

IREDELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BRIEFING MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2002

The Iredell County Board of Commissioners met in Briefing Session on Tuesday, March 19, 2002, at 5:00 p.m., in the Iredell County Government Center, 200 South Center Street, Statesville, NC.

Present: Chairman Sara Haire Tice
Vice Chairman Karen B. Ray
Tommy E. Bowles
Steve D. Johnson
R. Godfrey Williams

Staff Present: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, Planning Supervisor Ron Smith, Support Services Director Jim Vernon, Solid Waste Director Ron Weatherman, Library Director Steve Messick, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Tice.

PRESENTATION FROM MARTIN BOAL ANTHONY JOHNSON (MBAJ) ON THE IREDELL COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER-SOUTH (ICGC-S) PROJECT: Architects Rob Johnson and Larry Schaeffer said contact had been made with the user groups (clerk of court, probation, health department, sheriff's department) to determine the Mooresville space needs.

Architect Johnson then discussed the floor plan. He said the first floor, of the four-floored building, would consist of space for the following services: courtroom and judicial offices, parole, Station H of the Sheriff's Department, health, and an existing mechanical area. He said the square footage of the first floor, including common areas was 29,132. Mr. Johnson said the new courtroom would have 170 seats. He noted that the second floor could be used for health department expansion in the future. Architect Johnson said the third floor could be leased to an agency that had already shown an interest. He said that if everything ran on schedule, construction could begin in October and occupancy could occur in July of 2003.

Commissioner Bowles noted the raised ceiling on the first floor for the courtroom. He asked how this affected the second floor.

R. Johnson said the raised ceiling did not alter the second floor that much. He said the second floor area, where the reduction in space occurred, could be used for storage and some of the building's mechanical equipment.

County Manager Mashburn said the clerk of court preferred more than the 170 seats in the courtroom, but the extra space couldn't be found. He said the new site would at least offer 70 more courtroom seats and there would be a jury assembly room.

Commissioner Ray asked about the usage for the garden area or courtyard.

Architect Johnson said it would continue to be used as an open space or courtyard. He mentioned that in the future, an administrative office for the courts could be built in the space.

Schaffer then described the following statement of probable cost.

IREDELL COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER-SOUTH <i>Conversion of Lowrance/Lake Norman Regional Medical Center</i>				
Sitework				Total Project
Sub-total				\$ 56,000
Building				
Phase One (First Floor)		SQ.FT.	\$/SF	TOTAL
Court Facilities/Sheriff Dept.(excluding Jury Assembly)		11385	\$ 71.35	\$812,320
Jury Assembly		942	24.35	22,938
Probation/Parole Offices (1 st flr.)		3374	24.56	82,865
Health Dept. (including W.I.C.)		5758	24.56	141,416
Environmental Services		673	24.56	16,529
Station H (sheriff's department)		983	28.92	28,428
1 st . Flr. Corridors/Mechanical Rooms		4226	14.80	62,545
1 st . Flr. Restrooms		785	69.65	54,675
Sub-total area		28126		
PHASE ONE SUB-TOTAL		cost/sf	43.44	1,221,717
BUILDING AND SITE TOTAL		cost/sf	45.43	1,277,717
ALTERNATES:				
		SQ.FT.	\$/SF	TOTAL
New Courts Entrance Lobby		573	34.26	19,631
3 rd Floor (prospective tenant)		24852	34.96	868,826
3 rd Floor Restrooms		780		
Sub-Total Area		25632		
SUB-TOTAL		cost/sf	36.02	923,153

Commissioner Johnson noted that MBAJ had originally been on the agenda to make the presentation at the March 5 meeting. Mr. Johnson said he assumed the county staff had delayed the presentation due to the cost estimates being too high. He asked, "If we spend \$1,277,717, will you be back in a few months asking for more rooms or space?"

Support Services Director Vernon said maybe, especially if there was a space problem. He said "down the road there might be some failures."

Commissioner Williams asked the architects how they came up with \$45.43 per sq. ft.

Schaeffer said it was a "nuts and bolts estimate." He said the estimate was unpredictable, but there was a "good bid atmosphere now." Mr. Schaeffer acknowledged, however, that compared to a new school project or post office facility, the ICGC-S project was not the "cream-of-the-top type project."

Commissioner Ray asked the staff if they were comfortable with the amount of space that had been allotted to the agencies.

Vernon said a compromise had been made. He said the agencies had valid space needs. Mr. Vernon asked if the board wanted the staff to pursue the prospective tenant for the third floor.

