

Ben Fulmer

From: Janet McAfee <jmacnorris@gmail.com> on behalf of Janet McAfee
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 3:10 PM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Short Term Rentals

Dear Councilman Hunt,

I have been disappointed to hear comments suggesting that the recent elections were a mandate for STR's. I believe that is a mistaken view and that the election more likely reflected the haranguing that went on demonizing anyone who supported the possibility of something other than just a park at the vacant lot which came to be known as St Lawrence Green.

I believe you will find that there are many voters who oppose unrestricted STR's. I live in a neighborhood, 5 Points, where most streets are exceedingly narrow, and many sidewalks are lacking or in significant disrepair. Many existing housing structures are also unkempt or in a state of disrepair. We are one of the last semi-affordable areas close to the center of town and allowing conversion of existing housing stock to STR's will only reduce the number of affordable homes in this neighborhood.

If STR's are allowed in any form in our neighborhood, I believe they should be closely regulated with regard to numbers, proximity, and condition standards, with off-street parking required.

Our neighborhood, as other neighborhoods, have some vocal supporters of STR's, but please understand that our neighborhood is deeply divided on the subject of STR's. This should not be about the volume attained by either group but about what is best for the neighborhood.

Thanks for your consideration.

Janet McAfee
16 Spears Avenue



Ben Fulmer

From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> on behalf of Dave Nutter
Sent: Sunday, November 08, 2015 3:08 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;williamkyoung@hotmail.com;bsad28@gmail.com;Julie@mountaintrue.org;lindsey@southernequality.org;ric.hardlee@live.com
Cc: gjackson@ashevillenc.gov;cball@ashevillenc.gov;tokolichany@ashevillenc.gov;aglines@ashevillenc.gov;smerten@ashevillenc.gov;smonson@ashevillenc.gov;spowers@ashevillenc.gov;jstaudinger@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Democracy provokes thought

Last week's telling city council election seems to make policy transitions the order of the day. I agree with those outlined as possibilities by the Mayor in this morning's newspaper, including ones pertaining to Saint Lawrence Green instead of mixed-use public-private redevelopment across from the U.S. Cellular Center and Basilica of St. Lawrence, short-term rentals in the city and using the discretionary powers of the Council to decide on smaller as well as larger development projects.

As one individual voice, I would also like to offer the following hopes:

I hope the Saint Lawrence Green direction, which I believe is persuasive, will be carried out cooperatively, creatively, proactively by the city and harmoniously, with significant private funding contributions. As a practical matter, I do not think it can be implemented in any other way.

I hope the short-term rental regulations being finalized will not only welcome these uses to Asheville but will also be careful about sensitive neighborhood density conditions;

Also regarding density in the city's residential areas, I hope that Affordable Housing policy will not go too far in enabling higher density as the primary method of achieving a significant percentage of affordable units again because neighborhood density is a precious and irreplaceable thing;

I hope that greater use of Council discretion in expanding the use of conditional zoning for smaller development projects will not provoke an issue of contract zoning; and,

I hope the artists and existing industry in the River Arts District will be protected and retained by density, primarily height control, limitations in the planned zoning amendment and that the area west of the railroad tracks will remain in the form-based zoning area.

Best,

Dave

David G. Nutter, AICP, Principal, Retired
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street,
Asheville, North Carolina 28801 USA

Tel 828-505-8242 Cell: 828-279-1820
For large files: google drop-box

Ben Fulmer

From: David Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> on behalf of David Nutter
Sent: Wednesday, September 09, 2015 10:47 AM
To: Marc Hunt;Gwen Wisler;Jan Davis
Subject: Fwd: City approval of Historic Preservation Master Plan- GANTT

Marc, Gwen & Jan:

Re: coordination with county planning, keeping PED informed.

Thank you!

Dave

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Begin forwarded message:

From: David Gantt <david@davidgantt.com>
Date: September 9, 2015 at 9:35:40 AM EDT
To: David Nutter <dnutter@aol.com>, "jagerhng@gmail.com" <jagerhng@gmail.com>
Cc: "n3carolina@gmail.com" <n3carolina@gmail.com>, "nswking@charter.net" <nswking@charter.net>, "Brian.Turner@ncleg.net" <Brian.Turner@ncleg.net>, "terry.vanduynd@ncleg.net" <terry.vanduynd@ncleg.net>, "Susan.Fisher@ncleg.net" <Susan.Fisher@ncleg.net>, "smerten@ashevillenc.gov" <smerten@ashevillenc.gov>, "bertsandphoebe@aol.com" <bertsandphoebe@aol.com>, "emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com" <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com>, Brownie Newman <brownie.newman@buncombecounty.org>, Holly Jones <dhjwnc@gmail.com>, "Ellen Frost" <ellen.frost@buncombecounty.org>, Jon Creighton <jon.creighton@buncombecounty.org>, "Wanda Greene (wanda.greene@buncombecounty.org)" <wanda.greene@buncombecounty.org>, "Kathy Hughes" <Kathy.Hughes@buncombecounty.org>
Subject: RE: City approval of Historic Preservation Master Plan- GANTT

Dave- I have asked that County staff meet with Stacey and HRC and that we place this item on upcoming agenda. Thank you and HRC for great leadership in this important area of government.



David Gantt
Chairman - Buncombe County Commission
82 Church Street
Asheville, NC 28801
(828-252-2852)
(800-273-4002)

PS, think green. Do not print this email unless absolutely necessary.

From: David Nutter [<mailto:dnutter@aol.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 09, 2015 8:52 AM
To: jagerhng@gmail.com
Cc: n3carolina@gmail.com; nswking@charter.net; David Gantt <david@davidgantt.com>;
Brian.Turner@ncleg.net; terry.vanduyn@ncleg.net; Susan.Fisher@ncleg.net; smerten@ashevillenc.gov;
bertsandphoebe@aol.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; Brownie Newman
<brownie.newman@buncombecounty.org>; Holly Jones <dhjwnc@gmail.com>; Ellen Frost
<ellen.frost@buncombecounty.org>; Jon Creighton <jon.creighton@buncombecounty.org>
Subject: Re: City approval of Historic Preservation Master Plan

All:

I would only add that the Historic Preservation Master Plan has not yet been approved by the county planning board or the county commission.

I've never known what to do about the plain fact that the press almost always gets something wrong.

We are looking forward to the opportunity discussed at our retreat to meet with county planners to get this ball rolling.

I think it can succeed but we will need all the help we can muster!

Best,

Dave

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Email dnutter@aol.com

For large attachments: Google Drop Box

On Sep 9, 2015, at 7:19 AM, Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> wrote:

Dear John:

I've attached the good PowerPoint that Stacy presented to the City Council last night as well as my testimony and a link to this morning's AC-T article.

<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2015/09/08/asheville-passes-plan-save-historic-buildings/71910004/>

Best to you in the feverish homestretch of the state budget.

I have a meeting of the St. Lawrence Basilica Preservation Fund tomorrow and will say a prayer for Historic Preservation Tax Credits!

Best,

Dave

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

From: John Ager <jagerhng@gmail.com>

To: Nancy Nehls Nelson <n3carolina@gmail.com>; Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com>

Sent: Wed, Sep 9, 2015 6:40 am

Subject: Re: City approval of Historic Preservation Master Plan

Dave or Nancy, I would love to have a copy of the comments made at this meeting.
JOHN

On Tue, Sep 8, 2015 at 9:55 PM, Nancy Nehls Nelson <n3carolina@gmail.com> wrote:

As a member of the county Land Conservation Advisory Board and a private citizen in the rural, historically significant Reems Creek Valley, I applaud your success of having this measure passed. We look forward to the impact being felt all over the county, in many positive ways.

Thank you for your testimony which echos the sentiments of so many people and thank you for your time and effort to preserve our land for future generations.

Nancy Nehls Nelson
Weaverville, NC

On Tue, Sep 8, 2015 at 8:10 PM, Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> wrote:

Dave:

Following up on our HRC Retreat last week, and its lively discussion with you and the Mayor, the City Council unanimously approved the Historic Preservation Plan for the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, North Carolina this evening.

We hope we can have the meeting with you and county planning staff we spoke about.

I've attached the testimony I made tonight.

Best to you,

Dave Nutter

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Nancy Nehls Nelson
99 Parker Cove Road
Weaverville, NC 28787
[828-658-9945](tel:828-658-9945)

*"The truth is incontrovertible, malice may attack it,
ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is."*
~ Winston Churchill

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<HP MP testimony 090815 s.docx>

Ben Fulmer

From: Sam Speciale <sgspeciale@yahoo.com> on behalf of Sam Speciale
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2015 9:38 PM
To: Asheville City Council
Subject: St Lawrence green space

I am outraged to see the Council party to an ad to sell off the space vacant across from the St Lawrence Basilica without vigorous public discussion and with what even looks like aiding and abetting any "poor-in-the-mouth" developer to create another hotel monstrosity. Do you not recall the story of killing the goose that lay golden eggs? Most tourists do not come to Asheville to see another outsider-owned hotel or multistory parking garage! Doing away with city perks like a green space will ultimately drive away those tourists you seem to desire beyond rational city planning.

Preserve the unique character of this city that does not need more hotels, in spite of what line the Chamber of Commerce might be feeding you and certainly not squandering an opportunity to add a pocket park to this section of downtown.

And is this how you provide for the tax-paying citizens of this city? With sweetened offers like

- *City-owned Acreage*
- *Adjacent to US Cellular Center*
- *10 Story Potential*
- *City may offer incentives including tax credits, parking, regulatory approvals, etc.*

The latter give-away negates your arguments against creating a PUBLIC green space for citizens and tourists alike to enjoy for decades to come long after some of these ugly hotels will be gone. If this is the best your staff can come up with, Council needs to seriously consider replacing some or all of existing staff responsible for this travesty. Let them better do this kind of "planning" in a city like Atlanta.

Samuel Speciale, PhD
Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Peter Gentling <pgentling@charter.net> on behalf of Peter Gentling
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 6:58 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Basilica Green Space

Marc, thank you for the thoughtful reply to my suggestion that the Basilica Park not be developed. I am trying to understand this fiscal dilemma and the figures you sent. Since I'm not a businessman I can't wrap my mind around this data easily. First of all, I still (and will) advocate open space here. Second, as to Pritchard Park, I was on Tree Commission when this project was adopted. We advocated for a Pritchard Park costing perhaps \$250K, not the millions that the complex design did consume. Simplicity. As for the Basilica Park I'd (no longer on Tree Commission) advocate 1) Do nothing now. 2) when we do something, keep this as open space, let me or someone else design the space, and stick to simplicity. I can design it and will charge nothing for the design. And I believe we can keep the cost to less than \$1M for the entire thing, hopefully much less. Marc, open space. Perhaps a vision of it will come for you. I have respect for you and your many abilities. You have been instrumental and open minded. Let that continue. Again, I can do this and not for money. If you want drawings, I'll provide them.

Peter

Peter Gentling
253-0608

On Aug 20, 2015, at 3:05 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

Peter

This matter is a bit more complex than some suggest.

The proper question to consider - one that City Council has considered carefully - is whether developing a park at this site is the proper thing to do in the context of all other projects on the table.

For the City to have a park at this site is a \$4 million+ proposition (value of land + required remediation, drainage, etc., + improvements). If we commit \$4MM+ to this project, something else has to give. I have attached our current 5-year capital plan. Total available \$\$ to allocate across all the projects is fairly well limited assuming no tax increases, which is our current posture. The majority of the projects are not elective; they must be done. Council and staff, with open public input, spent many hours deliberating and refining this plan, and there are many worthy initiatives that are proposed and suggested that do not make it into the plan. For instance the required capital to renovate Thomas Wolfe auditorium is not in there nor is the capital to alternatively support a new performing arts center. Believe me, there are many citizens that are passionate and disappointed about other projects not getting funded.

So the question to be asked here is would the community prefer to cut \$4million+ in other important projects out of the planning in order to prioritize a park there? While I know there are a some people that might say that, I do not yet have the sense that many would given the things

that would have to go and given the other commitments to parks development in downtown in recent years. The polls that the St. Lawrence Green group is running are very slanted in that they simply ask whether people prefer a park or a high-rise without the context of trade-offs.

I have personally put many hours into negotiation and advocacy with the Asheville Design Center, developers, and others trying to get to a place where there could be a reasonable-scale development plus an affordable public plaza in that space. To me, that has been the sweet spot in this. It has been very difficult, mostly owing to the lack of private-sector capital coming forward to support something like that. Note that Pack Square Park was an almost \$20MM project with all but about \$2 million coming from the city. Carrier Park was likewise mostly funded from other sources. This would be a very different discussion if other money were coming to the table to make this happen.

Glad to talk or answer other questions. I do appreciate your concern and input.

I also appreciate you and Charlie initiating the efforts around storm drainage a couple years ago. While the progress has not been as great as you or I would have liked, your approach did get us underway. I understand we are in the process of purchasing the required grader now to properly maintain ditches!

Thanks

marc

<PastedGraphic-4.png>

Marc Hunt
City Council Member
55 Cambridge Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804
Cell 828.273.2172
marchunt@avlouncil.com

On Aug 19, 2015, at 3:43 PM, Peter Gentling <pgentling@charter.net> wrote:

Dear Marc,

I see you are wanting the City to sell the potential green space across from the St. Lawrence Basilica. Personally, I believe this area is already so congested that another hotel or business would be a mistake. Having lived in San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia I recall how open spaces are needed to reduce the claustrophobia of city congestion. These cities I mentioned all did it with pocket parks and areas of visual relief. Asheville has great charm which is a major reason folks like to come here. I do realize tax revenues are important. But if we can keep some elbow and breathing room, some just open grass and sky, I think

tourist income will more than compensate for the tax on this space.

Please reconsider. I hope you will change your mind.

Sincerely,
Peter

Peter Gentling
253-0608

Ben Fulmer

From: Dancewater <dancewater2@gmail.com> on behalf of Dancewater
Sent: Sunday, August 23, 2015 9:22 PM
To: Dancewater
Subject: Upcoming events for the week of August 23, 2015.

UPCOMING EVENTS

08/24/15 HEALTH CARE PARITY: BENDING THE ARC FOR EQUITY IN BUNCOMBE

This exhibit is based on attempts of Asheville physician Dr. Charles Blair to enhance awareness of and address health disparities affecting primarily African Americans. The exhibition also is based on a non-empirical study of Sharon Kelly West, RN on "Access and Availability of Health Care For African Americans of Buncombe County 1890-1960". Admission is free. Location is the YMI Cultural Center at 39 South Market Street in Asheville. This exhibit goes until 08/28/15 and the YMI Cultural Center is open during regular business hours.

08/24/15 THE SPIRIT OF HIROSHIMA 1945 COMMEMORATIVE EXHIBIT

NC Peace Action is sponsoring a display of posters on the Hiroshima bombings in 1945 at First Congregational Church in Asheville, located on Oak Avenue in downtown Asheville. This will be up until 08/30/15.

08/24/15 SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

This will be from 6 to 8 PM and location is Open Space AVL at 285 Haywood Road in Asheville. Asheville SURJ is seeking impassioned individuals to help begin a conversation on how to hold ourselves accountable while organizing for racial justice. By brainstorming together, we hope to develop action steps focused on engaging more white folks in racial justice while building collaborative, multiracial relationships. All are welcome. This is a Facebook event, no contact information given.

08/25/15 'REVISIONING HISTORY' BOOK GROUP AT FIRESTORM CAFE & BOOKS

This discussion group focuses on books that challenge or expand on dominant historical narratives and research methodologies. Together, we investigate -- and question -- the common idea that history is merely the objective presentation of facts, and explore the ways in which ideology plays a role in how history is interpreted, transmitted, and culturally/academically institutionalized. The first discussion group selection is "The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism" (Winner of the 2015 Avery O. Craven OAH Award, Winner of the 2015 Hillman Prize for Book Journalism) by Edward Baptist. Because the book is relatively long and dense, we will focus on the first half (up to Chapter 7 / page 215) for August and the second half for September. Folks are encouraged to come prepared with questions and talking points! Time is 7 PM and location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville.

08/25/15 CELEBRATE SOLAR SOIREE

There is a lot to celebrate around solar successes in North Carolina. We can't wait to share these stories with you. Join Self-Help, FLS Energy, Clean Energy for WNC, NC Interfaith Power & Light, and RiverLink for a happy hour-style reception and networking soiree. You'll hear stories, learn a bit about the state of solar in NC and be asked to share what we can do together to build an affordable solar society that's accessible to all. Light refreshments and beverages will be served. Time is 5:30 to 7:30 PM and location is Lenoir-Rhyne University Asheville at 36 Montford Ave, 2nd floor, in Asheville. RSVP at this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/celebrate-solar-soiree-tickets-17985841135>

08/25/15 WNC 4 PEACE MEETING

The next meeting of this planning group for the International Day of Peace will be Tuesday, August 25, at 6 PM at the North Asheville Community Center. For more information, contact Rachael at rachael_bliss@yahoo.com.

08/25/15 PRESENTATION AT WEAVERVILLE LIBRARY

"First Lady Feminists" will be presented at 7 PM at Weaverville Public Library at 41 North Main Street in Weaverville. Call library for more information.

08/25/15 SWANNANOVA LIBRARY PRESENTATION

"The Science and Theology of Climate Change" will be presented at 6:30 PM at Swannanoa Public Library at 101 West Charleston Street in Swannanoa. Call library for more information.

08/26/15 GREEN DRINKS

Bill Ramsey will inform us of the extent of the US drone warfare program. He will address how decisions are made to target people in several countries. He will describe the impact on targeted populations. He will inform us of the international response challenging the legality and consideration of criminal charges against the US. Bill Ramsey is a longstanding activist for peace and justice issues. He previously worked for the American Friends Service Committee. He is a graduate of Highpoint College and Duke Divinity School, and he lives in Madison County. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

08/26/15 OTHER WORLDS ARE POSSIBLE BOOK GROUP AT FIRESTORM

This discussion group focuses on science fiction, speculative fiction and fantasy literature with a feminist, social justice and/or "radical" theme. We'll read a book each month and discuss both the vision presented by the author and how the book contributes to our understanding of our present moment. We'll start with "Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements," an anthology of short stories by various authors that explore the connections between radical speculative fiction and movements for social change. Folks are encouraged to read the whole book, but anyone should feel welcome to attend. Time is 7 PM and location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville. For more information, contact Firestorm Cafe.

