, I've seen many changes in our city. Some have architecturally enhanced the beauty of this special city surrounded by mountains while other have not. The green space around the Court House has been beautifully done and is a great addition to our city. This area needs similar attention as a green space. It is my hope that the change I will see here will be the sale of the property to the Diocese of Charlotte in support of our efforts to enhance the beauty of our city while retaining and enhancing its treasures.

Sincerely,
Karen Poehlein
June 6, 2012

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 11:38 AM
To: fa7e.1ee1d06@vmail30.mynewsletterbuilder.com
Subject: Away until June 5 Re: Imagine St. Lawrence Green

Thanks for contacting me. I'm away from internet access until June 5.

Gordon Smith

Ben Fulmer

From: Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com> on behalf of Ellen Clarke
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 12:42 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Subject: Re: Away until June 5 Re: Support St Lawrence Green

Hi Gordon:

Please let me know if you'd like further input from me regarding our family's support of the St Lawrence Basilica green space.

Ellen Clarke and John Byrd

24 Howland Rd

28804

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 5, 2012, at 11:38 AM, "Gordon Smith" <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

> Thanks for contacting me. I'm away from internet access until June 5.

>

> Gordon Smith

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 12:39 PM
To: ellengclarke@gmail.com
Subject: Away until June 5 Re: Support St Lawrence Green

Thanks for contacting me. I'm away from internet access until June 5.

Gordon Smith

Ben Fulmer

From: Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com> on behalf of Ellen Clarke
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 12:39 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: Support St Lawrence Green

Asheville City Council:

Please vigorously support community-wide efforts to create a green space in front of St Lawrence Basilica. We do not need more hotels in downtown Asheville.

Thanks,

Ellen Clarke and John Byrd

24 Howland Rd

28804

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Frank Coney <fcms1982@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Frank Coney
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 11:54 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;'PARC'
Subject: Proposed McKibben Purchase

I urge all those on City Council to approve the proposed purchase of the lot in front of St Lawrence as proposed by the Church. We do not need yet another giant building, particularly a hotel in that location. Can't anyone on Council look at the choice which would benefit most of the citizens of Asheville for perpetuity rather than a choice which will benefit an out of state corporation? A green space in that area would enhance the beauty of the area and serve as a draw for residents and tourists alike. The Church has made a generous offer to the City. I request you approve their offer. If you are intent on building yet another hotel, consider the area on south Coxe Avenue or Buxton Street.

Thank you for considering this request.

Frank D. Coney

Ben Fulmer

From: Catherine Faherty <catina@main.nc.us> on behalf of Catherine Faherty
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 8:55 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence area

To Members of Asheville City Council,

PLEASE DO NOT sell our land to McKibbon, hotel chain. We NEED a beautiful green space there! For all, tourists and locals alike to share, enjoy. Please do not sell it!! Please make a green space!

Thank you
Catherine Faherty
Resident and downtown worker since 1984

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 12:02 PM
To: cwalgate@bellsouth.net
Subject: Away until June 5 Re: FW: St. Lawrence Green Space

Thanks for contacting me. I'm away from internet access until June 5.

Gordon Smith

Ben Fulmer

From: C. Walgate <cwalgate@bellsouth.net> on behalf of C. Walgate
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 12:02 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: FW: St. Lawrence Green Space

From: C. Walgate [mailto:cwalgate@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 11:58 AM
To: 'AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov'; 'PARC'
Subject: St. Lawrence Green Space

As a city taxpayer for over 40 years, I am appalled at council's decision for the property across from St. Lawrence. Do I need to remind you that you are making a decision about taxpayer owner property, and the majority of friends and neighbors want a green space not another monster that blocks the views like Biltmore Ave. A few more building additions like the Biltmore Ave construction and who wants to walk the streets of Asheville. What are you thinking? You will have your luxury hotels and no occupants. You are elected to work for your constituents not corporate executives. Please think long term and what is best for the majority of our citizens and not the privileged few.

Cathy Walgate

Ben Fulmer

From: Amy Renigar <amyrenigar@gmail.com> on behalf of Amy Renigar
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:15 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: Please make St. Lawrence GREEN

Dear City Council,

I am asking that you please use the area in front of St. Lawrence Basilica to create a community green space. What makes Asheville attractive to tourists is that it isn't a BIG city. Both local residents and tourists LOVE Pritchard Park, and to have a space with an even more beautiful view would attract even more people.

I realize it all comes down to money, but I know there is a way to work with the public to raise funds needed to make the green space. If you can turn down the big bucks offered from a corporation in support of your citizens, then we can pull together and make the space green.