Finance Director Blumenstein said she had prepared a ten year amortization schedule on the costs for the third floor work. She said the tenant, over a ten-year period paying \$4.62 per sq. ft., would pay the debt service for the third floor renovation. Blumenstein said that if one-fourth of the building's purchase cost (\$1,900,000) were added, the tenant would have to pay \$6.46 per sq. ft. to recoup the costs. She said the tenant was currently paying \$7.55 per sq. ft.

Vernon said he felt a letter of commitment could be obtained from the prospective tenant. He said the tenant desired to notify the present landlord about the future plans, but first, some assurance from the county was needed about the availability of the space. Mr. Vernon said the tenant's occupancy would affect the parking situation since the agency alone would need 100 spaces.

Former county commissioner Alice Stewart, in attendance at the meeting, asked about the parking at the facility.

R. Johnson said there were 258 parking spaces.

Vernon said the county might be able to make 275 spaces. He noted that Rick McLean, the town manager, had also committed to allow on-street parking.

Commissioner Johnson stated he knew the Mooresville agencies had valid space needs and there was congestion. He said, however, he still felt the board had gone in the wrong direction to try and solve the problem. Mr. Johnson said he had a right to dissent on the action needed for the project and that he did dissent.

MOTION by Commissioner Ray to (1) suspend the Rules of Procedure regarding motions during the briefing session (2) allow the Martin Boal Anthony Johnson (MBAJ) architectural firm to move forward with the first floor plan for the Iredell County Government Center-South (ICGC-S) (3) allow County Manager Mashburn and Support Services Director Vernon to continue negotiations with the prospective tenant for the third floor of the ICGC-S and (4) request the county manager and support services director to report their findings to the board as soon as possible in an effort to insure that the architects have sufficient time to work with the complete architectural proposal.

VOTING: Ayes – 4; Nays – 1 (Johnson).

REQUEST FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO BE HELD APRIL 2, 2002, 7:00 P.M., REGARDING THE RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ROAP): Iredell Transportation Authority Chairman Ben Garrison said he had received notification indicating that for FY 2002-03 the county could expect to receive \$123,958 in state and federal funds for public transportation. He said \$67,476 would be for elderly/disabled services, \$12,702 for the Work First Program, and \$43,780 for rural/general public services. Mr. Garrison said it was necessary to hold a public hearing before the funds could be distributed.

Mashburn reminded the board that on July 1 the county would be the provider for the transportation services. He said the county would continue with a contract with Laidlaw Transportation Services.

UPDATE FROM THE PLANNING SUPERVISOR ON PUBLIC WATER CONNECTIVITY: Planning Supervisor Ron Smith said that in January, the commissioners had requested information about the possibility of requiring new subdivisions to connect with private water providers if they were available in the construction area. Smith said a review of some contiguous counties (Alexander/Catawba/Rowan/Lincoln) showed that a policy of this type was being used. Mr. Smith said that in addition, Rowan and Lincoln County required a connection if the service happened to be within a specified distance. Smith said that if the board members were still interested in the connectivity matter, a public hearing would be required for the subdivision text amendment.

It was the consensus of the board to allow Mr. Smith to continue in his work on the public water connectivity item.

DISCUSSION ON ALLOWING NON-PROFIT RETREAT CENTERS IN AREAS ZONED RESORT RESIDENTIAL (RR): Smith said it had been brought to his attention that a retreat center was being operated off Fern Hill Road in an RR district. Mr. Smith said retreat centers were allowed in Residential Agricultural (RA) Districts, Rural Residential (RU-R) Districts, and Single Family Residential (R-20) Districts with a

special use permit, but they were not permitted in Resort Residential Districts (RR). Smith said he wanted to propose that retreats be allowed in RR districts after a special use permit had been approved by the board of adjustment. Mr. Smith said that in order to amend the zoning ordinance, a public hearing would first be needed.

Commissioner Bowles said he understood the retreat center was actually situated on property that had two zonings -- Residential Agricultural and Resort Residential.

It was the consensus of the board to allow Mr. Smith to continue with his work on allowing retreat centers in resort residential zoned property.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION DUE TO THE MORRISON'S PLANTATION SUBDIVISION: Chairman Tice said a citizen recently called her and complained about the traffic congestion occurring due to the construction of the Morrison's Plantation Subdivision. Mrs. Tice said the citizen asked if the county couldn't write something into the subdivision ordinance requiring that road work occur at night.

Smith said the conditional use district process might be used to address the problem. Mr. Smith said he would consider the citizen's suggestion as criteria to be met if someone submitted a sizeable subdivision plan in the future.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Tice adjourned the briefing at 6:50 p.m.

Approved: _____

Clerk to the Board