08/27/15 BIOENERGY FIELD DAY

Please join us on August 27 from 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station located in Mills River, NC for the 2015 Bioenergy Field Day. Lunch is on us and we look forward to seeing you! This Field Day is designed to provide a time for researchers to share the latest information of the work being conducted on energy crops in Western NC. Tours of the research plots and processing equipment demonstrations will help growers, researchers, and industry leaders learn how we are working to meet the state's renewable energy goals. Researchers from NCSU, Appalachian State, and local NGOs will discuss biomass crop production and the conversion of these crops into bioenergy. A complimentary lunch will be provided therefore, registration is required by August 21st, 2015. The NC Sustainable Energy Association is the organizer of this event. For more information and to register, contact Allison at allison.medlin@ncagr.gov.

08/27/15 ANNIVERSARY OF THE KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT

08/28/15 REMEMBRANCE OF EMMETT TILL'S MURDER

Wear Black and White on July 25 (Emmett Till's 74th Birthday) and August 28. A Time For Unity In Black And White: Please join us again! Let's Remember Emmett Till and those who have lost their lives #CharlestonNine #TrayvonMartin #JordanDavis #OscarGrant #RenishaMcBride #EricGarner #MikeBrown #RekiyaBoyd #SeanBell #StephenBiko and so many others to hate, violence and racism in the US and in other parts of the world. How? Please Wear black and white attire/clothing items on July 25 and August 28 (the day Emmett Till was murdered in 1955, 60 years ago). This is a silent but powerful way to show that we will never forget.

08/28/15 ASHEVILLE TIMEBANK KICK OFF

Friday, August 28, at 6 PM, Asheville TimeBank kicks off with a potluck and orientation open to all. Location is the Friendship Hall at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 20 Oak Street in Asheville. Share your talents, exchange services outside the cash economy. Please bring a potluck dish and a laptop if you have one in order to access the web-based software for orientation. Voluntary donation. Contact help@ashevilletimebank.org or call 828-348-0674 for more information, including how to access an application for the TimeBank.

08/28/15 JUST PEACE FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE MEETING

This meeting will be at 3:15 PM at Brooks-Howell Home on Merrimon Avenue in Asheville. Meet in the media room. Contact Susan at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information.

08/28/15 HELPING OTHERS CONVERSATION SERIES

Please join us for our latest project, The Helping Others Conversation Series, an event consisting of an monthly interview that will be taped and uploaded to YouTube and Vimeo. We will focus on who and how things happen in Asheville. The first organization to be interviewed will be BeLoved House. Please join us at The Sly Grog Lounge at the Downtown Market at 45 South French Broad Street in downtown Asheville. for our first monthly interview. We'll get to hear all about how BeLoved House began, it's history, accomplishments to date, and what their future plans are and what they really need to better sustain themselves and how they are funded. Doors open at 5:30 PM with drinks to purchase as well as small foods to munch on. Event begins at 7 PM. \$10 suggested donation, with money going to the selected charity after expenses. This was a facebook event.

08/29/15 TRAINING SESSION FOR EXHIBIT ON AMERICANS WHO TELL THE TRUTH

This will be from 10 AM to noon at the YMI Cultural Center on South Market Street in Asheville. 'Americans Who Tell The Truth' (AWTT) exhibit is in need of volunteers. Now - thanks to our generous community - that all our portraits are sponsored, we are moving on to the next stage of organizing for the AWTT exhibit. Mountain People's Assembly is in SERIOUS need of volunteers for staffing the 'Americans Who Tell The Truth' exhibit that will run from September 19 through November 7 at the YMI. We have over 100 slots that need to be filled for the duration of the 7-week exhibition. A training session for docents and greeters will be held on Saturday, August 29 from 10 AM to noon at YMI Cultural Center, 39 S. Market St. in downtown Asheville. In addition, volunteers are needed to staff and help with unpacking and mounting portraits, set-up for the opening gala on September 19, repacking portraits for shipping when the exhibit is over, van transportation for pickup and return of display partitions and other items. Please help us make this inspiring exhibit a success for our community! We assure you it will be an experience like no other. For more information or to sign up, contact Carmen Ramos-Kennedy at 828-423-6476.

08/29/15 JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE VIGIL FOR CHILD CASUALTIES

Please note that our vigil with a focus on the child casualties during Operation Protective Edge last summer. This will be held from 11 to 12:30 at Vance Monument. Contact Suchi at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information and to confirm location.

08/29/15 AMERICA'S JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE COMES TO NC

From August 1 to September 16, America's Journey for Justice—an historic 860-mile march from Selma, Alabama, to Washington, D.C.—will mobilize activists and advance a focused national advocacy agenda that protects the right of every American to a fair criminal justice system, uncorrupted and unfettered access to the ballot box, sustainable jobs with a living wage, and equitable public education. We will march through North Carolina from August 29th to September 7th and follow a 206 mile route. Each state along the route has an issue focus from the national advocacy agenda. North Carolina is the national battleground for voting rights and so, appropriately, voting rights is our focus. There will be a Voting Rights teach-in on July 31st, the same day that our redistricting lawsuit kicks off in North Carolina's Supreme Court, and a Voting Rights Rally on September 3rd. Voting Rights is the link between all social justice issues. There will also be other issue-based teach-ins along the march route that the public is welcome to join. Contact NAACP for more information.

09/01/15 WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL LECTURE SERIES

"Reconnecting with Cuba," a lecture by journalist and historian Jon Elliston, will kick off the fall World Affairs Council lecture series, at 7:30 PM on Tuesday, Sept. 1, at UNC Asheville's Reuter Center. Elliston will discuss the recently restored diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, which were severed during the Cold War, along with the ongoing disputes between the two governments and the possibilities of further reconciliation. Elliston, a frequent traveler to Cuba, currently serves as the investigations and open-government editor at Carolina Public Press, a nonprofit news service that covers Western North Carolina, and as senior editor at WNC magazine. The lectures are sponsored by the WNC chapter of the World Affairs Council, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UNC Asheville, and the university's Department of Political Science. Admission to World Affairs Council presentations at UNC Asheville is \$10 for the public; free to members of the World Affairs Council and UNC Asheville students. For more information call 828.251.6140.

09/01/15 CONNECTION PRACTICE

Tuesday, September 1, 6:30pm, West Asheville Library: A Taste of the Connection Practice. Communicating feelings and needs connects us more deeply at the heart level, and can help resolve conflicts. Free. Contact Cathy at cathyfholt@gmail.com for more information.

09/02/15 SIERRA CLUB MEETING AND GREEN DRINKS

Sierra Club meeting on French Broad River Odyssey by Dr. Chris Lechner. Location is Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville, 1 Edwin Place, (corner of Charlotte & Edwin). Time is 7 PM. Contact: judydmattox@sbcglobal.net, or 828-683-2176 for more information.

09/03/15 MAKING AN IMPACT THROUGH INVESTMENTS TALK

Bold Moves: Making an Impact through Investments - Krull & Company and Mountain BizWorks are co-hosting an event with speakers from Patagonia and Green Century Capital Management. The information from Green Century will be about socially responsible investing, focusing on a fossil fuel free fund options (so both socially & environmentally responsible investing). It will be at Kittredge Theatre on Warren Wilson's campus. The talk is free, but it is limited to 300 participants so RSVPs are required. To RSVP or find out more about this event, please contact Kerry at kkeihn@krullandcompany.com.

09/03/15 STARTING THE CONVERSATION: STUDENT PANEL

"Starting the Conversation" is an interdisciplinary discussion series on race at UNC Asheville intended to foster in-depth discussions about race between students and faculty. Free and open to the public. Time is 11:50 AM to 1 PM, and location is Karpen Hall 139 at UNCA. Contact Anne Jansen at ajansen@unca.edu or 828-251-6582.

09/09/15 GREEN DRINKS

Interested in making your home greener, but frustrated because you don't have thousands to spend for a major renovation? This discussion focuses on ways that homeowners on a tight budget can change how they operate their homes to achieve significant energy savings. We will also discuss inexpensive upgrades that make easy do-it-yourself projects. Amy Musser will speak, and she is co-founder and principal of VandeMusser Design, PLLC, founded in 2002. Socializing at 5:30 and presentation is at 6 PM. Location is The Green Sage at 5 Broadway Street in downtown Asheville.

09/09/15 JUST PEACE FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE MEETING

This meeting will be at 9:30 AM at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church at 117 Montreat Road in Black Mountain. Contact Susan at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information.

09/10/15 BUILDING BRIDGES

Building Bridges is starting a new seminar on the dynamics of racism and how it has impacted our relationships, institutions and community. The session runs from September 10 to November 5 from 7-9pm at AB Tech and costs \$35. This is an outstanding opportunity to learn together how to improve our interactions. Registration is now open. For more information call 828 -777-4585.

09/10/15 CREATION CARE ALLIANCE OF WNC GENERAL MEETING

Time is 5:30 to 7 PM, and location is the First Baptist Church of Asheville at 5 Oak Street in downtown Asheville. Information came from their website.

09/12/15 CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY MEETING

Citizens Climate Lobby meets on 9-12-15 from 12:30-3 PM at Kairos West Community Center, 742 Haywood Road in west Asheville. We are advocating for a Carbon Fee & Dividend, which would impose a fee on fossil fuels at point entry; this fee will be refunded to individuals and families. There is bipartisan support in Congress as this will create jobs and help grow the economy, boosting renewables. For more information, contact asheville@citizensclimatelobby.org.

09/12/15 HENDERSON COUNTY BIG SWEEP (CLEAN UP)

Sign up for the Henderson County Big sweep, hosted by MountainTrue's Southern Regional Office. Henderson County Big Sweep is a county-wide litter cleanup program that brings citizens and community organizations together to clear trash from their waterways. Anyone can join in the fun by registering with friends and family or by joining an existing team. Teams will hold cleanups between 9 AM - 3 PM in streams throughout the county. For more information or to volunteer for Henderson County Big Sweep with MountainTrue's Southern Regional Office, contact Evan Parker, Water Quality Administrator, at (828) 692-0385 ext 1001.

09/16/15 GREEN DRINKS

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Partnerships for Peace – Dignity for All" which aims to highlight the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace. For our Asheville Green Drinks presentation, WNC 4 Peace will discuss what we have planned for International Day of Peace in Asheville and Black

Mountain, and will discuss the many faceted diamond of peace, from inner peace to world peace. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

09/19/15 AMERICANS WHO TELL THE TRUTH EXHIBIT

Saturday, September 19 at 6 PM the exhibit at YMI (39 S. Market St.) called “Americans Who Tell the Truth” will open. Rev. William Barber of Moral Monday fame will speak as his portrait is unveiled September 19th for the first time as a new addition to other heroes on display for the “Americans Who Tell the Truth” exhibit. Mountain People's Assembly is hosting this event with YMI. This is a ticketed event, tickets start at \$25. Go to YMI webpage for more information.

09/19/15 AND 09/20/15 HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN GREENVILLE SC

Carolina Human Rights Organizing Conference (or CHRONIC) will hold a several day conference primarily on the issue of race relations on September 19-20, 2015 in Greenville, SC. See www.chronic2015.weebly.com for details.

09/20/15 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE EVENTS

Special fun and educational events in Asheville and Black Mountain will take place on Sunday, September 20. WNC4 Peace will be collaborating with UNCA Student Government Association to celebrate peace in the Quad Sunday afternoon while in Black Mountain, Dobra Tea on Broadway will be celebrating Tea for Peace. Music and information about peace will be in abundance as some 30 groups set up tables to educate participants.

09/21/15 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE MARCH AND RALLY

On Monday, September 21, at noon WNC 4 Peace hosts a March for Peace downtown, with the meeting place in front of the St. Lawrence Basilica in Asheville.. We will march to the Peace Pole in front of Asheville City Hall, where participants will observe a moment of silence. Asheville bells will be rung all around town, peace activist and performer David LaMotte and Rhoda Weaver plan to sing with people of diverse beliefs gathered to explore the spirit of peace in a troubled world, while white doves are released to send our message out into the universe. Attendees will also be invited to participate in Dances for Universal Peace. For more information, call Rachael at 828-378-0125.

09/23/15 GREEN DRINKS

This legislative session has been jam-packed with moves to roll back environmental protections, hinder renewable energy, slash funding for open space protections and more. But it's not all bad news. Many of our WNC legislators have stood against these shenanigans and are attempting to forward legislation to protect our communities' natural resources. We'll get you caught up on environmental outcomes of this legislative session, priorities between sessions and next year, and how you can get involved in holding our lawmakers accountable to the public they serve. Socializing at 5:30 and presentation is at 6 PM. Location is The Green Sage at 5 Broadway Street in downtown Asheville.

09/24/15 LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP BY MOUNTAIN TRUE IN HENDERSONVILLE

This legislative session has been jam-packed with moves to roll back environmental protections, hinder renewable energy, slash funding for open space protections and more. But it's not all bad news. Many of our WNC legislators have stood against these shenanigans and are attempting to forward legislation to protect our communities' natural resources. We'll get you caught up on environmental outcomes of this legislative session, priorities between sessions and next year, and how you can get involved in holding our lawmakers accountable to the public they serve. Time is 6 to 8 PM and location is Biz 611 at 611 North Church Street in Hendersonville, which is the MountainTrue office. For any questions and to RSVP, please contact Joan at Joan@Mountaintrue.org, 828-575-6268 ext. 205.

09/24/15 CREATION CARE ALLIANCE OF WNC DINNER AND EVENT

“Caring for Our Common Home: Responding to the Pope's call for action” is the theme for this event. Time is 6 to 8 PM and location is St. Eugene's Catholic Church at 72 Culvern Street in Asheville. Join with others to be inspired by the words of the Pope's Encyclical and watch Pope Francis' address to Congress. Light dinner included. Discuss what the Pope's message means to the world and commit to one behavioral change to better care for God's Creation. Sponsored by the Creation Care Alliance of Western North Carolina. Information came from their website.

09/24/15 ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES SUMMIT

The main speaker talks about how to build compassionate communities for our children, and one of the critical breakout sessions is “The First 2000 Days”. If we can expose them to compassion and alternatives to violence early, anything is possible! \$199 for entire conference and you can just register for parts. Dates are 09/24/15 to 09/26/15 and location is Renaissance Hotel in downtown Asheville. Contact Robyn at forrestwife@yahoo.com for more information including how to register. This is sponsored by MAHEC.

09/24/15 to 09/27/15 SOUTHEAST GE TREES ACTION CAMP

Global Justice Ecology Project and the Campaign to STOP GE Trees Presents: The Southeast GE Trees Action Camp. This is a Dogwood Alliance Partner Event. The US South is ground zero for GE trees, and now more than ever, we need to come together to save native forests and stop GE trees. Join for four days of training to take action to prevent the release of GE trees. Participants of the action camp will be given an overview of the current state of GE trees, with a focus on the US South, as well as training in organizing, direct action, blockades, our rights as protestors, how to use media and art in protests, among other critical topics. The goal of the training is for the immediate and direct use of skills and knowledge gained at the action camp in protests and organizing against GE trees. Application deadline is 09/02/15. Please contact Ruddy at Ruddy@globaljusticeecology.org for more information including where to go register.

09/29/15 POVERTY SIMULATION BY JUST ECONOMICS

CJJ Sponsored Poverty Simulation: The Difficulty of Living on Minimum Wage in WNC. Join Just Economics in a poverty simulation that will provide the community an opportunity to learn first-hand how difficult it is to live on a minimum wage salary in WNC. The cost is \$10. Participation will be limited to the first 45 registrants. Time is 4 to 6 PM and location is the Edington Education & Career Center at 133 Livingston Street in Asheville. For more information or to register, contact Judy Leavitt at judleavitt76@gmail.com.

09/30/15 GREEN DRINKS

Curious about solar energy? Want to know your options for switching over to solar? Join Asheville Green Drinks in meeting Erika Schneider, director of communications at Sundance Power Systems and Bill Maloney, the Solar Panels Project Coordinator at St. Eugene Catholic Church. Erika will help clarify the difference with the direct purchase, finance or lease options for your future or dream solar installation. As legislation can vary between states, she will also touch on current legislation surrounding solar energy in NC. St. Eugene Catholic Church in Asheville is installing over 100 Solar Panels this September to coincide with the visit of Pope Francis to the US. In his Encyclical "Laudato Si" we are encouraged to take Care of the Earth. This 45.99 KW DC Net Metered system will reduce CO2 emissions and our dependence on fossil fuel, provide 22% of the Church's electricity, and give a 35% NC tax credit and 30% Federal charitable tax deduction to donors. MB Haynes Energy Solutions of Asheville will do the installation. The presentation will discuss our project and show how your Congregation can do the same. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

10/06/15 WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL LECTURE SERIES

"From Humanitarian Intervention to the Responsibility to Protect: the Evolving Discourse on Human Protection," with George Andreopoulos, director of the Center for International Human Rights at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and professor of political science and criminal justice at City University of New York. The lectures are sponsored by the WNC chapter of the World Affairs Council, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UNC Asheville, and the university's Department of Political Science. Admission to World Affairs Council presentations at UNC Asheville is \$10 for the public; free to members of the World Affairs Council and UNC Asheville students. For more information call 828.251.6140.

10/07/15 SIERRA CLUB MEETING AND GREEN DRINKS

Sierra Club meeting on Community Greenways And Bikeways: Where We've Been And Where We Are Headed. Speakers are Marc Hunt, Vice Mayor of Asheville and Mike Sule, Jim Grode, and Claudia Nix. Location is Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville, 1 Edwin Place, (corner of Charlotte & Edwin). Time is 7 PM. Contact: judyमतox@sbcglobal.net, or 828-683-2176 for more information.

10/07/15 ANNIVERSARY OF US INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

It has been 14 years we have spent destroying that country. And the Taliban are still there.

10/14/15 FIFTH ANNUAL POVERTY FORUM

Join Pisgah Legal Services for our 5th Annual Poverty Forum called Getting Upstream of Poverty with Dr. Rishi Manchanda. Location is Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville. Don't miss "upstreamist" health care innovator and visionary Dr. Rishi Manchanda who will discuss the relationship between health and poverty as we explore what we as a community can do to improve the health of our society. Forum starts at 7 PM, cocktail reception before that. Tickets are \$50 for forum and cocktails, \$15 for forum only. To buy tickets by phone or for sponsorship information, contact Betsy Ellis at (828) 210-3444.

10/16/15 and 10/17/15 RACIAL EQUITY INSTITUTE TWO DAY WORKSHOP

Racial Equity Institute (REI) is offering a two-day workshop for people of color and white people who are committed to eliminating racism. It provides an analysis that helps participants gain clarity about how racism is organized and how to work to disrupt its powerful influence. Registration required. The cost is \$150 per person and registration is open to the public. Please submit registration forms and payment as soon as you (or your organization) are able to commit to the workshop. Time and location TBD. For more information including how to register, contact Laura Eshelman at eshelmanlaura@gmail.com or Isabel Carson at carson.isabel@gmail.com.