Regards,
Amy Renigar
Weaverville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:15 AM
To: amyrenigar@gmail.com
Subject: Away until June 5 Re: Please make St. Lawrence GREEN

Thanks for contacting me. I'm away from internet access until June 5.

Gordon Smith

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:10 AM
To: moonspirit48@bellsouth.net
Subject: Re: Make St. Lawrence GREEN

Thanks for writing in, Kathleen. I've been receiving a lot of correspondence on this matter, and you'd be surprised to hear how many different ideas people have for what ought to grace that space.

I'm waiting to learn the outcome of talks between McKibbon, the Basilica, and the Asheville Design Center to learn whether they've come to an accommodation.

Gordon Smith

On Wed, May 30, 2012 at 9:16 PM, <moonspirit48@bellsouth.net> wrote:

The citizens of this city clearly DO NOT WANT a high rise put in front of the church. Turning this space into a park is an ideal solution for this land purchased with TAXPAYERS' MONEY...not yours!

Kindly, Kathleen

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:06 AM
To: Demos Builders
Subject: Re: No hotel! St Lawrence Green!!!

Thanks for writing in, Mr. Demos. I've been receiving a lot of correspondence on this matter, and you'd be surprised to hear how many different ideas people have for what ought to grace that space.

I'm waiting to learn the outcome of talks between McKibbin, the Basilica, and the Asheville Design Center to learn whether they've come to an accommodation.

Gordon Smith

On Thu, May 31, 2012 at 5:29 PM, Demos Builders <demosbuilders@gmail.com> wrote:
Hotel Indigos's right down the street for crying out loud! Please move for a green space!

Jim Demos
Demos Builders, Inc.
828.777.2395
www.demosbuilders.com

Let us build your green home.

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:06 AM
To: Ilene Procida
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence property

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Procida. I've been receiving a lot of correspondence on this matter, and you'd be surprised to hear how many different ideas people have for what ought to grace that space.

I'm waiting to learn the outcome of talks between McKibbin, the Basilica, and the Asheville Design Center to learn whether they've come to an accommodation.

Gordon Smith

On Thu, May 31, 2012 at 5:45 PM, Ilene Procida <ileneprocida@yahoo.com> wrote:

Please be considerate of those of us who live & work downtown & keep the property across from St. Lawrence green. A high rise hotel would surely detract from the beauty & aesthetic of this unique part of town.

Manay thanks,

Ilene Procida, LPC
Child Abuse Prevention Services, Inc.
50 S. French Broad Ave. Suite 152
Asheville, NC 28801
www.childabusepreventionservices.org
828-299-9797

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 7:04 AM
To: Martin Barnes
Subject: Re: Basillica Green

Thanks for writing in, Mr. Barnes. I've been receiving a lot of correspondence on this matter, and you'd be surprised to hear how many different ideas people have for what ought to grace that space.

I'm waiting to learn the outcome of talks between McKibbon, the Basilica, and the Asheville Design Center to learn whether they've come to an accommodation.

Gordon Smith

On Thu, May 31, 2012 at 10:00 PM, Martin Barnes <mabarnes@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Asheville City Council Members,

I would like to voice my opinion about the proposed development of the lot across from the St. Lawrence Basilica and the Asheville Civic Center. Having lived in Asheville now for 27 years I've seen lots of changes to downtown; the center of our city has gone from a virtual ghost town to a vibrant center for business, residents and tourists. While I see this change as beneficial to all, I don't see the proposed hotel on this site being a benefit to our town. The Basilica is a treasure of history and architecture that should be protected and spotlighted. I see a public plaza accomplishing just that. Please don't allow a hotel and parking deck to be developed on this lot.

Thanks, Martin Barnes PLS

Ben Fulmer

From: Martin Barnes <mabarnes@charter.net> on behalf of Martin Barnes
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 10:01 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;' + PARC + '
Subject: Basillica Green

Dear Asheville City Council Members,

I would like to voice my opinion about the proposed development of the lot across from the St. Lawrence Basillica and the Asheville Civic Center. Having lived in Asheville now for 27 years I've seen lots of changes to downtown; the center of our city has gone from a virtual ghost town to a vibrant center for business, residents and tourists. While I see this change as beneficial to all, I don't see the proposed hotel on this site being a benefit to our town. The Basillica is a treasure of history and architecture that should be protected and spotlighted. I see a public plaza accomplishing just that. Please don't allow a hotel and parking deck to be developed on this lot.

Thanks, Martin Barnes PLS

Ben Fulmer

From: Demos Builders <demosbuilders@gmail.com> on behalf of Demos Builders
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 5:30 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;+PARC+
Subject: No hotel! St Lawrence Green!!!

Hotel Indigos's right down the street for crying out loud! Please move for a green space!

Jim Demos
Demos Builders, Inc.
828.777.2395
www.demosbuilders.com

Let us build your green home.

Sent from my iPhone

Ben Fulmer

From: Susan & Dean Presson <4pressons@gmail.com> on behalf of Susan & Dean Presson
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 10:00 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;+PARC+
Subject: greenspace in front of St. Lawrence

Please don't let the area in front of St. Lawrence be turned into a hotel. I understand that the taxes would be good income for Asheville, but I think the need for plenty of green space vs. development is more important to our mountain city.

susan presson

Ben Fulmer

From: moonspirit48@bellsouth.net
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 9:16 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: Make St. Lawrence GREEN

The citizens of this city clearly DO NOT WANT a high rise put in front of the church. Turning this space into a park is an ideal solution for this land purchased with TAXPAYERS' MONEY...not yours!

Kindly, Kathleen

Ben Fulmer

From: Bill Crownover <billcrownover@gmail.com> on behalf of billcrownover@bellsouth.net
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 11:00 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;PARC
Subject: Property near St. Lawrence Cathedral

I am totally opposed to the sale of the property across from St. Lawrence Cathedral to McKibbin or any other developer since I believe that we need a nice, small green space in that part of town. Please slow down and think more about beauty and less about tax dollars.

I have lived in Asheville for 60+ years, born and raised in the local schools and currently live in east Asheville. We love our great city and downtown and we hope you will think quality over quantity when it comes to major decisions like this.

Thank you,

Bill and Barbara Crownover
8 Pine Spring Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: AshevilleAnnie@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2012 5:59 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: building

Dear Asheville City Council Members,

A year or so ago there were two articles in the Asheville Citizen-Times that caught my attention and the irony of them. One article featured a photo of a large Roman Catholic church in Charlotte that is now surrounded by tall buildings. It wasn't a pretty sight. The other article was about McKibbon's plan to build across from Asheville's historical St. Lawrence Basilica.

I said to a friend, "Well, I guess Asheville will have the same look as Charlotte."

As was noted in the Citizen-Times last week: there are too many unfilled hotels in Asheville. Not only do we not need another hotel, we don't need one at the proposed site to dwarf the St. Lawrence Basilica.

Yes, you want to bring in a money-maker. If the "Tripp's" property is available to buy, McKibbon could buy/build there.

******Think green...a green respite with trees, flowers, park benches...a green oasis where tourists can rest and gather energy to shop some more.***

******Think of the air that will be blocked by McKibbon's tall building. The beauty of an open green space out matches a city building any day, in my opinion.***

When I visit a city, one of the memories that stays with me is its green spaces, the shaded areas to "people watch," to rest during a day of walking, to hear the birds sing.

Asheville is known as a happenin' town. Let it also be known for its loveliness. Nothing says *welcome, I'm glad you're here* than a place to rest and reflect on the wonderful time they have in Asheville and decide to come back and tell their friends about.

Please, City Council Members, make Asheville beautiful for us who live here and for guests who visit.

You'll always be able to get money for Asheville, but will you ever have another choice space like the one across from the Basilica for a park?

If that space is gone for buildings, it's gone for good.

PLEASE PRESERVE THAT AREA FOR A PARK.

*Sincerely,
Leigh Ann Condie
9 Maplewood Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804*

Ben Fulmer

From: David Johnson <djohnson12@mac.com> on behalf of David Johnson
Sent: Friday, March 09, 2012 2:14 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;spowers@ashevillenc.gov;gjackson@ashevillenc.gov;scole@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Basilica area redevelopment

To the Asheville City Council and City Officials:

I understand that the Asheville City Council will take up on March 20 the issue of how to develop the city-owned site facing the historic St. Lawrence Basilica. Asheville has an unusual opportunity to foster an urban design consistent with the great urban architectural heritage this city features which attracts visitors from near and far. I recently authored an op-ed piece for the Asheville Citizen-Times which outlines the importance of getting this right and what features of development ought to be considered. This was published in the on-line edition of the AC-T so you may not have seen it. I attach it below for your consideration.