ONGOING EVENTS

TUESDAY

Veterans for Peace have a weekly vigil at 5 PM at Pack Square, Vance Monument

WEDNESDAY

Haywood Peace Vigilers have a weekly vigil at 4 PM at Haywood County Courthouse in Waynesville

THURSDAY

Showing Up For Racial Justice meeting at noon at Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville.

FRIDAY

Women in Black have a weekly vigil at noon at the City Hall in Hendersonville

Women in Black have a monthly vigil at 5 PM at Vance Monument in Asheville (first Friday only)

SATURDAY

Transylvanians for Peace and WNC Physicians for Social Responsibility have a weekly vigil at noon in front of the courthouse in Brevard. Call 884-3435 to confirm.

Third Saturdays – Asheville's Green Grannies invites the public to "sing for the climate" at Pritchard Park at 5 PM.

SUNDAY

Youth OUTright meeting from 4 to 6 PM at First Congregational United Church of Christ at 20 Oak Street in Asheville. Ages 14 - 23 only.

ACTIONS AND READINGS

FrackAlert: Comment on EPA Fracking & Drinking Water Study
Comments due Friday, August 28th

In June, EPA released its nearly 1,000 page study of hydraulic fracturing impacts on drinking water. The study's major conclusion: "We did not find evidence that these mechanisms have led to widespread, systemic impacts on drinking water resources in the United States." In fact, FrackFree NC's review team found that there is far too little known by EPA and scientists to say that there aren't "widespread, systemic impacts."

The FrackFreeNC team has reviewed each chapter and written short, plain English comments that you can put in your own words and use to submit your own comments! When you've commented about the topics you care or know about the most, please submit your comments to Docket_OEI@epa.gov. IMPORTANT: include Docket number EPA-HQ-OA-2015-0245 in your subject line.

For some basic information on fracking to get you started, go to the Frackfreenc.org homepage for more information.

This is from Nuclear Free Future and a link to their website is at the end of the article. One of the things proposed recently by the US Congress is new National Parks to honor and remember the making of nuclear bombs. They should call it SHOP OF HORRORS NATIONAL PARK to reflect the reality of what the bombs dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima really did. -dancewater

Two late August opportunities to take action!! Comments due by August 28th.

Tell the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to reject efforts by pro-nuke fanatics to weaken radiation standards. The "Linear No-Threshold" (LNT) radiation model endorsed by the National Academies of Sciences and used by all government agencies, acknowledges that there is no such thing as a "safe" level of radiation exposure. The "hormesis" model, on the other hand, asserts—with little to no scientific backing—that exposure to very low levels of radiation can actually be beneficial to people, and that there is no concern about exposures until they reach high levels. Hormesis is like a vampire that keeps coming back from the dead. In February, a group of pro-nuclear fanatics submitted three petitions for rulemaking to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) arguing that the LNT radiation model should be replaced by a "hormesis" model.

Tell the Department of Energy and the National Park Service that the new Manhattan Project National Park must include the perspective of the victims of the U.S. atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, and the continuing legacy of the Manhattan Project.

The Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act established the Manhattan Project National Park, to be located in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Hanford, Washington, and Los Alamos, New Mexico. The Oak Ridge and Los Alamos National Laboratories are today engaged in massive programs to maintain and modernize U.S. Nuclear weapons. The park will be jointly developed by the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of the Interior, through the National Park Service, "to improve the understanding of the Manhattan Project and the legacy of the Manhattan Project through interpretation of the historic resources."

Anyone who has visited DOE-run museums such as the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, the Bradbury Museum in Los Alamos, or the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Visitor's Center, know that the story of the Manhattan Project is – to be polite – totally one-sided, with little or no acknowledgement of the human toll of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or the broader legacy of the Manhattan Project, from the legacy of the nuclear fuel chain and the disproportionate impacts on indigenous people, to the legacy of the nuclear arms race and the threat or annihilation the continues to this day, to the legacy of a nation and world divided.

According to the National Park Service, the Manhattan Project Park "will create an opportunity for people from around the world to visit these historic sites and gain a deeper understanding of history and world-changing events that happened as part of the Manhattan Project". The way the story is told will have a profound impact on future generations. The DOE and the National Park Service are soliciting public comments until August 28.

Click here to tell DOE and the National Park Service, in your own words, that the new Manhattan Project National Park must include the perspective of the victims of the U.S. atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, and the continuing negative legacy of the Manhattan Project.

http://www.nuclearfreefuture.org/nuclear-hotspots-and-action-opportunities/its-nuclear-free-future-month-two-late-august-opportunities-to-take-action/?can_id=43e595db80cf35904784dd06c46549c1&source=email-supporting-the-iran-deal-working-beyond-the-bomb&email_referrer=supporting-the-iran-deal-working-beyond-the-bomb

FROM LOCAL ACTIVIST STEVE NORRIS:

We are going to do something we've never done before. On the day after Labor Day a group of us from Beyond Extreme Energy is going to begin an 18 day Fast at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Washington demanding No New Permits. We are doing this in part to support Pope Francis, who will be coming to DC on September 23-24, meeting with President Obama and then speaking before the US Congress, with a focus on the need for action on the climate crisis. We're doing this also because in spite of our repeated protests for more than a year now, FERC, which has been captured by industry, keeps rubber stamping industry proposals that endanger and destroy communities and contribute mightily to climate change. We are also doing this to support the larger cries heard round the country and the world for racial, economic and environmental justice, and will participate in Black Lives Matters protests also being planned in DC during our three weeks of fasting.

In our Call to Action, you can get a fuller picture of all of this: <http://beyondextremeenergy.org/september-fast-at-ferc-for-no-new-permits/> You will also find there personal testimonies by some of those planning to fast, including us.

Please consider what you might be able to do in support of this fast. Each of us fasters has been asked to reach out for "sponsors" with a goal of raising \$1000 each (more would also help BXE in its ongoing work). Again, you can send nondeductible check to Steve personally, or you donate through our website at <http://beyondextremeenergy.org/>.

And it would be wonderful if you felt moved to take part in the fast yourself either at home or in Washington, for a day or longer. Do whatever works best for you. More information on doing that can be found at the website.

Also during the week of the Pope's visit there are going to be numerous activities in Washington: a Yom Kippur celebration led by our friend Rabbi Mordechia Liebling at the Lincoln Memorial, September 22 and 23; and large interfaith rally on the mall near the Capitol on the 24th led by Moral Action on Climate; and on Friday the 25th, when we end our fast, a mobilization at FERC to deliver copies of the Pope's encyclical to the five FERC commissioners who have the power to bring some of the Pope's visions into policy.

Please contact us if you have questions. And we hope the remainder of your summer is a good one.

Steve and Kendall

FROM UNCA CENTER FOR DIVERSITY EDUCATION:

2042 ASCORE Leadership Awards - Nominations open through September 18

From 1960 - 1965, high school students with the Asheville Student Committee on Racial Equality (ASCORE) worked to desegregate our mountain home including restaurants, schools, busses, libraries, businesses, and more. 50 years later their legacy will be honored with the 2042 ASCORE Leadership Awards as part of the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the UNC Asheville Center for Diversity Education. Five awards, at \$500 each, will be given to young adults between the ages of 21 - 40 (by December 31, 2015) who exemplify a few of the characteristics that made ASCORE and ASCORE members so successful.

Desired attributes as evidenced by ASCORE members:

ASCORE members practiced PEER-TO-PEER MENTORING by identifying and supporting the students their age as well as somewhat younger than them. These were often siblings, cousins, next-door neighbors, fellow church members, and classmates in close proximity. They worked to help build their skill set to take on more responsibility as each class matriculated from high school to college. Willette Burton - "I begged, and my cousin Susan begged, to let us walk the picket line. We weren't conscious of the entire movement, but we felt like we wanted to be there, because there were kids our age who couldn't work there, and I knew some of them who had gone down just to be bad boys. But we decided that we were going to ask if we can. First, well, they said no, but we just kept on asking. So I was the youngest one on the ticket line [12]. I have an older cousin, Barney, who was there at the time and he told my Mom "She'll be all right!"

ASCORE members engaged with the white community in PARTNERSHIPS TO BUILD COALITIONS. James Ferguson shared "Some us used to meet with a group called, The Greater Asheville Intergroup Youth Association. GIYA I think it was called. There was a group of young people, black and white, who would meet together to talk about race and talk about our differences. The idea was to begin to promote race relations at that time. I remember that it was organized by a group of white ladies in the community. I was a part of it from the time I was in late junior high school or in high school. So that's when I first remember thinking about race in terms of things being unjust. I knew they were unjust, but talking about it was not something that happened across racial lines".

ASCORE members actively sought out adult MENTORS and COMMUNITY RESOURCES for advice and support. Annette Penland Coleman recalls with great fondness Mr. William Roland. "He was so sensitive and I admired him so much. He was a mentor. He always reminded us to remain non-violent and under no circumstances to hit back - even if they called us a nigger. He stressed not to retaliate. He encouraged us far beyond the issue of how unfairly we were treated as citizens and reminded us that an education was about power".

ASCORE members were CREATIVE in their non-violent activities. Sandra Burton Hughes recalls, "One place we protested was at the A and W on Biltmore Avenue. It was a drive-in back then, and they had servers on roller skates, so they didn't want to hire any black servers. We decided that we would just run a wagon train on them. We would get in the cars, and we drive, and drive, and drive around in circles, but never order anything. Most everybody - the young white kids - they all had cars. They would get in the trucks, and they didn't know what to do. So nobody was buying anything".

The candidates are to: 1) Actively work to promote equity and inclusion in their daily life and work, 2) Be between the ages of 21 - 40 by December 31, 2015, 3) Live in Buncombe County, and 4) Be available to attend luncheon award ceremony on November 6, 2015.

Contact Deborah Miles at dmiles@unca.edu for more information.

Will you join America's Journey For Justice in North Carolina?

On August 1, the NAACP kicked off America's Journey for Justice. We're marching across the South to the steps of our nation's Capital to shout "Our lives, our votes, our jobs, our schools matter." And we refuse to be ignored. The march will enter North Carolina on August 29th. The route is 206 miles and will last 10 days. There will be vehicles following the marchers for those who need to take a break throughout the day. Dates and locations are subject to change. AJFJ marchers will be provided with breakfast, a boxed lunch, and dinner each day that they participate. Marchers will sleep in churches and different anchor locations along the route. Partial day participants will have to arrange their own transportation back to their vehicles. Marchers will leave from designated anchor locations every morning to begin marching by 7:30 AM and be dropped off by bus where the marchers stopped the day before. They will be brought back to the anchor locations every afternoon at 4:00 PM for teach-ins, entertainment, and fellowship. For more information, visit www.naacpnc.org/journey_for_justice

Support the Journey For Justice in North Carolina

There are many ways that you and your organization can support the Journey For Justice in NC in addition to being a marcher. If you have any questions about how to support, you can contact State Coordinator Rev. Curtis Gatewood at curtis.gatewood@naacpnc.org or (919) 682-4700 ext. 220.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2015 3:09 PM
To: Peter Gentling
Subject: attachment... Re: Basilica Green Space
Attachments: draft 2016 budget capital improvements.pdf; PastedGraphic-4.png

Attachment....

Ben Fulmer

From: Peter Gentling <pgentling@charter.net> on behalf of Peter Gentling
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 3:43 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Basilica Green Space

Dear Marc,

I see you are wanting the City to sell the potential green space across from the St. Lawrence Basilica. Personally, I believe this area is already so congested that another hotel or business would be a mistake. Having lived in San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia I recall how open spaces are needed to reduce the claustrophobia of city congestion. These cities I mentioned all did it with pocket parks and areas of visual relief. Asheville has great charm which is a major reason folks like to come here. I do realize tax revenues are important. But if we can keep some elbow and breathing room, some just open grass and sky, I think tourist income will more than compensate for the tax on this space.

Please reconsider. I hope you will change your mind.

Sincerely,
Peter

Peter Gentling
253-0608

Ben Fulmer

From: Dancewater <dancewater2@gmail.com> on behalf of Dancewater
Sent: Sunday, August 16, 2015 10:36 PM
To: Dancewater
Subject: Upcoming events for the week of August 16, 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

08/17/15 HEALTH CARE PARITY: BENDING THE ARC FOR EQUITY IN BUNCOMBE

This exhibit is based on attempts of Asheville physician Dr. Charles Blair to enhance awareness of and address health disparities affecting primarily African Americans. The exhibition also is based on a non-empirical study of Sharon Kelly West, RN on "Access and Availability of Health Care For African Americans of Buncombe County 1890-1960". Admission is free. Location is the YMI Cultural Center at 39 South Market Street in Asheville. This exhibit goes until 08/28/15 and the YMI Cultural Center is open during regular business hours.

08/17/15 THE SPIRIT OF HIROSHIMA 1945 COMMEMORATIVE EXHIBIT

NC Peace Action is sponsoring a display of posters on the Hiroshima bombings in 1945 at First Congregational Church in Asheville, located on Oak Avenue in downtown Asheville. This will be up until 08/30/15.

08/17/15 MOVE TO AMEND BUNCOMBE COUNTY MEETING

Location is the North Asheville Library at 1030 Merrimon Avenue in Asheville. Time is 7 PM. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Diana at dianakruk@gmail.com or 828-275-0680.

08/18/15 JUST ECONOMICS MEETING

Our regular meeting is at 6:30 PM at the United Way on South French Broad. We will have dinner - feel free to bring a dish to share if you would like and are able. We will discuss general Just Economics topics and then divide into committees: Policy Advocacy, Certification, and Education and Outreach. Everyone is welcome! For more information, contact info@justeconomicswnc.org.

08/18/15 DRONE QUILT EXHIBIT AND PANEL PRESENTATION AT FIRESTORM CAFE & BOOKS

The Drone Quilt Project is a public education project to memorialize the victims of US drone warfare and to provide a medium for individuals to take action on this illegal and immoral use of combat drones. Drones are responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent people worldwide. Come see the quilts memorializing the victims of US drone warfare. This evening will feature a panel with an "Overview of the Military Industrial Complex" by Coleman Smith of New South Network of War Resisters. Also, Barry Summers will talk on "The Coming Integration of US Military Drones in Civilian Air Space" and Dr. Terry Clark of WNC Physicians for Social Responsibility will speak on "Psychological Impacts of Drone Warfare". Free and open to the public. Location is 610 Haywood Road in west Asheville. Opening panel is from 7 to 9 PM. Drone quilts will be on display until 08/22/15.

08/19/15 GREEN DRINKS

People of faith are installing solar panels, planting gardens, recycling, testifying, protesting, marching, writing, preaching and engaging in all sorts of acts of courageous compassion. Come explore some of the transformative work that is already happening on behalf of all creatures great and small. Scott Hardin-Nieri is the Director of The Creation Care Alliance of Western North Carolina. He has served in faith communities for over twenty years and after a "climate conversion" experience left his work in Monteverde, Costa Rica for the Blue Ridge Mountains. Socializing at 5:30 and presentation is at 6 PM. Location is The Green Sage at 5 Broadway Street in downtown Asheville.

08/19/15 DRONE QUILT PANEL CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP

The Drone Quilt Project is a public education project to memorialize the victims of US drone warfare and to provide a medium for individuals to take action to this illegal and immoral use of combat drones responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent people worldwide. If you would like to create a panel to be incorporated into the next quilt, please stop by between 2 and 9 PM. Contact Coleman at 828-301-6683 for more information. Location is Firestorm Cafe & Books at 610 Haywood Road in west Asheville. There will also be drop-in hours for panel construction on 08/20/15 from 2 to 9 PM. Panel drop off hours are also on 08/22/15 from 11 AM to 2 PM. This event is sponsored by the New South Network of War Resisters with the support of Veterans for Peace Chapter Chapter 099 and WNC Physicians for Social Responsibility.

08/20/15 SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE GROUP

Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) is a national network of groups educating and organizing white people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for racial justice. Asheville SURJ hosts a weekly discussion group on risk-taking, accountability, mutual interest and how to call more white people into racial justice work. Anyone with a passion for working with white people on racial justice is welcome. Location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville. Time is noon. For more information, contact Firestorm Cafe.

08/20/15 COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS ABOUT USE OF FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Buncombe County Sheriff's Office will host a series of community meetings for discussions about the use of force by law enforcement. Location is Owen High School at 99 Lake Eden Road in Black Mountain. Time is 6 PM. The meeting will allow people to hear from Sheriff Van Duncan on the training and education that deputies receive regarding use of force, and Duncan will answer questions from community members about the topic. "We want to share with the public the law as well as the policies that we operate under when making use of force decisions," Duncan said. "Being

transparent with the public will hopefully create a shared understanding of law enforcement's obligations as well as duties in protecting the public." The question-and-answer portion of the program will be moderated by Lucia Daughtery of the Asheville-Buncombe Community Relations Council. This forum is free and open to the public.

08/21/15 to 08/23/15 MONTREAT CONFERENCE CENTER REMEMBRANCE OF MLK

On this weekend in August, at the Anderson Auditorium, Montreat Conference Center, in Montreat NC, there will be a weekend of remembrance of Martin Luther King's address at Montreat in 1965, called "Dr. King's Unfinished Agenda: A Teach-In for Re-dedicating Ourselves to the Dream". There will be nine speakers; one of which is Rev. William Barber and the main speaker will be U.S. Representative John Lewis. Events include programming and break out sessions for teens and adults. Basic registration fee is \$40; for those able to help provide scholarship funds for the conference, a registration of \$100 is appreciated. To register or call 828.669.2911, ext. 339.

08/22/15 STAND WITH PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Time is 8:30 AM and location is 68 McDowell Street in Asheville. A group opposing Planned Parenthood planned to stage a protest at the Asheville clinic, and we have decided it can not go unchallenged. Planned Parenthood has gotten a lot of negative publicity lately, all based on deceptive videos and a lies. We who believe in affordable health care for low-income women, in contraceptives and in choice, need to show up and show our support. Without Planned Parenthood, many women would be without access to health care and without reliable contraception, leaving them vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies and without cancer screenings and well-woman checkups, without access to care for chronic illness that can cause premature death. Please come out and show your support for this essential community service.

08/23/15 TEACH IN TO SAVE THE ECONOMY AT FIRESTORM CAFE

In-depth discussions focused on what we can and should do to extend the reach of game-changing idea on taking back our economy - from making work family-friendly, to creating Medicare for all, to ending mass incarceration. Time is 4 PM and location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville.