With a majority of our citizenry, I reject the notion that a tall hotel is appropriate for the site. However, I do not necessarily endorse simply turning the site over to the Archdiocese for development. Stringent city design controls and design review are called for. Some cities in such a case would utilize form-based zoning to achieve good massing and use results. Another approach would be to conduct a national competition for the site and the area around it. Such a competition would demonstrate that Asheville is the international center of the Guastavino Heritage. The reuse of this area is not a mere real estate operation, but a challenge in producing an attractive and economically viable urban design. For example, it may be desirable to redo the street pattern around the site, perhaps closing Page Street in front of the Basilica.

I urge the Council to accept the proposal of the Archdiocese, but with the proviso that development approval be predicated on a design review by appropriate city agencies to ensure the best possible outcome for all stakeholders and citizens.

Sincerely,

David A. Johnson, PhD., FAiCP

David Johnson is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners, Professor Emeritus of Planning at the University of Tennessee, and a founding Board Member of the Asheville Design Center. He has resided in the Asheville area for twelve years. He was the planner on the team that designed Nashville's State Capitol Bicentennial Mall, which was named by the American Planning Association in 2011 as one of America's outstanding public spaces.

Rafael Guastavino and the Asheville Basilica opportunity

Written by
David Johnson

•
He was called the greatest American architect you never heard of. A Spanish immigrant, he brought from his native Catalonia a unique tile vaulting system that was subsequently used in more than 1,000 major buildings in the US. His name was Rafael Guastavino. His “Cohesive Construction” technique proved extremely popular in the early 20th century. He worked on 233 projects in Manhattan alone. These included Grand Central Station, Grant’s Tomb, the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church, Carnegie Hall, and Temple Emanu-El. He also worked on the Great Hall at Ellis Island through which millions of immigrants came to America.

Guastavino is no longer a forgotten genius. Enthusiasm for his works has been growing world-wide over the last decade. He has been rediscovered in his native Catalonia, Spain, where a major exhibit on his works was recently presented. In New York, he has also been rediscovered. “Guastavino’s” is an extraordinarily popular restaurant in Manhattan built ten years ago into a beautiful space vaulted in Guastavino domes under the Queensboro Bridge. Guastavino scholars in the United States are now planning a major traveling exhibition titled “Guastavino Vaulting: Palaces for the People.” And an interactive exhibit on Guastavino’s work is set to open at the Boston Public Library in September 2012.

Guastavino is well-represented in Asheville, where he lived on-and-off from 1894-1908. He originally came here to work on elements of the Biltmore House including terraces, and the swimming pool. Guastavino built a home for himself in Black Mountain, called “Rhododendron”. While not much remains of the structure, it has some residual significance as an historic site and is a US National Historic Landmark. The Basilica is one of the most important of Guastavino’s 1,000 buildings. It was designed in collaboration with the well-known Asheville architect, Richard Sharp Smith. St. Lawrence is also where Rafael Guastavino is interred, making it a particularly important pilgrimage site for international “Guastavinistas”, as they are called. The parishioners of St. Lawrence are well-aware of the landmark treasure they worship in and are committed to ensuring its preservation and the sensitive development of the adjacent area.

Ashevillians are also rediscovering Guastavino as evidenced by the large turnout this month for a lecture given to a packed house at UNCA by John Ochsendorf, MIT engineering and history professor, and a leading researcher on the Guastavino legacy. Prof. Ochsendorf emphasized the international importance of the Guastavino presence in Asheville. Many in the audience were there because they were concerned about the prospects for future development of the site across from St. Lawrence.

So what guidelines should be put in place for the development of this critical part of downtown? Here is my list:

- Protect the “forecourt” and surroundings of the Basilica.
- Do not overbuild on the site. A building higher than six stories would damage the setting of the basilica and be out of scale with the surrounding urban fabric.
- The area design should be complementary to the surrounding setting and in harmony with the architectural features of the Basilica.
- The design should minimize surface parking.

- It should reflect natural pedestrian paths and movements through the area.
- It should carefully deal with and limit through traffic in the area.
- The design should include mixed uses: restaurants, offices, retail shops, and limited housing.
- More hotel rooms are not needed at this point. The Asheville area has an ample supply now and for the next decade.
- Views of landmarks and the mountains from the site, and to the site, should be respected.
- Shading in summer and sun capture in winter should be considered in the design.
- The open area should be an urban plaza, not a totally green park.
- Preserve a sense of enclosure. Successful urban places have a feeling of containment.
- Reflect the spirit, genius, and legacy of Rafael Guastavino.