08/25/15 REVISIONING HISTORY BOOK GROUP AT FIRESTORM CAFE & BOOKS

This discussion group focuses on books that challenge or expand on dominant historical narratives and research methodologies. Together, we investigate -- and question -- the common idea that history is merely the objective presentation of facts, and explore the ways in which ideology plays a role in how history is interpreted, transmitted, and culturally/academically institutionalized. The first discussion group selection is "The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism" (Winner of the 2015 Avery O. Craven OAH Award, Winner of the 2015 Hillman Prize for Book Journalism) by Edward Baptist. Because the book is relatively long and dense, we will focus on the first half (up to Chapter 7 / page 215) for August and the second half for September. Folks are encouraged to come prepared with questions and talking points! Time is 7 PM and location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville.

08/25/15 CELEBRATE SOLAR SOIREE

There is a lot to celebrate around solar successes in North Carolina. We can't wait to share these stories with you. Join Self-Help, FLS Energy, Clean Energy for WNC, NC Interfaith Power & Light, and RiverLink for a happy hour-style reception and networking soiree. You'll hear stories, learn a bit about the state of solar in NC and be asked to share what we can do together to build an affordable solar society that's accessible to all. Light refreshments and beverages will be served. Time is 5:30 to 7:30 PM and location is Lenoir-Rhyne University Asheville at 36 Montford Ave, 2nd floor, in Asheville. RSVP at this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/celebrate-solar-soiree-tickets-17985841135>

08/26/15 GREEN DRINKS

Bill Ramsey will inform us of the extent of the US drone warfare program. He will address how decisions are made to target people in several countries. He will describe the impact on targeted populations. He will inform us of the international response challenging the legality and consideration of criminal charges against the US. Bill Ramsey is a longstanding activist for peace and justice issues. He previously worked for the American Friends Service Committee. He is a graduate of Highpoint College and Duke Divinity School, and he lives in Madison County. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

08/26/15 POSTCARD CAMPAIGN FOR EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Let's pass the Equal Rights Amendment! Join us for a post-card writing campaign at 7 PM on August 26, location to be announced. Back in the 1970s, the Equal Rights Amendment very nearly passed. It would very specifically guarantee women equal rights to men and end once and for all the debate about women's place in American society. We still need just three states to ratify the ERA, and some North Carolina legislators have offered to help get this done here. We stand at a time in history where we can move forward or risk losing rights we have fought so long to attain. This event is sponsored by Asheville chapter of NOW. Email ashevilenow@live.com for more information and to confirm.

08/26/15 OTHER WORLDS ARE POSSIBLE BOOK GROUP AT FIRESTORM

This discussion group focuses on science fiction, speculative fiction and fantasy literature with a feminist, social justice and/or "radical" theme. We'll read a book each month and discuss both the vision presented by the author and how the book contributes to our understanding of our present moment. We'll start with "Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements," an anthology of short stories by various authors that explore the connections between radical speculative fiction and movements for social change. Folks are encouraged to read the whole book, but anyone should feel welcome to attend. Time is 7 PM and location is Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville. For more information, contact Firestorm Cafe.

08/27/15 BIOENERGY FIELD DAY

Please join us on August 27 from 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station located in Mills River, NC for the 2015 Bioenergy Field Day. Lunch is on us and we look forward to seeing you! This Field Day is designed to provide a time for researchers to share the latest information of the work being conducted on energy crops in Western NC. Tours of the research plots and processing equipment demonstrations will help growers, researchers, and industry leaders learn how we are working to meet the state's renewable energy goals. Researchers from NCSU,

Appalachian State, and local NGOs will discuss biomass crop production and the conversion of these crops into bioenergy. A complimentary lunch will be provided therefore, registration is required by August 21st, 2015. The NC Sustainable Energy Association is the organizer of this event. For more information and to register, contact Allison at allison.medlin@ncagr.gov.

08/27/15 ANNIVERSARY OF THE KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT

08/28/15 REMEMBRANCE OF EMMETT TILL'S MURDER

Wear Black and White on July 25 (Emmett Till's 74th Birthday) and August 28. A Time For Unity In Black And White: Please join us again! Let's Remember Emmett Till and those who have lost their lives #CharlestonNine #TrayvonMartin #JordanDavis #OscarGrant #RenishaMcBride #EricGarner #MikeBrown #RekiyaBoyd #SeanBell #StephenBiko and so many others to hate, violence and racism in the US and in other parts of the world. How? Please Wear black and white attire/clothing items on July 25 and August 28 (the day Emmett Till was murdered in 1955, 60 years ago). This is a silent but powerful way to show that we will never forget.

08/28/15 ASHEVILLE TIMEBANK KICK OFF

Friday, August 28, at 6 PM, Asheville TimeBank kicks off with a potluck and orientation open to all. Location is the First Congregational United Church of Christ, 20 Oak Street in Asheville. Share your talents, exchange services outside the cash economy. Please bring a potluck dish and a laptop if you have one. Voluntary donation. Contact help@ashevilletimebank.org or call 828-348-0674 for more information, including how to access an application for the TimeBank.

08/28/15 JUST PEACE FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE MEETING

This meeting will be at 3:15 PM at Brooks-Howell Home on Merrimon Avenue in Asheville. Meet in the media room. Contact Susan at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information.

08/28/15 HELPING OTHERS CONVERSATION SERIES

Please join us for our latest project, The Helping Others Conversation Series, an event consisting of an monthly interview that will be taped and uploaded to YouTube and Vimeo. We will focus on who and how things happen in Asheville. The first organization to be interviewed will be BeLoved House. Please join us at The Sly Grog Lounge at the Downtown Market at 45 South French Broad Street in downtown Asheville. for our first monthly interview. We'll get to hear all about how BeLoved House began, it's history, accomplishments to date, and what their future plans are and what they really need to better sustain themselves and how they are funded. Doors open at 5:30 PM with drinks to purchase as well as small foods to munch on. Event begins at 7 PM. \$10 suggested donation, with money going to the selected charity after expenses. This was a facebook event.

08/29/15 TRAINING SESSION FOR EXHIBIT ON AMERICANS WHO TELL THE TRUTH

This will be from 10 AM to noon at the YMI Cultural Center on South Market Street in Asheville. More information below events listings on what exactly is needed and who to contact.

08/29/15 JUST PEACE IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE VIGIL FOR CHILD CASUALTIES

Please note that our vigil with a focus on the child casualties during Operation Protective Edge last summer. This will be held from 11 to 12:30 at Pritchard Park. Contact Suchi at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information and to confirm location.

09/01/15 WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL LECTURE SERIES

"Reconnecting with Cuba," a lecture by journalist and historian Jon Elliston, will kick off the fall World Affairs Council lecture series, at 7:30 PM on Tuesday, Sept. 1, at UNC Asheville's Reuter Center. Elliston will discuss the recently restored diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, which were severed during the Cold War, along with the ongoing disputes between the two governments and the possibilities of further reconciliation. Elliston, a frequent traveler to Cuba, currently serves as the investigations and open-government editor at Carolina Public Press, a nonprofit news service that covers Western North Carolina, and as senior editor at WNC magazine. The lectures are sponsored by the WNC chapter of the World Affairs Council, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UNC Asheville, and the university's Department of Political Science. Admission to World Affairs Council presentations at UNC Asheville is \$10 for the public; free to members of the World Affairs Council and UNC Asheville students. For more information call 828.251.6140.

09/02/15 SIERRA CLUB MEETING AND GREEN DRINKS

Sierra Club meeting on French Broad River Odyssey by Dr. Chris Lechner. Location is Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville, 1 Edwin Place, (corner of Charlotte & Edwin). Time is 7 PM. Contact: judyattox@sbcglobal.net, or 828-683-2176 for more information.

09/09/15 GREEN DRINKS

Interested in making your home greener, but frustrated because you don't have thousands to spend for a major renovation? This discussion focuses on ways that homeowners on a tight budget can change how they operate their homes to achieve significant energy savings. We will also discuss inexpensive upgrades that make easy do-it-yourself projects. Amy Musser will speak, and she is co-founder and principal of VandeMusser Design, PLLC, founded in 2002. Socializing at 5:30 and presentation is at 6 PM. Location is The Green Sage at 5 Broadway Street in downtown Asheville.

09/09/15 JUST PEACE FOR ISRAEL/PALESTINE MEETING

This meeting will be at 9:30 AM at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church at 117 Montreat Road in Black Mountain. Contact Susan at suchi1025@bellsouth.net for more information.

09/10/15 BUILDING BRIDGES

Building Bridges is starting a new seminar on the dynamics of racism and how it has impacted our relationships, institutions and community. The session runs from September 10 to November 5 from 7-9pm at AB Tech and costs \$35. This is an outstanding opportunity to learn together how to improve our interactions. Registration is now open. For more information call 828 -777-4585.

09/10/15 CREATION CARE ALLIANCE OF WNC GENERAL MEETING

Time is 5:30 to 7 PM, and location is the First Baptist Church of Asheville at 5 Oak Street in downtown Asheville. Information came from their website.

09/12/15 CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY MEETING

Citizens Climate Lobby meets on 9-12-15 from 12:30-3 PM at Kairos West Community Center, 742 Haywood Road in west Asheville. We are advocating for a Carbon Fee & Dividend, which would impose a fee on fossil fuels at point entry; this fee will be refunded to individuals and families. There is bipartisan support in Congress as this will create jobs and help grow the economy, boosting renewables. For more information, contact asheville@citizensclimatelobby.org.

09/16/15 GREEN DRINKS

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Partnerships for Peace – Dignity for All" which aims to highlight the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace. For our Asheville Green Drinks presentation, WNC 4 Peace will discuss what we have planned for International Day of Peace in Asheville and Black Mountain, and will discuss the many faceted diamond of peace, from inner peace to world peace. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

09/19/15 AMERICANS WHO TELL THE TRUTH EXHIBIT

Saturday, September 19 at 6 PM the exhibit at YMI (39 S. Market St.) called "Americans Who Tell the Truth" will open. Rev. William Barber of Moral Monday fame will speak as his portrait is unveiled September 19th for the first time as a new addition to other heroes on display for the "Americans Who Tell the Truth" exhibit. Mountain People's Assembly is hosting this event with YMI. This is a ticketed event, tickets start at \$25. Go to YMI webpage for more information.

09/19/15 AND 09/20/15 HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN GREENVILLE SC

Carolina Human Rights Organizing Conference (or CHRONIC) will hold a several day conference primarily on the issue of race relations on September 19-20, 2015 in Greenville, SC. See www.chronic2015.weebly.com for details.

09/20/15 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE EVENTS

Special fun and educational events in Asheville and Black Mountain will take place on Sunday, September 20. WNC4 Peace will be collaborating with UNCA Student Government Association to celebrate peace in the Quad Sunday afternoon while in Black Mountain, Dobra Tea on Broadway will be celebrating Tea for Peace. Music and information about peace will be in abundance as some 30 groups set up tables to educate participants.

09/21/15 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE MARCH AND RALLY

On Monday, September 21, at noon WNC 4 Peace hosts a March for Peace downtown, with the meeting place in front of the St. Lawrence Basilica in Asheville. We will march to the Peace Pole in front of Asheville City Hall, where participants will observe a moment of silence. Asheville bells will be rung all around town, peace activist and performer David LaMotte and Rhoda Weaver plan to sing with people of diverse beliefs gathered to explore the spirit of peace in a troubled world, while white doves are released to send our message out into the universe. Attendees will also be invited to participate in Dances for Universal Peace. For more information, call Rachael at 828-378-0125.

09/23/15 GREEN DRINKS

This legislative session has been jam-packed with moves to roll back environmental protections, hinder renewable energy, slash funding for open space protections and more. But it's not all bad news. Many of our WNC legislators have stood against these shenanigans and are attempting to forward legislation to protect our communities' natural resources. We'll get you caught up on environmental outcomes of this legislative session, priorities between sessions and next year, and how you can get involved in holding our lawmakers accountable to the public they serve. Socializing at 5:30 and presentation is at 6 PM. Location is The Green Sage at 5 Broadway Street in downtown Asheville.

09/24/15 LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP BY MOUNTAIN TRUE IN HENDERSONVILLE

This legislative session has been jam-packed with moves to roll back environmental protections, hinder renewable energy, slash funding for open space protections and more. But it's not all bad news. Many of our WNC legislators have stood against these shenanigans and are attempting to forward legislation to protect our communities' natural resources. We'll get you caught up on environmental outcomes of this legislative session, priorities between sessions and next year, and how you can get involved in holding our lawmakers accountable to the public they serve. Time is 6 to 8 PM and location is Biz 611 at 611 North Church Street in Hendersonville, which is the MountainTrue office. For any questions and to RSVP, please contact Joan at Joan@Mountaintrue.org, 828-575-6268 ext. 205.

09/24/15 CREATION CARE ALLIANCE OF WNC DINNER AND EVENT

"Caring for Our Common Home: Responding to the Pope's call for action" is the theme for this event. Time is 6 to 8 PM and location is St. Eugene's Catholic Church at 72 Culvern Street in Asheville. Join with others to be inspired by the words of the Pope's Encyclical and watch Pope Francis' address to Congress. Light dinner included. Discuss what the Pope's message means to the world and commit to one behavioral change to better care for God's Creation. Sponsored by the Creation Care Alliance of Western North Carolina. Information came from their website.

09/29/15 POVERTY SIMULATION BY JUST ECONOMICS

CJJ Sponsored Poverty Simulation: The Difficulty of Living on Minimum Wage in WNC. Join Just Economics in a poverty simulation that will provide the community an opportunity to learn first-hand how difficult it is to live on a minimum wage salary in WNC. The cost is \$10. Participation

will be limited to the first 45 registrants. Time is 4 to 6 PM and location is the Edington Education & Career Center at 133 Livingston Street in Asheville. For more information or to register, contact Judy Leavitt at judleavitt76@gmail.com.

09/30/15 GREEN DRINKS

Curious about solar energy? Want to know your options for switching over to solar? Join Asheville Green Drinks in meeting Erika Schneider, director of communications at Sundance Power Systems and Bill Maloney, the Solar Panels Project Coordinator at St. Eugene Catholic Church. Erika will help clarify the difference with the direct purchase, finance or lease options for your future or dream solar installation. As legislation can vary between states, she will also touch on current legislation surrounding solar energy in NC. St. Eugene Catholic Church in Asheville is installing over 100 Solar Panels this September to coincide with the visit of Pope Francis to the US. In his Encyclical "Laudato Si" we are encouraged to take Care of the Earth. This 45.99 KW DC Net Metered system will reduce CO2 emissions and our dependence on fossil fuel, provide 22% of the Church's electricity, and give a 35% NC tax credit and 30% Federal charitable tax deduction to donors. MB Haynes Energy Solutions of Asheville will do the installation. The presentation will discuss our project and show how your Congregation can do the same. Socializing at 5:30 PM and presentation from 6 – 7 PM. Location is The Green Sage (Downtown) 5 Broadway St. in Asheville.

ONGOING EVENTS

TUESDAY

Veterans for Peace have a weekly vigil at 5 PM at Pack Square, Vance Monument

WEDNESDAY

Haywood Peace Vigilers have a weekly vigil at 4 PM at Haywood County Courthouse in Waynesville

THURSDAY

Showing Up For Racial Justice meeting at noon at Firestorm Cafe & Books in west Asheville.

FRIDAY

Women in Black have a weekly vigil at noon at the City Hall in Hendersonville

Women in Black have a monthly vigil at 5 PM at Vance Monument in Asheville (first Friday only)

SATURDAY

Transylvanians for Peace and WNC Physicians for Social Responsibility have a weekly vigil at noon in front of the courthouse in Brevard. Call 884-3435 to confirm.

Third Saturdays – Asheville's Green Grannies invites the public to "sing for the climate" at Pritchard Park at 5 PM.

SUNDAY

Youth OUTright meeting from 4 to 6 PM at First Congregational United Church of Christ at 20 Oak Street in Asheville. Ages 14 - 23 only.

ACTIONS AND READINGS

'Americans Who Tell The Truth' (AWTT) exhibit is in need of volunteers.

When: Saturday, Aug 29 - 10 AM – 12 noon

Where: YMI Cultural Center, 39 S. Market St. downtown Asheville

Now - thanks to our generous community - that all our portraits are sponsored, we are moving on to the next stage of organizing for the AWTT exhibit. Mountain People's Assembly is in SERIOUS need of volunteers for staffing the 'Americans Who Tell The Truth' exhibit that will run from September 19 through November 7 at the YMI. We have over 100 slots that need to be filled for the duration of the 7-week exhibition.

A training session for docents and greeters will be held on Saturday, August 29 from 10 am-noon at YMI Cultural Center, 39 S. Market St. in downtown Asheville. In addition, volunteers are needed to staff and help with unpacking and mounting portraits, set-up for the opening gala on September 19, repacking portraits for shipping when the exhibit is over, van transportation for pickup and return of display partitions and other items.

Please help us make this inspiring exhibit a success for our community! We assure you it will be an experience like no other.

For more information or to sign up, contact Carmen Ramos-Kennedy at 828-423-6476.

From the Mountain People's Assembly:

NAACP: "America's Journey for Justice"

The "America's Journey for Justice" march to fight for civil rights began August 1 in Selma, AL and will culminate on September 15 with a rally in front of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by the NAACP, the first leg of the 860-mile march has already drawn more than 200 demonstrators. "We're marching for our lives, our votes, our jobs, our schools," NAACP Southwestern Region Organizer Quincy Bates said. "We're demanding real policy reform, and we need support from everyone in our country."

Demonstrators have planned stops in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia in which they will visit local schools and churches to educate citizens on criminal justice and education issues.

MPA will be joining NAACP on portions of this historic march. "America's Journey for Justice" will mobilize activists and advance a focused advocacy agenda that protects the right of every American to a fair criminal justice system, uncorrupted and unfettered access to the ballot box, sustainable jobs with a living wage, and equitable public education.

It is expected that the march will be in North Carolina August 20 – 29 with specific places and dates to be determined. For more information, contact Sherrill Zoeller at zbirdlady@reloz.com.

WNC4Peace invites you, as individuals or groups working for peace through love of creation, social justice, environmental sustainability, human rights, etc. to respond to this message. Please pass this on to others. Events begin Friday, September 18 and continue through Monday, September 21.

For information about WNC4Peace and all peace day events, contact Rachael Bliss, Coordinator at rachael_bliss@yahoo.com or call 828-378-0125.

When Oppression Is The Status Quo, Disruption Is A Moral Duty
by Bree Newsome

"When rights are consistently denied, a cause should be pressed in the courts and in negotiations among local leaders, and not in the streets." — Alabama clergymen's letter to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. April 12, 1963

"You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations. ... It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative." —From Letter From a Birmingham Jail, by Martin Luther King Jr., April 16, 1963

I visited the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site for the first time two weekends ago while in Atlanta for a wedding. I sat in the pews of the original Ebenezer Baptist Church listening to recordings of King speaking on racial and economic injustice, words just as applicable to the present moment as they were 50 years ago.

I walked along the reflecting pool—a mausoleum surrounded by the kind of poverty and urban blight King was fighting to end at the time of his assassination in 1968—and watched people toss coins into the water and pose for photos in front of the tombs of King and his wife, Coretta. I saw posters celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act—although the Voting Rights Act itself didn't survive intact for 50 years but was gutted by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013.

I viewed photos of activists receiving nonviolent-resistance training at the Highlander Center in Tennessee. I thought of a similar photo that exists of myself with a group of modern activists, many of whom were in Cleveland at that moment attending the Movement for Black Lives Convening. I paused to scroll through my Twitter feed and saw that attendees of the convening in Cleveland had just been pepper-sprayed by a cop. An anger that had been slowly rising within me during my visit finally boiled over.

I'm struck by the way society can commemorate the movement of the past while condemning the movement of the present. Or how it can continually celebrate social progress in the most abstract of ways while ignoring the realities of what is required for social progress to occur. Lyndon B. Johnson's signing of the Voting Rights Act happened only because there were black Americans refusing to comply with oppression, creating disruption and posing direct challenges to the United States' racial caste system.

In 1963, Birmingham, Ala., was one of the most segregated cities in the United States of America. Black citizens faced brutal racial and economic oppression. If they protested, they faced violence from police and local authorities. To ask, "Was the Birmingham campaign of 1963 really necessary?" seems like a ridiculous question to most people today.

Yet some of those very same people whose 20-20 hindsight never fails them seem blind to the present. They ask why Black Lives Matter protesters staged die-ins at the malls, disrupting America's high holy shopping season, or why they blocked traffic on the highways. Do they pause to "express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the demonstrations"? Instead of asking why young black people are interrupting white people at brunch, perhaps we should be asking why equal protection under the law is not a real thing.

In 2015, St. Louis remains one of the most segregated cities in the United States of America. According to Richard Rothstein's study "The Making of Ferguson," black citizens there have faced brutal racial and economic oppression for decades, including the following:

... zoning rules that classified white neighborhoods as residential and black neighborhoods as commercial or industrial; segregated public-housing projects that replaced integrated low-income areas; federal subsidies for suburban development conditioned on African-American exclusion; federal and local requirements for, and enforcement of, property deeds and neighborhood agreements that prohibited resale of white-owned property to, or occupancy by, African Americans; tax favoritism for private institutions that practiced segregation; municipal boundary lines designed to separate

black neighborhoods from white ones and to deny necessary services to the former; real estate, insurance, and banking regulators who tolerated and sometimes required racial segregation; and urban renewal plans whose purpose was to shift black populations from central cities like St. Louis to inner-ring suburbs like Ferguson.

On Aug. 9, 2014, Michael Brown, an 18-year-old, unarmed black teenager, was shot and killed by a white police officer named Darren Wilson in a place where black citizens are routinely harassed by cops to generate revenue for the city coffers. Brown's body was left on full display in the street for hours. The officer involved was not arrested.

When residents objected, police responded with canine units, rifles, tanks and tear gas. Journalists were arrested, protesters were thrown in jail, residents were teargassed in their own front yards. Yet we must explain why there was an uprising in Ferguson? How much longer must we wait for justice? Why must we wait at all?

South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union, arguing, "We of the South contend that slavery is right." The Confederacy was formed in the belief that African Americans should remain in a perpetual state of bondage. For over a hundred years, the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacists waved the Confederate battle flag as a sign of non-surrender as they continued to terrorize and murder black Americans.

In 1961, at the height of the civil rights movement, the all-white South Carolina Legislature voted to raise the Confederate battle flag above the Statehouse. Black residents protested it for the next 54 years.

In June 2015, a white supremacist entered Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., and massacred a local civil rights leader and eight parishioners during Bible study. The state refused to lower the flag even as these victims of a hate crime were laid to rest. Yet instead of asking the state of South Carolina why it took 54 years of protest and a massacre to ultimately remove a hate symbol from its Capitol, James Tyson and I had to explain why we removed the flag ourselves instead of waiting longer. How much longer must we wait for justice? Why must we wait at all?

Some seem to think we've reached a point in time where the right to vote has replaced the need to disrupt the system—although the right to vote itself has yet to be secured. Rights are signed into law by the legislature, but history shows that the legislative pen moves in accordance with the pressure of organized protest and disruption in the streets.

This moment requires bold action and disruption of business as usual for the same reasons it was required in Birmingham in 1963. We easily become blind to what we see every day. The continued oppression and brutalization of black life is so normalized that we're taught to wait and be patient, as though liberation is an inevitable by-product of the passage of time. It's not and it never has been.

The political establishment cannot praise King with one breath while condemning modern civil disobedience in the next breath. If we are wrong now, King was wrong then. If King was right then, we are right now.

History will remember the Ferguson uprising as a moment of awakening. This small suburb—which many of us might not have ever heard of were it not for the events of August 2014 and the existence of social media—is a microcosm of America. We looked at Ferguson and saw that Ferguson is everywhere. There can be no more waiting for the passage of time to do what only we can do by taking a stand via direct action. When oppression is the status quo, disruption is a moral duty.

The movement lives.

Bree Newsome is a community organizer in Charlotte, N.C., where she works with several organizations including the Tribe, Ignite NC and the local NAACP chapter. Newsome made headlines recently when she took down the Confederate flag in Columbia, S.C.

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: Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com> on behalf of Ellen Clarke
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 10:21 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Support St Lawrence Green

You bet, Marc. Hang in there. And remember this is Asheville...not Raleigh nor Washington.
Ellen

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 6, 2012, at 5:34 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

> Ellen
> Thank you for these supportive thoughts!
> marc
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Ellen Clarke [mailto:ellengclarke@gmail.com]
> Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 6:16 PM
> To: Marc Hunt
> Subject: Re: Support St Lawrence Green
>
> Marc:
> Thanks for your well thought-out reply. I supported your candidacy for this reason and hope your conservation values continue to inform a balanced development approach. That said I remain unconvinced about the need for another hotel complex in that area of the city. I hope the stalemate you fear doesn't ensue and that a fair compromise can be worked out that complements the Basilica, furnishes as much greenspace that's reasonably possible and doesn't burden the City's already strained resources. Surely you and your able colleagues can work this out.
> Here's hoping,
> Ellen Clarke
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Jun 6, 2012, at 2:54 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:
>
>> Ms. Clarke and Mr. Byrd
>>
>> 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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.
>>
>> I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
>> ☐ 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, with a willingness to entertain City input. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

>>

>> 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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

>>

>>

>> Marc Hunt

>> Asheville City Council Member

>>

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Ellen Clarke [mailto:ellengclarke@gmail.com]

>> 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: Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com> on behalf of Esther Manheimer
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:58 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

My husband is hosting cards tonight and two of the guys got the call. They said the questions were totally slanted. Ugh! And what about Father Thomas refusing to meet with us? I am open the first half of the day. My depositions start at 1:00. Give me a call.

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:40 PM
To: Esther Manheimer
Subject: RE: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

Here is my exchange with Charlie on that very subject. A push poll of sorts, backed by their long-running misinformation campaign I think I mentioned to you, but nonetheless a serious PR and policy challenge. This plus the basilica press likely to be unsettling over the next 48 hours.

As pointed out by my wife, Cat, think about this: If your mom were to ask you as a child, "Would you rather have spinach or ice cream?", which would you choose?

What windows do you have to talk tomorrow by phone?

Marc

+++++

Hi Marc,

I'm having trouble reading these arcane reports from the polling company but the rough answer is this:

We started with the list of 13,188 people who voted in at least 2 of the last three municipal elections. Of those, we had numbers for 8713 and had the polling company try them all. About 3000 were bad numbers, about 2500 went into voice mail, about 1300 were busy, and some people hung up and did not complete the poll.

On the Basilica question, 1592 completed the poll and answered the question. On the BID question 1516 answered and on the water question, 1516 answered.

We polled everyone whose numbers we had, not a sample.

By contrast the latest nationwide Fox poll (which shows Obama up by 9 points, hooray!) surveyed 930 voters in a nationwide race.

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/interactive/2012/08/09/fox-news-poll-presidential-race/>

Charlie

On Aug 12, 2012, at 10:31 AM, Marc Hunt wrote:

Cecil and Charlie

How many people responded and pressed one of the keys versus how many answered and hung up versus how many did not answer or were otherwise unavailable?

Thanks
marc

From: Esther Manheimer [<mailto:emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com>]
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:29 PM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: FW: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

?? Who did this poll go to?

From: Cecil Bothwell [<mailto:cecil@braveulysses.com>]
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:17 AM
To: councilgroup Group; Gary Jackson; Dawa Hitch
Subject: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

For immediate release 8/11/12

What: Public opinion poll of Asheville voters concerning Haywood Street property

Who: Cecil Bothwell, PARCPAC and Voice Broadcasting Corp. (an automated polling company)

Contact: 828-713-8840

Here is the text used in the public opinion poll of Asheville voters:

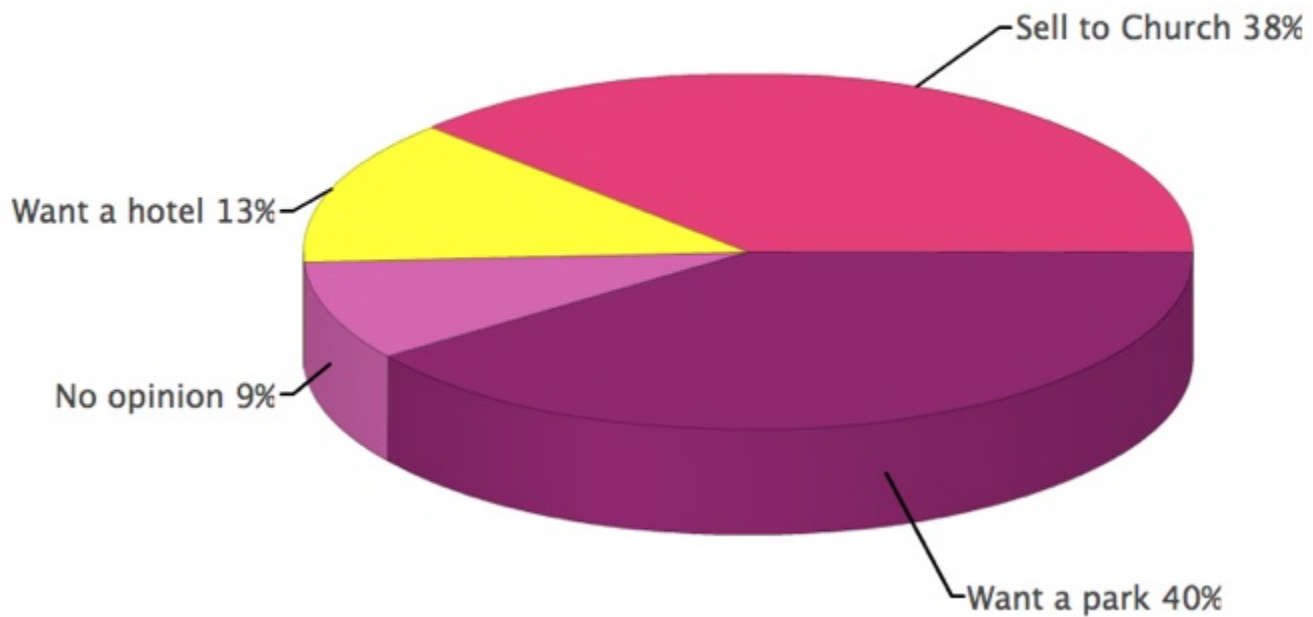
"The first question is about the city-owned land across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Some people favor a hotel, others selling the land to the church for their development, and others favor a public park.

If you favor the McKibbin Hotel, please press 1

If you favor selling the land to the Diocese of Charlotte, press 2

If you favor a public park, press 3

If you have no opinion, press 4"



A new poll released today shows that most Asheville voters do not want to see a hotel on the city-owned property across from the Civic Center.

PARC PAC obtained a phone list of all Asheville voters who cast ballots in at least two of the last three City elections. That list included 8,713 consistently engaged voters: Unaffiliated, Republican, and Democrat. We employed an automated phone polling company to conduct the survey. 40 percent favored a public park, 38 percent want to sell the land to the Catholic church and 13 percent favor a hotel on the site (the rest indicated "no opinion.")



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.



The poll was conducted after the *Citizen-Times*' big front story last Tuesday and McKibbin's public presentation of its plan. So even after all of persuasion the developers muster, the public still opposed hotel in that location.

A seven story hotel looming near the Basilica came in dead last among those who answered the question.



The church has said that it would use the property for parking now and would sell it at a later date for development. This is their rendering of a four-story building and a paved patio. Some people are under the

mistaken impression that the church wants the property greenspace but that is not the case.

I believe it is time to withdraw the defunct deal the City McKibbin back in 2008 (they defaulted on their contract promise to complete the project within 2-3 years). We need to rethink use of this space in line with citizen preferences.

-Cecil Bothwell
Asheville City Council



11 North Market Street, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-258-2991 | FAX 828-255-0255
422 South Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792 | 828-697-6196 | FAX 828-693-3999

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Ben Fulmer

From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> on behalf of Dave Nutter
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 9:21 AM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Cc: emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com
Subject: Re: Redevelopment of City-owned Parcel A: BEST PRACTICES
Attachments: BaltCCS&Cr.pdf

Marc:

Here it is.

Thanks,

Dave
David G. Nutter, AICP
Principal
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
USA
Tel. 828-505-8242
Cell: 828-279-1820

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

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Dave Nutter' <dnutter@aol.com>
Cc: emanheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com>
Sent: Thu, Aug 9, 2012 8:39 am
Subject: RE: Redevelopment of City-owned Parcel A: BEST PRACTICES

Dave

Thanks for these thoughts and also your important comments at the McKibbon presentation Tuesday.

The noted attachment did not come though on your below email...please resend.

Marc

From: Dave Nutter [mailto:dnutter@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:27 AM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Cc: emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com
Subject: Redevelopment of City-owned Parcel A: BEST PRACTICES

Marc:

Yes, this one is important for the Ages, the Ages of Asheville, I believe. Just as the Piazza della Signoria was to Florence in the renaissance time of the de Medici's.

I have suggested some edits to your excellent letter. See below.

However, there is one more central factor that is as important as it is uncomfortable. It does not appear that the City of Asheville has any defined process for a situation like this.

I have always found that developer selection, including architectural goals and standards, is one of the hardest things.

I can find no evidence that the City thinks in terms of having physical design principles as part of a development agreement or deed. It is so very crucial to have design standards. Esther Manheimer was quoted in recent months saying that the most important thing about this development was that "... it should be THOUGHTFUL and BEAUTIFUL". I agree.

Marc, I am attaching a document which illustrates classic best practices in downtown redevelopment.

Please read Bill Potts' article entitled "Architectural Controls" on page 47. This is from ULI Technical Bulletin 51 - *Baltimore's Charles Center - A Case Study of Downtown Renewal*. It was edited by Martin Millspaugh, my boss in the Baltimore Inner Harbor projects, who I am now helping write a book about the redevelopment of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. It is dated November 1964. It is as valid today as it was then.

I am not saying that Asheville can be expected to emulate this process, but without the basic principle of required design standards, to be included in the development agreement and the deed, the "mandatory design review, voluntary compliance" procedure of the Downtown Commission (which has 3 excellent members conducting design review) will be like whistling in the wind.

I urge you to take the time to read these few pages and think about it.

See you Tuesday evening.

Best regards,

Dave

cc: Esther Manheimer
David G. Nutter, AICP
Principal
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
USA
Tel. 828-505-8242
Cell: 828-279-1820
-----Original Message-----
From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Dave Nutter' <dnutter@aol.com>
Sent: Sun, Aug 5, 2012 10:39 am
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Thanks for writing me regarding the future of the city-owned parcel across from the US Cellular Center, the Pack Library 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 the Basilica, the library, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
- Ensures that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain sight lines to the Basilica.
- Includes a public plaza / open space
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure there will be 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 required annually to operate and maintain that park in keeping with the initial vision of 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, a hotel on upper floors, and structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principles outlined above, and if it does not, we should set aside the negotiation with McKibbin. I am open to the idea of a well-designed high-quality hotel (not an imposing ugly one) because that might best activate greater use of the US Cellular Center. 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 for 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 also work well for well-scaled hotel development (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, McKibbin, 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 and control the site. 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 McKibbin 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: Dave Nutter [mailto:dnutter@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 4:48 PM

To: t2903@aol.com; kate@livingroofsinc.com; djohnson12@me.com; david@pearsonrussell.com; chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org; aglines@ashevillenc.gov; wlangdon@aol.com; alan.mcguinn@arca-design.com; joe@urban-three.com

Cc: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; gjackson@ashevillenc.gov; spowers@ashevillenc.gov; michael@mcdonougharchitect.com; HAZZARDCON@AOL.COM; msprouse@siteworkstudios.com

Subject: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Hi:

Below please find St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 from the Basilica of St. Lawrence, for your information.

Also possibly of interest, my wife Ellen and I took part in a tour of the new Aloft Hotel on Biltmore Avenue this afternoon. It was interesting and we recommend it to you.

Our tour was arranged by Meghan Rodgers of the Asheville Downtown Association. It was given by Sarah Bender Hope of Aloft Asheville Downtown (tel. 828-232-2064, email sarah.benderhope@aloftashevilledowntown.com). Both Sarah and Meghan welcomed inquiries.

Best regards,

Dave Nutter

David G. Nutter, AICP

Principal

Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals

169 Flint Street

Asheville, North Carolina 28801

USA

Tel. 828-505-8242

Cell: 828-279-1820

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

From: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>

To: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>

Sent: Fri, Aug 3, 2012 11:02 am

Subject: SL Plaza Update #7

Friends and Members of the Basilica of St. Lawrence,

If you are personally acquainted with either Representative Patsy Keever or Senator Martin Nesbitt, please contact me. We would like to elicit their support in encouraging the City Council to abandon the McKibbin RFP for the Haywood St. property and follow North Carolina General Statute 160A-266 which allows the City to enter into private negotiation and development agreement with the Basilica of St. Lawrence to develop this property under certain parameters that both entities can agree upon.