Whoever gets the nod to develop the site should be kept to the highest design standards by the city. The city should not base its approval of a design simply on maximizing tax rateables from the site. There is a larger economic context to consider: tourism. Tourism is one of Asheville's strongest economic sectors. The opportunity to attract visitors from around the world to Rafael Guastavino's masterpiece can be realized only through careful planning of the site and sensitive design of its components. One can imagine a European style piazza in an open area in front of the Basilica ("Guastavino Place"?). A small museum to house exhibits on Guastavino? An arcade in the Italian style built into the surrounding structures adjacent to the piazza? A cappuccino on the square?

Get it right, Asheville, and it will be an adornment for years to come. Get it wrong and you will be remembered for missing a great opportunity and fouling the nest. Most of all, decisions about development should not be made on the basis of cronyism or political benefactions. The quality of the final result is what counts. Asheville is a smart, attractive place, and the rest of the country now knows it. And they are watching. Indeed, given the emerging global prestige of our Rafael Guastavino, the whole world is watching.

Postscript:

I urge you to view MIT Professor John Ochensdorf's recent UNCA lecture on the importance of Rafael Guastavino as an architect and builder in the early part of the 20th Century. This is available on-line at:

<http://tlt.unca.edu/video/productions/guastavino-vaulting-barcelona-black-mountain>

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2012 12:34 PM
To: PARC
Subject: Re: City Considers Land Sale

Oh, I got this email here as well. I hope that in the future you'll outline the real set of options and that you'll be more thorough in the way you seek to inform your list of the issues. For a quick primer on the issues, you could read more here:

<http://scrutinyhooligans.us/2012/02/09/open-letter-from-marc-hunt/>

Further - if you would ever like to discuss City issues in a constructive way, you could contact me directly. I'm always open to having a conversation. Getting something like this in the mail only pushes potential allies away. It's counterproductive. If I may assume your intent is either a park or something else that won't interfere with views of the Basilica from people's apartments or other locations, then I'd recommend attending a PED meeting or just getting together with the Council members and seek ways to create productive partnerships.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Feb 13, 2012 at 3:00 PM, PARC <ashevilleparc@gmail.com> wrote:

City Land Sale?

Monday, February 13, 2012



Satellite View of the Basilica of St. Lawrence

If the McKibbon Group gets its way, this view of the Basilica of St. Lawrence might soon be your best way to see it.

McKibbon wants to buy several City-owned properties in front of the Basilica to build a high-rise hotel, potentially blocking sight lines between several public buildings – Pack Memorial Library, the Vanderbilt, the Basilica, the Civic Center, the Battery Park Hotel, and the Grove Arcade.

Many worry that construction of a hotel so close to the church could damage it. The church has one of the world's largest unsupported elliptical domes, and at age 103, heavy construction nearby risks damage to the structure.

But Council has other reasonable options.

- The Church itself has offered to buy the property, with a plan to immediately use the area for parking and later build a smaller building, set back from the church with a public plaza in front.
- Asheville citizens have long favored a public park in the area.

So there are actually three proposals for the land:

1. A high-rise hotel. Cities lose their local character quickly when the corporate giants come to town. (We already will have the big new sign for the U.S. Cellular Center right across the street);
2. The Church's set-back building, with a plaza; or
3. A city park, pictured below. As the economy improves and development resumes, more and more green space will be lost. Smart cities put in green space as they grow. Thousands of residents, over many years, have expressed their preference for a park.

Please email City Council and let them know your thoughts on this!

If you want, send us a copy and/or send your letter to the Asheville Citizen-Times or Mountain Xpress.

(Letters to the editor require your full name and phone number for verification.)

Thanks,
from the folks at PARC.

[Video from three years ago when a builder wanted to put a high rise in front of the Basilica](#)

A City Park?

[Click to email City Council and a copy to PARC](#)



▪ [Click to email Asheville Citizen-Times](#)

- - [Click to email the Mountain Xpress](#)
-

PARC • PO Box 4093 • Asheville, NC 28805

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Ben Fulmer

From: racheltanksley@gmail.com on behalf of Rachel Russell
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2012 11:03 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; AshevillePARC@gmail.com
Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence

To Whom it May Concern:

It has come to my attention the the McKibben Group is interested in purchasing several city owned pieces of property around the Basilica of St. Lawrence in order to construct a high rise hotel. While a tourist destination such as Asheville does need lodging options, this location is less than ideal for yet another high rise hotel. There are already five hotels within one mile of the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Adding yet another hotel to the downtown landscape is completely un-necessary, especially a high rise building. The church itself has offered to purchase the property in order to avoid this construction, which is preferable to the alternative, but perhaps is not the best use of the space. The best use of the space would be to create a public green space for all to enjoy. Green spaces in urban areas have numerous positive impacts not only on the environment, but on the residents, and visitors, themselves. A green space planted with native trees, shrubs and plants will contribute to the health of our beautiful city in the following ways:

- Reduce heat build-up from the paved surfaces. In a study published by the University of Washington, tests in a mall parking lot in Huntsville, Ala. showed a 31 degree difference between shaded and unshaded areas.
- Reduce nitrate leaching from the soil into the water supply and reduce surface water runoff, keeping phosphorus and other pollutants out of our waterways
- Remove smoke, dust and other pollutants from the air. One tree can remove 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually, equaling 11,000 miles of car emissions.

These are just a few of the environmental impacts an urban green space would have on the city of Asheville. Studies have also documented the impacts of urban green spaces on the health of the residents as well. A study published by the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research found the greater amounts of green space within one kilometer -- or 0.6 miles -- of people's homes was related to small reductions in the risks of health problems like heart disease, diabetes, chronic neck and back pain, asthma and migraine. The strongest connection was seen with depression and anxiety. Among people who lived in areas with 90 percent green space just over 2 percent had been diagnosed with depression, compared with just over 3 percent of those living in areas with 10 percent green space.

These are just a few of the reasons the city of Asheville should consider using this opportunity to create an urban green space for its residents. An urban green space will provide innumerable positive impacts for the people who live here, as well as the ones who visit, while another hotel will not.

Sincerely,

Rachel D. Russell

919/259-4275

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2012 12:06 AM
To: Chris Johansen
Subject: Re: Disposition of front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Thanks for writing in, Chris.

I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site.

Council Member Marc Hunt provides more context and facts in his excellent open letter regarding the property at this link:

<http://www.mountainx.com/article/40213/In-open-letter-Asheville-Council-member-seeks-to-address-concerns-about-Basilica-land-offer>

I appreciate you taking the time to contact me about this.

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Feb 9, 2012 at 6:14 PM, Chris Johansen <johansen@main.nc.us> wrote:

Friends, I am informed that there are three proposals for the land:

1. A high-rise hotel. Cities lose their local character quickly when the corporate giants come to town. We already will have the new sign for the U.S. Cellular Center; we already have a high-rise hotel build nearby, another under construction, and another in planning--enough is enough;
2. The Church's set-back building, with a plaza; or
3. A city park. As the economy improves and development resumes, more and more green space will be lost. Smart cities put in green space as they grow. Do not repeat the mistake the county has made with city-county plaza.

I strongly favor option three. I can live with option two. Please do not choose option one. Please remember that I vote my conscience assiduously in every election.

Best regards,

--

Chris Johansen {johansen at main dot nc dot us}
33 Haywood Street
828.280.2122

Ben Fulmer

From: Chris Johansen <johansen@main.nc.us> on behalf of Chris Johansen
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 6:15 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; AshevillePARC@gmail.com
Subject: Disposition of front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Friends, I am informed that there are three proposals for the land:

1. A high-rise hotel. Cities lose their local character quickly when the corporate giants come to town. We already will have the new sign for the U.S. Cellular Center; we already have a high-rise hotel build nearby, another under construction, and another in planning--enough is enough;
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Best regards,

--

Chris Johansen {johansen at main dot nc dot us}
33 Haywood Street
828.280.2122

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 5:02 PM
To: Jennifer Woodward
Subject: Re: stop Hi-Rise Hotel development from blocking St. Lawrence Basilica

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Woodward.

I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site.

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I appreciate you taking the time to contact me about this.

Gordon Smith

On Thu, Feb 9, 2012 at 3:12 PM, Jennifer Woodward <jenwoodward@gmail.com> wrote:

As a citizen of Asheville and someone wholly invested in the unique landmarks that make our downtown special, I urge you to stop any plans for a hi-rise hotel across from the St. Lawrence Basilica. A city park/green space would be the most welcome solution as our city is seriously lacking in that area (especially on that side of downtown), but allowing the church to purchase would also be a welcome solution. The Basilica is one of our city's most treasured landmarks and should be protected!

Best regards,

Jennifer Woodward

Ben Fulmer

From: Jennifer Woodward <jenwoodward@gmail.com> on behalf of Jennifer Woodward
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 3:12 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; AshevillePARC@gmail.com
Subject: stop Hi-Rise Hotel development from blocking St. Lawrence Basilica

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Best regards,

Jennifer Woodward

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 11:26 AM
To: Judy Easley
Subject: Re: Property across from the Basilica

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Easley.

I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site.

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I appreciate you taking the time to contact me about this.