NC General State Statute for Cities and Towns 160A-266: "a city may dispose of real property of any value and personal property valued at thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) or more for any one item or group of similar items by private negotiation and sale where (i) said real or personal property is significant for its architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural or historical associations, or significant for its relationship to other property [Basilica of St. Lawrence] significant for architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural, or historical associations, or significant for its natural, scenic or open condition; and (ii) said real or personal property is to be sold to a nonprofit corporation or trust whose purposes include the preservation or conservation of real or personal properties of architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural, historical, natural or scenic significance."

We believe the construction of a hotel and parking deck on the Haywood site presents potential harm to the Basilica and is precisely the sort of incursion this statute was written to prevent.

On another subject, you may have read that the McKibbin group is inviting the public to a presentation of their design. In their publicity, they mentioned “meetings with the Basilica” which gave many the mistaken impression that we are involved in some kind of collaborative relationship with McKibbin. Rest assured, we are not and have requested a public retraction. The www.stlawrenceplaza.com web site, and particularly the May 24, 2012 letter from counsel available from the web site, represents our position. We remain opposed to a hotel and believe the Basilica, especially with the new partnership with Kessler Development and our relationship with Professor John Ochsendorf from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a renowned expert in Guastavino’s architecture who has agreed to act as our consultant, is the most qualified steward of this site and best able to ensure the Basilica is protected and St. Lawrence Plaza is designed and developed properly.

As always, thank you for your support.

Rita Livezey
Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC

View Proposed St. Lawrence Plaza
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

Sign Petition Supporting St. Lawrence Plaza
<http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

Ben Fulmer

From: Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com> on behalf of Bill Branyon
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2012 6:41 PM
To: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council
Subject: Re: Mckibbon Project

Marc,

Sure appreciate your time this morning. You provided me a comprehensive insight into many interesting factors about the property.

The main remaining question I have is, why didn't someone on the City Council try to mobilize a movement to get private donors and government money to pay for a St. Lawrence Park? Or is park building always a citizen initiative?

Thanks again. I beginning to think, despite running for it several times, I wouldn't like to have you job given the enormous pressues and tough decisions with no clear answers. I applaud your courage.

B

From: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 19, 2012 9:56 AM
Subject: Re: Mckibbon Project

Bill

Still shooting for 11.

Below is the discussion I was providing folks in the days leading up to the vote.

Marc

+++++

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.

§ Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

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. The design McKibbon has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, and set-backs, very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. It and other aspects of their plan can be viewed at <http://www.haywoodfacts.com/>. It also allows for a public plaza to be separately developed fronting the basilica – a project that would be undertaken separately since it would require acquisition of additional property and realignment of Page Avenue. The 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbon and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbon.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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.

On Sep 18, 2012, at 11:30 PM, Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com> wrote:

10-4 good buddy.

From: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2012 9:36 PM
Subject: Re: McKibbon Project

Bill

Let me dial you as I am on the move. Lok for an advance email with some background on my thinking. Will shoot for about 11, okay?

On Sep 18, 2012, at 4:54 PM, Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com> wrote:

Thanks for responding so quickly. Yeah, should I call you tomorrow or vice versa? My number is 350-9114.

From: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>

To: Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2012 2:31 PM

Subject: Re: McKibbin Project

Bill

Glad to talk. Is Wednesday am okay?

Marc

On Sep 18, 2012, at 8:52 AM, Bill Branyon <billbranyon@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear

I was disappointed that you voted for the McKibbin Hotel project across from the Civic Center. I saw it as a once-in-a-hundred year opportunity to expand park availability in a Civic Center area that is an important community gathering space. I do understand that jobs, taxes and initial money was a major competing factor, especially in this time of tight money and jobs.

I'm writing an op-ed piece for Xpress about that transaction, and combining it with the Verizon sponsored DNC and Amy Goodman's recent talk at AB Tech. I was wondering if you'd explain your motivation in voting for McKibbin.

I understand if you're too busy or would prefer not to. I do admire your Council work in other areas and was impressed with our

talk at Green Life a while back. Keep up the
good work!

Sincerely

Bill Branyon

Ben Fulmer

From: David Johnson <djohnson12@mac.com> on behalf of David Johnson
Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2012 12:46 PM
To: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council
Subject: Re: Basilica area opportunity

Hi Marc:

Yes. let's talk by phone tomorrow at 9:30. I can be reached at my home phone number which is 828 277-5792.

I wanted to show you a few things so maybe at a later date we can do a FTF when you are back in town.

I noticed that only the first page of my AC-T op-ed got through the web to you in my original message. The whole article is available at the following url.

<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20120217/OPINION03/302170001/Rafael-Guastavino-Asheville-Basilica-opportunity?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|Opinion|p>

Also, I am including a photo page of Guastavino-related sites in and around Asheville.

http://web.me.com/djohnson12/Site/My_Albums/Pages/Guastavino_related.html

I appreciate your willingness to discuss these possibilities for our city's development future.

Regards,

Dave

On Mar 4, 2012, at 9:17 AM, Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council wrote:

Dave

Whoops, we need to talk by phone monday at 930 since I am out of town. Could I dial you then?
Phone #?

Marc

On Mar 3, 2012, at 9:06 PM, David Johnson <djohnson12@mac.com> wrote:

Hi Marc:

Green Life, 70 Merrimon, is fine. See you on Monday at 9:30 am.

Dave

On Mar 3, 2012, at 10:20 PM, Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council wrote:

How about green life?

On Mar 3, 2012, at 7:54 PM, David Johnson
<djohnson12@mac.com> wrote:

Hi Marc:

Monday at 9:30 would be fine. What place would
be convenient for you?

Dave

On Mar 3, 2012, at 10:22 AM, Marc Hunt -
Asheville City Council wrote:

David

Sorry to be slow in responding; am
vacationing thru Thursday out of
town. Can we set a time to talk in
the next couple days or so? Maybe
9:30 am Monday?

I really appreciate your and adc's
leadership efforts here.

Marc

On Mar 1, 2012, at 11:22 AM, David
Johnson <djohnson12@mac.com>
wrote:

Hi Marc:

I am writing as a
follow-up to your
thoughtful op-ed
piece in the AC-T
regarding the Basilica
project. I was pleased
to learn that you are
of the opinion that a

project for the site across from St. Lawrence can be realized that recognizes all the interests and stakeholders concerned with the outcome. You may have seen my op-ed on the same topic last week in the AC-T Blog section. But in case not, I have attached it to this e-mail. In this piece I emphasize the opportunity presented by the recognition of the Guastavino heritage, which has international significance.

As a result of that op-ed I have been asked by the Program Committee of the Asheville Design Center, with which I have been associated since it was founded, to explore the possibility of an ADC Forum on the Basilica area and its future. The ADC is well-positioned to act as a facilitator of communications among the various groups and entities that have an interest in the project. We did this successfully in the case of the I-26 issue,(still on the public agenda), and for the area surrounding the

proposed Performing Arts Center. We think we might be able to play a similar role with regard to this important urban design issue.

The concerned parties that we feel should be invited to a Forum would include, but not necessarily be limited to:

City of Asheville,
both elected and staff,
Representatives of the
Basilica and Diocese
Preservation Society
of Asheville and
Buncombe County
PARC
Asheville Downtown
Association
Others?

What we envision is an open forum where each speaker would be given an opportunity to express their vision and speak briefly about their aspirations for the development of the area. We would then open it up to questions from the attendees, with an ADC moderator presiding. We would hope that out of this event would come a better understanding of the various viewpoints and the

beginnings of a
consensus on how a
satisfactory outcome
might unfold.

The ADC won't move
ahead on this without
some assurance that
the city is receptive to
such an event. We
want to be supportive
and constructive.

I am writing to you
because I know you
have a deep interest in
the project and that
you espouse
transparency, open
communication and
creativity as the
foundation of
community
improvement.

If you are available
for a short chat, I
would welcome the
opportunity to visit
with you to explore
the possibilities
further.

With best wishes,

Dave Johnson

<Guastavino article
AC=T version
.rtfd.zip>

Ben Fulmer

From: Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com> on behalf of Esther Manheimer
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 11:37 AM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Upcoming discussion re: Basilica

Yes to the CIBO lunch. Let's talk there.

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 11:26 AM
To: Esther Manheimer
Subject: Upcoming discussion re: Basilica

Esther

Thanks for stepping carefully as we get set to have discussions w/ the basilica folks and then discuss it at Council next week.

In advance, I wanted to share two things:

- The below email exchange w/ Ms. Livezey. In inviting us to meet with them, she made reference to their concerns over public statemetns made by some mebrs of Council. Cannot help but think that some of here retorts below are what they want to talk with us about.
- McKibbon's PowerPoint from their Tuesday night session. You might already have this.

Are you going to the CIBO lunch w/Dalton at noon? I might attend...

Marc

From: Rita Livezey [<mailto:rdlive@charter.net>]
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 1:00 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Councilman Hunt,

First, thank you for your thoughtful response and for keeping me updated on your evolving position in this matter. There is now obviously a great deal more common ground between us, and that is encouraging. However, as I'm sure you know, there are some key points of divergence.

High-rise

You mention that "many in the community seem to fear a high-rise." You bet, and for two very simple reasons: 1) 51 Biltmore and 2) your remarks about the Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments.

1) 51 Biltmore, a McKibbon development, has utterly stunned and shocked residents and visitors of Asheville with its glaring inappropriateness in scale, style, and location. And, one must also note that it totally dwarfs, over shadows, and isolates Trinity Episcopal and the other historic churches from the

Biltmore Ave. corridor. You may not be aware of the intense community dislike of that development. Everyone I have talked to both in my capacity with the Basilica, and also in private, day-to-day, non-political situations, asks "On whose watch did THAT happen?" and "Never again!" To borrow your phrase, "The Scenario I Most Worry About" is exactly the same thing happening to the Basilica, and by the same developer who has demonstrated such complete lack of sensitivity to the unique character of downtown. While we agree that surface parking is not an ideal long term use of the Haywood St. property, it is far from the worst scenario because it is at least temporary and could always be changed. However, if another mistake like 51 Biltmore were to occur, it would be permanent.

2) You speak of a hotel that would "fit height-wise between the neighboring Vanderbilt Apartments and Battery Park Apartments." Councilman, by Asheville standards, those ARE high-rises. I'm trying to imagine something the height of Battery Park being built on the odd little triangle of land on Haywood St., and still managing to leave enough open space to, as you say, "ensure that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica." That conjures up a very strange vision indeed.

Hotel vs. Another Type of Development

As you are aware, the feasibility study done in connection with the original RFQ did not support further hotel construction and indicated we are above supply for many years into the future. Since those studies were done, occupancy rates have decreased further. You say you "have recently been hearing that there does seem to be healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel choices" and that you want to learn more about that. What you are hearing, and perhaps wishing, is not to our knowledge substantiated by studies. You may be a man of vision, Councilman, but facts are stubborn things:

From: Dennis Hulsing [<mailto:dennishulsing@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 8:07 AM
To: Herman.Turk@wcghotels.com; abc@shghotels.com; afraga@fircgroup.com; dpearson@hlihotels.com
Subject: Re: Asheville Haywood Street Basilica Site

Gentlemen,

As I indicated in our conversation Friday, the WNC average is 51% occupancy for 2011. The upscale hotels in WNC market average 60% occupancy, while the Asheville MSA average is 62%. Our industry standard is 65% to break even. All three are currently well below the 65% industry break even point. When Aloft opens for business occupancies could even drop further, let alone if they elect to support construction of McKibbons hotel.

Thank you,
Dennis I. Hulsing

DH/sc

While you may find it easy to dismiss hotel owners' objections as self serving or wanting to discourage competition, the City risks treading a veritable legal mine field when it conveys city-owned property in direct competition with private groups that have already invested and risked building in this city. The City is in fact competing with these private groups in sites such as 51 Biltmore and now potentially the Haywood St. site.

Even if one could demonstrate a proven need for additional hotel rooms, there are many sites more suitable: the Three Brothers' Restaurant site now available, the city-owned employee vehicle lot behind Cellular One, or the ATT lot on Haywood. All more commodious properties, easy walking distance from Cellular One, more convenient to the Interstate, less likely to increase traffic congestion on Haywood St., and most importantly, not in the heart of an historic cluster of architecturally significant buildings.

Basilica "Withdrawing From Discussions"

You state, "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." First, the term "control" is inaccurate: the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City and commits us to "show good faith in keeping discussions with the City open regarding pricing, meeting development requirements, timelines, and future controlling interests that the City may require."

Second, what actually happened, as one of our consultants, Matt Mores, writes:

"In March 2012 I had only one meeting with ADC that was very successful. This ended with receiving their support to help with designs of our plaza and they agreed to support, at that time, the Basilica having private state statute rights to the Haywood site development. The next day the director of ADC called me to apologize that he had to reverse their decision to support us and that he was informed by *certain city staff* (emphasis added) not to get ADC involved with the Basilica 'because this is too hot of an issue'."

Who brought the ADC into the mix anyway? The Basilica did not. Esther Manheimer told me the City did not. Did they inject themselves or did someone else bring them in?

"Delegating That Much Authority"

You are "uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community." Again, the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City, etc. Those are the terms, which, if you were not aware previously, should now alleviate your discomfort. Why you would want to perpetrate the false notion that the Basilica would be free to construct whatever and however we wanted without City input is puzzling, to say the least.

"Not A Hugely Different Outcome"

You wrote, "Note that representatives of the Basilica say they fully intend to sell the property to a developer just as the City might... 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." In fact, our approach and vision IS hugely different: 1) Our motivation of protecting and preserving not only the Basilica but the surrounding historical district is primary. 2) The scope of what we envision is smaller and more in keeping with the surroundings. This smaller scale is not financially viable without the philanthropic interests we bring to the table. 3) We have experts in Guastavino's architecture most qualified to ensure the Basilica is not damaged and the plaza design is compatible with its surroundings.

The Scenario You Most Worry About

Last February, when the Diocese's amended offer was made, you may well have been skeptical about our ability to pull together sufficient design, development, and investment resources to move forward with a plaza, and that the property would languish as surface parking indefinitely. However, as you may know, we now have a partnership with the Kessler Collection who, in the Grand Bohemian, unlike McKibbin, does demonstrate sensitivity to location and appropriateness of style. In addition, we have relationships with philanthropists as well as experts in the architecture of Guastavino, most notably Professor John Ochsendorf from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who has agreed to act as our consultant in design and preservation aspects. The Basilica is the most qualified steward of this site and best able to protect the Basilica and to work with the City to ensure St. Lawrence Plaza is designed and developed in the community's interests.

Very sincerely,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

From: Marc Hunt [<mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com>]

Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:30 AM

To: 'Rita Livezey'

Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Ms. Livezey

Thank you for your continued input.

I wanted to make sure you have my most recent “take” on this situation, below.

Marc

+++++

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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, McKibbin, 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 McKibbin 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: Rita Livezey [<mailto:rdlive@charter.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 31, 2012 2:44 PM
To: 'Cecil Bothwell'; 'Chris Pelly'; 'Esther Manheimer'; 'Gordon Smith'; 'Jan Davis'; 'Marc Hunt'; Mayor Terry Belamy
Subject: Haywood Street Property Petition

Madam Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, and Members of the Council,

Attached please find the output file of an online petition signed by over **860** people to date—voters and tourists alike—urging you to negotiate to sell the city-owned Haywood Street property opposite the

Basilica of St. Lawrence to the Diocese of Charlotte so that the Basilica may become the steward of the site to protect and preserve the surroundings and the Basilica.

You may view the full text of the petition online and read people's comments at <http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

We hope you will take this strong and ever-growing popular support for the Basilica's position into account as you weigh the options for the fate of this property.

Best regards,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC



11 North Market Street, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-258-2991 | FAX 828-255-0255
422 South Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792 | 828-697-6196 | FAX 828-693-3999

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Ben Fulmer

From: Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com> on behalf of Esther Manheimer
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:29 PM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: FW: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

?? Who did this poll go to?

From: Cecil Bothwell [mailto:cecil@braveulysses.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:17 AM
To: councilgroup Group; Gary Jackson; Dawa Hitch
Subject: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

For immediate release 8/11/12

What: Public opinion poll of Asheville voters concerning Haywood Street property

Who: Cecil Bothwell, PARCPAC and Voice Broadcasting Corp. (an automated polling company)

Contact: 828-713-8840

Here is the text used in the public opinion poll of Asheville voters:

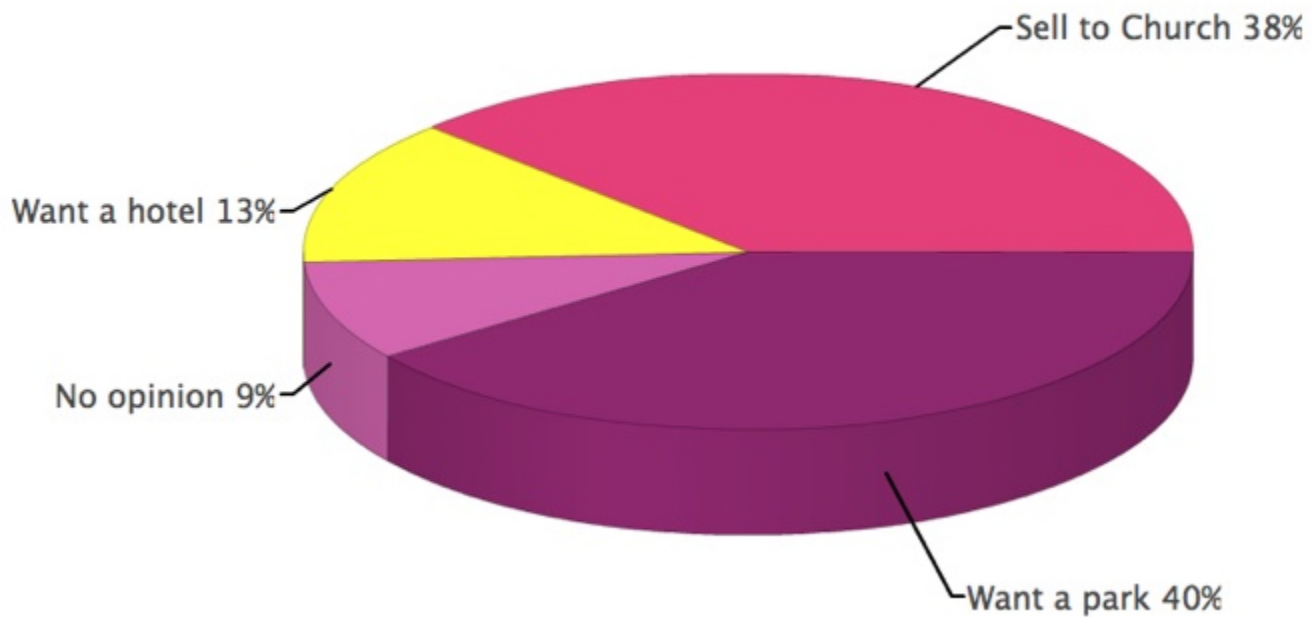
"The first question is about the city-owned land across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Some people favor a hotel, others selling the land to the church for their development, and others favor a public park.

If you favor the McKibbin Hotel, please press 1

If you favor selling the land to the Diocese of Charlotte, press 2

If you favor a public park, press 3

If you have no opinion, press 4"



A new poll released today shows that most Asheville voters do not want to see a hotel on the city-owned property across from the Civic Center.

PARC PAC obtained a phone list of all Asheville voters who have cast ballots in at least two of the last three City elections. That list included 8,713 consistently engaged voters: Unaffiliated, Republican, and Democrat. We employed an automated phone polling company to conduct the survey. 40 percent favored a public park, 38 percent want to sell the land to the Catholic church and 13 percent favor a hotel on the site (the rest indicated "no opinion.")



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.



The poll was conducted after the *Citizen-Times*' big front story last Tuesday and McKibbin's public presentation of its plan. So even after all of persuasion the developers muster, the public still opposed hotel in that location.

A seven story hotel looming over the Basilica came in dead last among those who answered the question.



The church has said that it will use the property for parking now and would sell it at a later date for development. This is their rendering of a four-story building and a paved patio. Some people are under the

mistaken impression that the church wants the property greenspace but that is not the case.

I believe it is time to withdraw the defunct deal the City McKibbin back in 2008 (they defaulted on their contract promise to complete the project within 2-3 years). We need to rethink use of this space in line with citizen preferences.

-Cecil Bothwell
Asheville City Council



11 North Market Street, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-258-2991 | FAX 828-255-0255
422 South Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792 | 828-697-6196 | FAX 828-693-3999

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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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, February 17, 2014 3:18 PM
To: t2903@aol.com;Chris Joyell
Cc: Gwen Wisler
Subject: PED Tomorrow
Attachments: Staff Report PED_Update on 68-76 Haywood Street.docx

Guys

I am 50-50 on whether I can make your chat with Gwen tomorrow at Green sage at 11:00; will do my best.
Attached is the staff report regarding the project and process.

Thanks
marc

Ben Fulmer

From: Gordon and Eleanor <gordonandeleonor@charter.net> on behalf of Gordon and Eleanor
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 2:26 PM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: PROPERTY ACCROSS FROM BASILIKA

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: 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: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 8:24 AM
To: 'ROBERT HALLIDAY'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Plaza

Mr Halliday

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, and set-backs, very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. It and other aspects of their plan can be viewed at www.haywoodfacts.com. It also allows for a public plaza to be separately developed fronting the basilica – a project that would be undertaken separately since it would require acquisition of additional property and realignment of Page Avenue. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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.

And thank you for your enduring commitment to the character of our city!

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: ROBERT HALLIDAY [mailto:usmc1862@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 8:20 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Plaza

My Dearest Mayor and City Council Members:

As a former member of the Tree Commission and the TRC, I humbly beseech you to vote for the St Lawrence Plaza property to be sold to the Basilica for development. We appreciate what the McKibbon Group has done for Asheville, although I don't particularly agree with all their projects. My degree in Urban Renewal from the University of Florida gave me an appreciation of what a city like Asheville can do to enhance its reputation and visual presentation to tourist and residents. Let us all join hands and partner with the Basilica to enhance that particular area of our city that keeps open a view of the Great Civic Center, the Basilica, the Battery Park area, and be a reminder to future Mayors and City Council Members that those who serve today, truly believed in the people and the city of Asheville. Look into your hearts and vote for the Basilica. Bless each of you, your families, and the people of Asheville.

Your most humble servant

Robert C. Halliday (Doc)

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 8:09 AM
To: 'David Mayeux'
Subject: RE: Haywood St Development and the St Lawrence Plaza

Mr. Mayeux

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

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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: David Mayeux [mailto:david.m.mayeux@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 8:00 AM
To: mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Haywood St Development and the St Lawrence Plaza

Honorable Mayor, Distinguished Councilors,

I am a citizen of Asheville, a city that I dearly love, and a member of the parish of St Lawrence. Due to work, I will not be able to attend tonight's meeting of the Council that determines the fate of the Haywood St lot whose destiny rests in your hands by the grace of God, but I wanted to make sure that I shared my voice concerning the hopes for the Haywood St development. I have looked at the various proposed plans, and I see merit in them all. But **I urge you to consider with favor the Diocese of Charlotte and the Basilica of St. Lawrence's proposal for the St. Lawrence Plaza.** Being so close to the issue, it is hard to be objective, but I have given over my heart in prayer and while I do not think that any issue of such importance should be dealt with objectively, I have tried to consider this with the eyes of reason, as well as those of heart.

In many ways, for me the issue is not one of aesthetics—I actually think the McKibbin Hotel Group did a nice job of conforming their proposed architecture to match the Vanderbilt Apartments—**or of finance**—of COURSE Asheville could use the taxes—**but one of family.**

Our city thrives on tourism, and I'm elated that so many people find our city interesting and beautiful enough to be worthy of their time, interest, and yes, money. But Downtown is the heart of the city, and with Haywood St the site of Malaprops Bookstore, Earth Guild, the Woolworth Art Gallery, the Chocolate Fetish and many many other fine business ... it is the heart of Asheville's renewal from a listless old resort town. And yes, with the Basilica at one "end" and Church St essentially at the other, it is a spiritual heart of the city as well. It is a street of cherished family memories. **What brings tourists into the city and into Downtown are not the amenities or the nearness of the hotels to our city's heart and soul, because those amenities and spirit were there before the hotels.** Tourists love the purity of our city, that it is a place that we lovingly care for and make our own. We gladly share with open and charitable arms to any who visit, but Asheville is home first, which is why it's so inviting to visitors.

Every home has a guest room, but it's never smack dab in the middle of the Family Room. When houses become so filled with guests that you have to set up people on the couch ... people notice, and then what should be a fun visit, becomes a cramped and awkward situation. **Putting up a hotel on Haywood St is filing up the family room with guests** (and we all know what Mark Twain said about guests and fish). We don't want that; they don't want that.

Haywood St has a nice symmetry to it: I already mentioned the spiritual houses that cap both ends; there's an even number of eateries and shops, county and city services; architecture of historical interest, particularly in the S&W building and, again, the Basilica. **Why not achieve greater balance of Haywood St, with public spaces at both ends, Pritchard Park to the North and the St Lawrence Plaza to the south.** In fact, I have often thought that the particular curve of Haywood St at that location, creates something of a dead-end for tourist traffic. Opening up that space with a Plaza opens up that end of the city, so that more people flow toward

the Grove Arcade and the other wonderful shops that border it. Some of you have shown an interest in whatever funds become available to the city related to this development being available for affordable housing. Homes should be at the heart of this matter, and it is wonderful that the Basilica's proposal includes such homes in its design.

You have heard all these arguments, but it boils down to this: our city, our community, should consider family first, always. The St Lawrence Plaza is a good idea, and it's one proposed by your friends and your family at St Lawrence Basilica. **Thus, the St Lawrence Plaza is in the best interest of the city; it is in the best interest of Family.**

Thank you,
David Mayeux
80 Rice Branch Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804

828.253.0125

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I am but nothingness which loves.

--Raïssa Maritain, "[song of the tendency](#)"

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 8:08 AM
To: 'katherine kemp'
Subject: RE: Vote for Council Agreeing to Partner with the Diocese/Basilica on Sept 11 Meeting

Ms kemp

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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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: katherine kemp [mailto:kitkemp@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 11:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Vote for Council Agreeing to Partner with the Diocese/Basilica on Sept 11 Meeting

Asheville City Council has a unique opportunity now to capitalize on the city's history and architecture to become an even more desirable place to live, work and attract tourists. St. Lawrence Basilica's plan to acquire city land will enhance the appearance of the area, bring revenue to the city and ensure the future preservation of the Basilica.

Haywood Street does not need the traffic congestion that would be created by the hotel McGibbon is proposing there, particularly when there are events at the Civic Center. McKibbon made its mark (a mixed one) on the city at 51 Biltmore Avenue. McKibbon's proposed plaza in front of the Basilica is nothing more than an afterthought and incorporates land that belongs to the Basilica, reducing the size of the Basilica's parking lot.

I strongly urge City Council to vote for the Basilica's offer to acquire land to create a SAINT LAWRENCE PLAZA.

Kitty Kemp
Asheville city resident

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, September 11, 2012 7:50 AM
To: 'Michael Mason'
Subject: RE: No Hotel Across from Basilica

Mr. Mason

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, and set-backs, very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. It and other aspects of their plan can be viewed at www.haywoodfacts.com. It also allows for a public plaza to be separately developed fronting the basilica – a project that would be undertaken separately since it would require acquisition of additional property and realignment of Page Avenue. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

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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: Michael Mason [mailto:datamason@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:49 PM

To: jandavis@avlcouncil.com; cecil@braveulysses.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com; mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com

Subject: No Hotel Across from Basilica

Dear Council Members!

I have been reading up concerning the discussion around whether or not to allow a hotel to be build across from our Basilica. The more I learn, the more I am baffled why there is any discussion at all.

There seems to be insufficient sense among the Council as to why people love to come to Asheville as tourists. Simply, it is because here they can find something has gone missing from most, nearly all, American cities. Asheville still exists on a human scale. We do not have (many) lofty, multistory buildings. Asheville streets invite strollers, people who wish to wander and linger. Asheville buildings often still have the grace and aesthetic of construction from an earlier time -- a time when dropping a square block of glass and steel would have rightly offended the eye, and the feeling of community. But now we have a contingent of developers and fast-money men who wish to exploit the loveliness of Asheville in order to squeeze a quick profit. A prime case in point is the stunning, extraordinary ugliness of the Aloft Hotel on Biltmore Avenue. Such a lump of a building has no relation to anything else in the neighborhood -- rather it dominates and overwhelms the neighborhood. The aggressiveness of its obtruding multistory wall of glass and steel, reaching right up to the sidewalk, pushes the pedestrian to move on quickly, to get away, to cross the street. Is this the feeling you want for the "new" Asheville?? Do you really wish to transform Asheville into a city of skyscraper canyons? Move to Miami, or New York if that is your desire.

The St Lawrence Basilica is an Asheville (and national) treasure. Tourists love to visit -- they seek out that part of town. Why is not the city council trying to find a plan that enhances the view of the Basilica? Why not create a park, a haven of quiet that supports the tranquility that the Basilica emanates? That creates more "lingering spaces" for pedestrians? Instead the Council appears to prefer construction

companies such as the McKibbin Group, the ones responsible for the Aloft Hotel. Is anyone on the Council at all aware of the impact that another Aloft would have on the traffic at Haywood & Flint?

The heedlessness in which the McKibbin Group operates convinces me that they would take shortcuts in the construction process -- that they would not take the care necessary while building to protect the Basilica from seismic damage. On the other hand, the Basilica and the development partner it has chosen, The Kessler Collection Group, has the interest and experience to properly monitor the impact of construction in that area on the Basilica. Does the Council wish to merely turn a quick buck, or create a building plan that will last for a century, that will further enhance that area of Asheville? There is some blathering about trying to increase tax revenues by sticking another large hotel in that area (again, turn a quick buck), but who is to say, with the other hotels already recently built in Asheville, that yet another hotel will simply siphon off guests from the existing hotels (no net gain there). Yet, by sharply reducing the appeal of that part of town, maybe the City Council will be successful in convincing tourists to shorten their stay, as what the tourists will now experience in Asheville is what they have back home: traffic jams and noise.

It is clear from the dithering and conflicting plans that the City Council has proposed over the last nearly ten years that you have no ability to plan. Please get out of the way and let a team that truly cares for the Basilica take on the project.

Michael Mason
Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:29 PM
To: 'Doug Abernethy'
Subject: RE: Public park

Thanks.

If you are curious,
<http://www.newurbanism.org/>

Just one interesting part of a greater array of perspectives.

marc

From: Doug Abernethy [mailto:asheville@me.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:25 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Public park

Thanks for taking time to reply. I know you all can't make us all happy, but I appreciate you listening and responding. Thanks! Doug Abernethy

Sent from iPad

On Sep 10, 2012, at 10:20 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 9:45 PM
To: jojo818c@aol.com
Subject: RE: Some Basilica facts

JoJo818c

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

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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: jojo818c@aol.com [mailto:jojo818c@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 9:24 PM
To: pete@wwnc.com; AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; cecil@braveulysses.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com; mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com
Subject: Some Basilica facts

Dear Pete, When I listened to your show today, I thought you and some callers may not have complete information. I'm no expert on this issue, but I'm beginning to think that the Basilica has been treated unfairly. Here are some facts that were presented at the Renaissance Hotel last week. There were city council persons in the audience and they did not refute them. I am copying from a flyer that was given out and whose contents were authorized by the Basilica. If you want the entire document, I'll be happy to mail it. I'm sure you can ask the Basilica for a copy, too. It answers some of the questions you posed on your show today.

"What is the Basilica's past experience on the Haywood site?"

2003 The City approaches the Basilica to acquire the church-owned parking lot adjoining the Battery Park Hotel/Residences for what was then labeled the 'St. Lawrence Square Project', a commercial project and public parking deck.

2006 To save money, the City makes design changes to the public parking deck on the church site. The original 2 under/ 3 above design is altered to a 5 level above ground deck. The surrounding neighbors outcry stalls the project. As a result, the Basilica has to withdraw from the Memorandum of Understanding with the City due to lack of fulfillment and execution. Additionally, the Basilica discovers that the parcels of land that make up its parking lot are deed restricted and only allow for a two story building.

2006 Following the collapse of the St. Lawrence Square Project, THE TAX APPRAISED VALUE ASSESSED TO THE BASILICA ON THEIR PARKING LOT CURIOUSLY WENT FROM \$793,500 IN 2005 TO AN INCREASED TAX APPRAISAL AMOUNT OF \$2,865,700 IN 2006, AN INCREASE OF OVER 360%. The church has always paid property and income taxes on this parking lot. The church parking lot does not carry non-profit status.

Much was discussed at last week's meeting and I may not have absorbed it all correctly. This is what I believe I heard:

The Church informed the Council that they would meet any purchase price within fair market value. The Basilica development will pay full property taxes. The McKibbin plan encroaches on Basilica land without permission and apparently assumes that it will acquire it even though the Church has unequivocally said it will not sell to the McKibbin group. That would substantially change the configuration of the McKibbin plans and they would have to stuff the hotel into a smaller property. The added congestion a hotel would add, with delivery trucks, guest check-ins, employee cars, etc is substantial. Nearby existing hotels are not overcrowded. An additional hotel does not add to the amount of tourists; it just divides the guest pie up into smaller portions. There are plans for more hotels to go up in the general vicinity. The Basilica's plan, with residential apartments and small stores, and a lovely piazza will use world-renowned consultants to design something that will last for hundreds of years and enhance the downtown in a spectacular way. Hotels, as you know, have an average lifespan that is measured in decades not in centuries.

The Basilica has an international reputation. I can't imagine any McKibbin hotel that will have one, particularly if it is wrapped in neon.

I think it is perfectly reasonable for the Church to want to oversee development around such an historical landmark, particularly if there was danger to its existing structure. Isn't there a story about damage to a fresco in a Church in Charlotte when Wachovia built?? The Church will use the latest seismographic technology during the entire building process. It will detect problems before they occur. I don't think McKibbin offered such careful monitoring.

As for future city revenue, in the short run, with McKibbon's room charges and other taxes, there might be more revenue. But, let's think about this. The brochure noted that St. Lawrence has been ministering to the people of Asheville since 1840 (172 years). The current land was purchased in downtown 147 years ago. St. Justin's, part of St. Lawrence, was the first place in Asheville where homeless could find refuge. Over the years, our sick citizens found mercy, love and selfless ministering from the clergy and nuns in a TB sanitarium, at St. Joseph's Hospital, in Sisters of Mercy Urgent Care Centers, from hundreds of thousands of dollars given by these same generous Sisters in annual grants to many Asheville charities without regard to denomination, through Catholic Social Services and the education of Asheville's black children during segregation, as well as countless other acts of charity going on right now as I type. What is the value of that?? When considering revenue benefits to the City, should we begin counting from St. Lawrence's founding? Should McKibbon's future revenue be measured against St. Lawrence's past contributions? If we could add it all up, from 1840 until the present day, who do you think contributed the most to Asheville??? But we can't add it up, can we?? No, we can't, because it is truly 'priceless'.

I am very troubled by some City actions. Is it true that the Basilica's plans never had the formal hearing but McKibbon's plan did. Why did the Church's appraisal go up so radically? Why would the City give serious consideration to McKibbon's plan knowing that part of it is drawn on Basilica property?? Pardon my cynicism, but that nasty bludgeon, 'eminent domain' comes to mind. I'm not exactly clear about the 2007 RFQ, but I sense a certain favoritism.

This process needs to begin again with complete and open transparency. What is going on has the whiff of politics and that is reason enough to open it up for total scrutiny.

Pete, I would gently suggest that you contact the Basilica for further information. I would'nt rely solely on ACT for the facts. There's also a website, stlawrenceplaza.com that may interest you.

Forgive the rambling. It's late and I'm tired but this is important to get straight. I've sent copies of this email to Council members. Hope it does some good.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 7:55 PM
To: 'Nancy Hofmann'
Subject: RE: Property across from the Basilica

Ms. Hofmann

I apologize for the misspellings of your name. I am clearly typing-challenged.

I have spent about 5.5 hours in private meetings with representatives of the basilica, attended the 2 hour public session last week, and have engaged in perhaps 500 email exchanges with folks advocating the basilica hopes. I have been insistent that city staff engage with basilica leaders, and was insistent that the Asheville Design Center play a role in leading in a collaborative fashion. Please consider that if I happen to disagree with you in the end, it does not mean I have not worked hard at considering a range of views. I have and will continue to do my best to listen attentively and be open to all community concerns.