Gordon Smith

On Tue, Feb 7, 2012 at 1:52 PM, Judy Easley <jeasley08@gmail.com> wrote:

Downtown Asheville is a beautiful place and St. Lawrence Basilica is not only beautiful but a very historically significant building. In addition, there is no green space in the downtown area. Pritchard Park and the Plaza are nice, however, not as inviting as a nice green park. I would much rather see a park across from the Church than another hotel. Why don't we wait and see if the three new hotels in Asheville even make it before adding another. Isn't that part of our downfall in the economy now....building too much, too fast!! If we cannot have a park, let's let the church, who has been diligent in preservation, buy the property.

*Judy Easley
Downtown resident*

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 11:04 AM
To: Catherine Riley
Subject: Re: Basilica of St.Lawrence

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Riley.

I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site.

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I appreciate you taking the time to contact me about this.

On Tue, Feb 7, 2012 at 2:32 PM, Catherine Riley <catherineriley@bellsouth.net> wrote:

To: Asheville NC Council
Re: Our need for a Park in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence

It has recently come to my attention that a developer wants to buy the land in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence in downtown Asheville. In my opinion any commercial development would greatly detract from downtown Asheville's unique character, architecture, and beauty. Asheville is indeed special in that it does NOT have huge new buildings everywhere, blocking views and making it unable to walk around and enjoy the very special feeling that we all love. Asheville desperately needs green space downtown. Asheville NEEDS a park in front of the gorgeous Basilica of St. Lawrence. Everyone would benefit from it for generations to come. Please BLOCK commercial development!

Catherine Riley

Catherine Riley
catherineriley@bellsouth.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 10:39 AM
To: Mary Lou Sartoris
Subject: Re: Preservation of Land near Basilica of St. Lawrence

Thanks for writing in, Ms. Sartoris.

I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site.

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I appreciate you taking the time to contact me about this.

Gordon Smith

On Wed, Feb 8, 2012 at 2:01 PM, Mary Lou Sartoris <marylousartoris@charter.net> wrote:

Dear City Council of Asheville and the Citizen-Times--

Please, please, please preserve the beauty of Asheville's national treasure, The Basilica of St. Lawrence. A city park would be a gift to the residents of this community and all its tourists for years to come. It would exhibit pride of our legislators in our natural world and stand for Asheville's commitment to going green. Make the right decision!!!

Respectfully,
Mary Lou Sartoris

Ben Fulmer

From: Mary Lou Sartoris <marylousartoris@charter.net> on behalf of Mary Lou Sartoris
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 2:02 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: Preservation of Land near Basilica of St. Lawrence

Dear City Council of Asheville and the Citizen-Times--

Please, please, please preserve the beauty of Asheville's national treasure, The Basilica of St. Lawrence. A city park would be a gift to the residents of this community and all its tourists for years to come. It would exhibit pride of our legislators in our natural world and stand for Asheville's commitment to going green. Make the right decision!!!

Respectfully,
Mary Lou Sartoris

Ben Fulmer

From: Catherine Riley <catherineriley@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Catherine Riley
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 2:32 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence

To: Asheville NC Council
Re: Our need for a Park in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence

It has recently come to my attention that a developer wants to buy the land in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence in downtown Asheville. In my opinion any commercial development would greatly detract from downtown Asheville's unique character, architecture, and beauty. Asheville is indeed special in that it does NOT have huge new buildings everywhere, blocking views and making it unable to walk around and enjoy the very special feeling that we all love. Asheville desperately needs green space downtown. Asheville NEEDS a park in front of the gorgeous Basilica of St. Lawrence. Everyone would benefit from it for generations to come. Please BLOCK commercial development!
Catherine Riley

Catherine Riley
catherineriley@bellsouth.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Judy Easley <jeasley08@gmail.com> on behalf of Judy Easley
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 1:52 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: Property across from the Basilica

Downtown Asheville is a beautiful place and St. Lawrence Basilica is not only beautiful but a very historically significant building. In addition, there is no green space in the downtown area. Pritchard Park and the Plaza are nice, however, not as inviting as a nice green park. I would much rather see a park across from the Church than another hotel. Why don't we wait and see if the three new hotels in Asheville even make it before adding another. Isn't that part of our downfall in the economy now....building too much, too fast!! If we cannot have a park, let's let the church, who has been diligent in preservation, buy the property.

Judy Easley

Downtown resident

Ben Fulmer

From: Phil Kleisler <PKleisler@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Phil Kleisler
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 10:04 AM
To: councilgroup
Cc: Gary Jackson
Subject: Letter: Haywood Street across from the Basilica
Attachments: Albert_Sneed.pdf

Mayor and City Council Members,

Gary asked that I forward the attached letter to you regarding the Haywood Street property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Philip Kleisler

Business Services Manager
City Manager's Office
City Of Asheville
828-232-4541
PKleisler@ashevillenc.gov

Think Green! Please do not print this e-mail unless necessary

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 10:38 PM
To: Thehallerz
Subject: Re: The Basilica of St. Lawrence

Thanks for writing in. I'm willing to work with both the Basilica and the McKibbon group to determine who's willing to bring a project that will best complement surrounding uses and best serve the people of the city. I agree with you that we want something that Asheville can be proud of for generations to come and will preserve the beauty and integrity of the Basilica. Our Planning and Economic Development Committee, composed of Council members Manheimer, Hunt, and Pelly, opted to remain with McKibbon for the moment but have made it clear that we're seeking the best possible option for the site. I'm hoping the Basilica representatives will make another proposal and we can all benefit.

Gordon Smith

On Mon, Feb 6, 2012 at 10:20 PM, Thehallerz <thehallerz@aol.com> wrote:

If three options exist for the property the city is considering selling to the McKibbon Group for development why not let St. Lawrence buy it?? I, like many others, would prefer to have a green area rather than a mass of concrete and asphalt. The Basilica is a historic structure and needs to be preserved and protected. Any major construction, like that being proposed, is risky. No one can guarantee that something negative wouldn't happen to the structure so why take the chance that it won't? Hopefully ALL aspects will be considered and properly evaluated before a decision is reached. And likewise, those making it won't allow the economics to be the sole and dominate criteria.

A. Haller
1 View Street
Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Thehallerz <thehallerz@aol.com> on behalf of Thehallerz
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 10:20 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: The Basilica of St. Lawrence

If three options exist for the property the city is considering selling to the McKibbon Group for development why not let St. Lawrence buy it?? I, like many others, would prefer to have a green area rather than a mass of concrete and asphalt. The Basilica is a historic structure and needs to be preserved and protected. Any major construction, like that being proposed, is risky. No one can guarantee that something negative wouldn't happen to the structure so why take the chance that it won't? Hopefully ALL aspects will be considered and properly evaluated before a decision is reached. And likewise, those making it won't allow the economics to be the sole and dominate criteria.

A. Haller
1 View Street
Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlouncil.com> on behalf of Gordon Smith
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2012 12:04 PM
To: Anne Smith
Subject: Re: City Property. Please scroll down to see image and text. Thank you so much!

Thanks for writing in, Anne. This is arguably the most valuable piece of undeveloped downtown property. I think it's safe to say that everyone wants to make sure that whatever gets built there will be something that will serve as a complement to surrounding uses. We'll be looking very closely at possible ways forward over the next several weeks, and your thoughts will help to inform my decision making.

Sincerely,

Gordon Smith

On Fri, Jan 20, 2012 at 4:31 PM, Anne Smith <annefitzsmith@gmail.com> wrote:



Here's a developer's rendering of a proposal for the City-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence (diagonally across from the Civic Center). He is proposing a set-back of 200-225 feet from the street. The green object is the roof of the Basilica of St. Lawrence and the tall black-looking building is Battery Park Apartments. He is proposing having a plaza (with a fountain and benches) out toward the street and a building of approximately 125,000 square-feet, set back from the street by 200-225 feet. He is also proposing underground parking.

The alternative proposal (being considered right now) is a 7 story hotel of rustic design that will be built at the street edge. The alternative will overshadow and crowd out our very beautiful architectural gem. The basilica is a great tourist attraction and one of the most interesting and beautiful of Asheville's downtown. It was built by Rafael Guastavino, who was the tile master at the Biltmore Estate.

Anne Fitzgerald Smith
P O Box 8966
Asheville NC 28814
home (828) 254-6791
cell (828) 545-5452

Ben Fulmer

From: Anne Smith <annefitzsmith@gmail.com> on behalf of Anne Smith
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2012 4:31 PM
To: Ashe. Gov. City Council
Subject: City Property. Please scroll down to see image and text. Thank you so much!



Here's a developer's rendering of a proposal for the Clty-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence (diagonally across from the Civic Center). He is proposing a set-back of 200-225 feet from the street. The green object is the roof of the Basilica of St. Lawrence and the tall black-looking building is Battery Park Apartments. He is proposing having a plaza (with a fountain and benches) out toward the street and a building of approximately 125,000 square-feet, set back from the street by 200-225 feet. He is also proposing underground parking.

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Anne Fitzgerald Smith
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