Thanks again

marc

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

From: Nancy Hofmann [mailto:nhofmann@warren-wilson.edu]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 7:25 PM
To: Marc Hunt; Thomas, Fr.
Subject: Re: Property across from the Basilica

Mr. Haunt (OH! I spelled your name incorrectly, just as in this second email from you, you have again spelled my name incorrectly) ~To set the record straight - your paragraph about the Basilica requesting a park is incorrect. The Basilica never requested putting a park in the location in question. The Basilica has always had a plaza with low-lying buildings to the rear in mind.

~One can only frequent the Page Street area to know that it needs restructuring....it is gridlock at most hour of every day. The problems that would arise with a hotel in that location will only lead to greater concern and danger to pedestrian traffic.

~I've heard from you before on your leaning towards the McKibbin group...What a shame for the restoration of our historic downtown area! Your response reads to me as though you are not open to negotiation with the Basilica plan at all.

Hopefully, you will come to the meeting tomorrow night with an open mind, heart and ears.
Nancy Hofmann

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

From: "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: "Nancy Hofmann" <nhofmann@warren-wilson.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 6:01:37 PM
Subject: RE: Property across from the Basilica

Ms. Hofamn

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.

§ Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, and City officials. I was disappointed when, on July 5

th , 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very difficult to plan, fund, and make successful. The Basilica leaders explained last week that they do not have capital to make the purchase, and that they would have to borrow \$1 million as a down payment to the city and count on a later-negotiated arrangement with a developer to fund the rest of the purchase price. The Basilica does have a quality developer willing to consider developing the site, but the financial feasibility of the Basilica's plan is far from certain, and a commitment by the city to work with the Basilica would include the risk that a quality project would not materialize. The Basilica has said that the City could repurchase the property at the original price if they are unable to achieve an acceptable development. Uncertainty of a quality project being accomplished would be a concern for me.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, and set-backs, very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. It and other aspects of their plan can be viewed at www.haywoodfacts.com . It also allows for a public plaza to be separately developed fronting the basilica – a project that would be undertaken separately since it would require acquisition of additional property and realignment of Page Avenue. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11 th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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

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

From: Nancy Hofmann [mailto:nhofmann@warren-wilson.edu]

Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 2:58 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Cc: Nancy Hofmann

Subject: Property across from the Basilica

Council Members: Tomorrow is an important day! Please be reminded that, at present, there is only a 68% occupancy rate in all downtown Asheville hotels. Another hotel would be a waste of space and take away from the already established hotels. Please consider the historic significance of the Basilica of St. Lawrence, let us preserve it's beauty and all that it offers our community.

Looking forward to seeing you tomorrow night and to a positive vote in the Basilica's favor.

Nancy H. Hofmann

nhofmann@warren-wilson.edu

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 6:47 PM
To: 'Brian Jay Stanley'
Subject: RE: I support the St. Lawrence Plaza proposal

thanks

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

From: Brian Jay Stanley [mailto:brianjaystanley@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 6:38 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: I support the St. Lawrence Plaza proposal

It has its good and bad angles. I like the view from the civic center okay.
From the Basilica, I find it a bit institutional looking. It's definitely better than what's there now (and better than Aloft, I think). But now I'm spoiled by what I consider the stunningly beautiful architecture of the St Lawrence Plaza proposal. That would be something to be proud of, while this would be functional but not quite rising to the level of beauty.

On 9/10/2012 6:21 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Brian
>
> Curious as to your take on the chad Roberson presentation at
> www.haywoodfacts.com and an assumption that the city would require it
> to be built in accordance with that.
>
> marc

>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Brian Jay Stanley [mailto:brianjaystanley@gmail.com]
> Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 6:19 PM
> To: Marc Hunt
> Subject: Re: I support the St. Lawrence Plaza proposal

>
> Marc,
>
> I think I can agree with most of what you say. I sympathize with the
> feeling that the Basilica is not exactly in the business of developing
> sites. For that reason, I originally supported McKibbin. But then I
> saw the mediocrity of the Aloft Hotel and the beauty of the St
> Lawrence Plaza proposal. That's what changed my mind. But I don't
> really care who builds it, as long as it's a beautiful addition to
downtown that we will all be proud of.

>
> Best,
> Brian
>
> On 9/10/2012 5:43 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

>> Mr. Stanley

>>

>> 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. This matter offers complex challenges and
>> complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some
>> outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I
>> share my current thinking.

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>> and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am
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>> to an outcome for the site which:

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>> vibrancy of that portion of downtown and especially complements the
>> Basilica, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.

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>> maintain site-lines to the Basilica.

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>> §Includes the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space
>> between any development and the Basilica.

>>

>> §Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to
>> the historic Basilica.

>>

>> *_Public Park Space and/or and Buildings?_* – Great urban design is
>> key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public
>> spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like
>> residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key.
>> 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 and continue to play key roles in getting
>> some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a
>> stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do
>> not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed
>> with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have
>> established many project priorities, and an additional park in this
>> area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those
>> plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of
>> town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently
>> completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a
>> well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great
>> outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and
>> vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential
>> for development of the area just north of the city-owned property
>> into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a "pocket park" of sorts -

>> well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That
>> plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved
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>> representatives, McKibbin, 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
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>> apartments with plaza. Also note that development projects are very
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>> open to the idea of a well-designed high-quality hotel, not an
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>> and the rest of the neighborhood. While some segments of the
>> hotel/motel market in the region are struggling, I have recently been
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>> parking lot for years to come. That would be tragic.

>>
>> Marc Hunt

>>
>> Asheville City Council Member
>>
>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 6:01 PM
To: 'Pat Hyland'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Plaza Project

Pat

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Pat Hyland [mailto:pfhyland@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 11:43 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence Plaza Project

Dear Council members,

Please give your full support to the proposed Basilica plan for the development of a landmark Plaza. There is no comparison to the beauty and community upbuilding that this well thought out plan will bring to Asheville, as opposed to the very myopic construction of a single unnecessary hotel. I urge you to partner with the Basilica on this much needed enhancement to our City.

Sincerely,
Pat Hyland
Asheville resident

Pat Hyland

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 5:47 PM
To: 'Bill Maloney'
Subject: RE: Yes for Basilica Plan

Mr. Maloney

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: Bill Maloney [mailto:maloneyw@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 9:16 AM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Yes for Basilica Plan

Councilman Marc Hunt

Marc,

We are down to the wire whether we decide to go with the Basilica and the Kessler Group who will develop the site suitable to the Historical nature of this National Landmark or give it to the McKibbon group for a hotel.

I and the majority of Asheville Citizens prefer the Basilica. The Basilica under the direction of Kessler will do a better job. The proposed plan with the Plaza and Fountain shown at Friday night's public meeting will beautify the area and give tourists a reason to come here and fill up all of the hotels we now have, as well as the additional 3 hotels in the planning stage.

I am not sure what it takes to get your attention or if you are just more comfortable with a hotel company than you are with the Catholic Diocese that has done so much for Asheville.

The 2007 RFQ you keep referring to was never completed. There is no contract with McKibbon. All documents were never submitted and signatures are incomplete.

Let it go. You are free to re-start the process. Do it. The Basilica is making a larger financial offer and knows what they are doing with the design. Kessler has experience with historic sites as evidenced with what was done fitting the Bohemian into the Biltmore Estate setting.

The people of Asheville are asking you to go with the Basilica. I attended the meeting 9/7/12 and got quite a bit of history on all that has happened. It's time to start new.

Asheville is not a destination city for hotels. People come here for our attractions. No other city has a St. Lawrence Basilica National Historic site. Enhance it! You have one chance to create something that will be nationally known and be around for hundreds of years and the vote comes during your elected term.

Do it. We the People are behind you. Everyone who knows anything about the value of this landmark Basilica is watching and wanting you to make this choice, and I along with the majority of your constituents urge you to do this Tuesday 9/11/12.

911 brings back many memories. Next year at this time I would like to look back to this 911 and remember that during your term we started something Great for Asheville.

Sincerely,

Bill Maloney
100 Hawk Ridge
Asheville, NC 28804
Office: 828-258-1171
Cell: 828-230-0103

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 5:46 PM
To: 'Salva M Atkin'
Subject: RE: Basilica of St Lawrence

Mr. and Ms. Atkin

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Salva M Atkin [mailto:Salva.Atkin@msj.org]

Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 8:20 AM

To: 'cecil@braveulysses.com'; 'jandavis@avlcouncil.com'; 'marchunt@avlcouncil.com'; 'chrispelly@avlcouncil.com'; 'gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com'; 'emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com'

Subject: Basilica of St Lawrence

Dear Cecil, Jan, Marc, Chris, Gordon, Terry and Esther:

As a resident of Asheville who frequents downtown and as a parishioner of the Basilica I am asking that you do not approve the development of the hotel. The Basilica is a beautiful historic building and a 7 story hotel would surely decrease its beauty and value. I think the plan for landmark plaza would be a much better choice not only for the residents of Asheville but for tourists as well. We have the Indigo right down the street another hotel is just not necessary nor is it ethical in my opinion. Please allow the Basilica to go forward with their plan to purchase and develop the property.

Thank you so much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Atkin

185 Graveyard Road

Fairview NC 28730

828-628-0002

salvie26@charter.net

----- This message and its attachments may contain confidential and/or legally-sensitive information that is intended for the sole use of the addressee(s). Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution of the information contained in this message and its attachments is prohibited. If you have received this message or any of its attachments in error, please destroy all originals and copies of the same and notify the sender immediately.

Ben Fulmer

From: Patricia Wald <patricia.wald@att.net> on behalf of Patricia Wald
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 7:50 AM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Basilica

Dear Mr. Hunt:

Thank you for your response and explanation of your position. Unfortunately, recent buildings approved by City Council have proven to be out of place eyesores that have destroyed the Asheville City skyline. I have no doubt that allowing another hotel in this area will have an equally undesirable effect on the area. The hi-rise building down the street from the Basilica (at, I believe, 51 Haywood St.) has marred our skyline for miles around, being the primary thing seen as people approach Asheville.

Of course our city needs to make financially sound decisions, however based on the City Council decisions in the past couple of decades (at least), the loser is the aesthetic and character of Asheville.

I ask you to keep in mind what the citizens of Asheville want for their city.

Sincerely,

Patricia Wald

--- On Sun, 9/9/12, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Basilica
To: "Patricia Wald" <patricia.wald@att.net>
Date: Sunday, September 9, 2012, 6:59 PM

Ms. Wald

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt

Asheville City Council Member

From: Patricia Wald [mailto:patricia.wald@att.net]
Sent: Saturday, September 08, 2012 3:07 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence Basilica

Dear Council:

I wish to state my unequivocal and absolute support for the Saint Lawrence Plaza plan being offered by the Basilica. Any other project or use of the land would be inappropriate, disrespectful, and not in the best interest of the City of Asheville nor its residents.

I am asking you to support and vote in favor of the plan put forward by St. Lawrence Basilica.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Patricia Wald

29 Sycamore St.

Asheville, NC 28804

828-254-2312

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 7:11 PM
To: 'MariaEstela Oses Munoz'
Subject: RE: Controversial development across the street of the Basilica of St. Lawrence.

Ms Estela

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: MariaEstela Oses Munoz [mailto:maria.estela.oses@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 11:43 AM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Subject: Controversial development across the street of the Basilica of St. Lawrence.

Dear Members,

The Basilica's proposal to build a Plaza across the street from the church is the option to follow because it would serve everyone's interests in the city of Asheville. Those who want to build a hotel show only a profit (for the hotel chain) and ignores the long term consequences of our historical Asheville. Please don't let the hotel lobbyists blur your vision and support the interests of our lovely city.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

--

Maria Estela Oses-Muñoz, M. Ed.; M. Psy.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 6:59 PM
To: 'Bill Kalarovich'
Subject: RE: Basilica of St. Lawrence

Mr. Kalarovich

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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- From a design and quality standpoint enhances and adds to the vibrancy of that portion of downtown and especially complements the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Bill Kalarovich [mailto:wmkalar@charter.net]

Sent: Saturday, September 08, 2012 10:47 AM

To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com

Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence

Dear Councilman Hunt,

Please vote in favor of the Catholic Diocese of Charlotte purchasing the property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. The church is a national historical landmark and a significant part of the architectural and religious history of Asheville. A plaza or small park across from the church would enhance the area as a welcoming spot for Ashevilleans and tourists alike.

Thank you. William Kalarovich

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 6:59 PM
To: 'Kerry Jambon'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Basilica

Ms. Jambon

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Kerry Jambon [mailto:jammer777@charter.net]

Sent: Thursday, September 06, 2012 6:07 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Subject: St. Lawrence Basilica

Dear City Council Members,

We as Catholics of the Basilica are totally opposed to building this landmark project or any other project on this site that would encroach or jeopardize the integrity of the Basilica and surrounding area.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 6:52 PM
To: 'Bob Niedzwicki'
Subject: RE: VOTE TO RESCIND THE McKIBBON PROPOSAL

Mr. Niedzwicki

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Bob Niedzwicki [mailto:robertn1@charter.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 06, 2012 3:03 PM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: VOTE TO RESCIND THE McKIBBON PROPOSAL

Dear Councilman Hunt:

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to read this brief letter. I speak in favor of the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza across from the Basilica. Asheville is a beautiful place to live and to visit. If you study the beautiful cities of America and other countries, you find that they all share grand, open and welcoming spaces for the PEOPLE to enjoy. This site is unique and deserves to be enjoyed by the citizens and visitors! I join with those who strongly support the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza and feel that City Council should at least formally review that proposal. Not giving it a fair review is "shortchanging" the citizens of Asheville and Buncombe County because that plan has so much to offer the people and this city. How will YOU be remembered; what have YOU given to the people?

Please, on September 11, 2012 ... VOTE TO RESCIND THE 2007 RFQ (RFP) from McKibbon and give the St. Lawrence proposal its fair review for the sake of the PEOPLE.

Thank you.

Robert C. Niedzwicki

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 6:51 PM
To: 'Catherine Mitchell'
Subject: RE: Sale of Land to St Lawrence Church

Ms. Mitchell

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Sent: Monday, September 03, 2012 9:48 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Sale of Land to St Lawrence Church

We have offices in downtown Asheville, have studied the history of the Basilica, and visited there. DO consummate a sale to the church because of it's historical significance. The downtown area is already TOO DENSE to enjoy anymore! We are surrounded by new high rise structures that effectively obstruct any views of the sky, except for penthouse dwellers who pay for it !!!! Asheville needs to retain some of its beauty, somewhere. What we really need is diversification of our business infrastructure. After all, who is intended to occupy all of the low-moderate income dwellings at \$8.00 p/hr???? Business occupancy of the 1st Floor of these structures represent folks who moved from elsewhere in town. What is ratio of new businesses verses transfers to a new space? We the people hired you to represent their best interests, by voting to protect that interest, not your judgmental intrepretation of that interest. Listen to the community's expressions in support of the Basilica, and vote for the people.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 6:50 PM
To: 'Susan Sihler'
Subject: RE: Haywood/Page site

Ms Sihler

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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 the potential for there to be a public plaza / open space between any development and the Basilica.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am excited about the potential for development of the area just north of the city-owned property into a high-quality publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. That plaza would not be inexpensive itself, and could only be achieved with collaboration and funding support from neighboring property owners, others in the private sector, and various levels of government. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, and set-backs, very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. It also allows for a public plaza to be separately developed fronting the basilica – a project that would be undertaken separately since it would require acquisition of additional property and realignment of Page Avenue. The negotiation is based on McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process has been ongoing and Council is to hold a public hearing at our September 11th session as to whether to move forward to a contract for sale and development with McKibbin.

The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: Susan Sihler [mailto:ssihler@yahoo.com]
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: 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.

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 let 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: PARC <ashevilleparc@gmail.com> on behalf of PARC
Sent: Thursday, September 06, 2012 2:49 PM
To: hunt.marc@gmail.com
Subject: "Say NO to the Hotel" Rally

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[Times](#)
[Mountain Xpress](#)
[Asheville PARC](#)



If you're going...

"Say NO to the Hotel" R

**1. St. Lawrence
Public Meeting**

Friday, Sept. 7th,
5-8PM, Renaissance
Hotel, 31 Woodfin St.

2. Sign Making

Saturday, Sept. 8th, 3-
5PM, in the church
basement.

3. No Hotel Rally!

Tuesday, Sept. 11th,
4:30PM, City Building



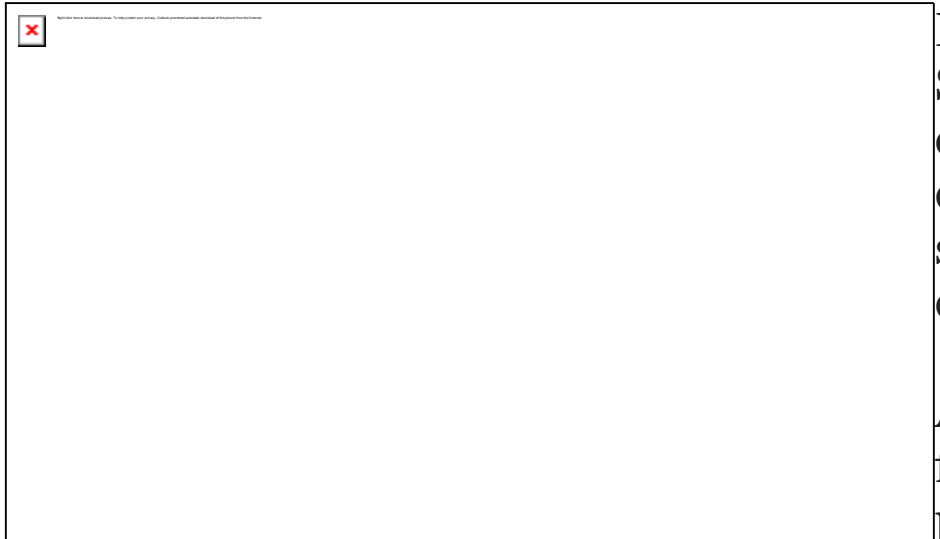
**This image from McKibbon shows their
hotel towering over the Basilica of St. La**

The Church is holding a 'Say No to the Hotel' R
11th, to protest the McKibbon Hotel plan for a
front of the Basilica. The Rally starts at 4:30 at
Council has said that they'll take public comme
their meeting *that night*.

Also, the Church will hold a public meeting ton
September 7th, in the conference room of the L
Woodfin Street to present its proposal for deve

On Saturday, members and supporters will get
signs for the Tuesday rally. Please come! Bring
poster board to the church basement, Laurenti

Please email [City Council](#), and attend the public Rally on Tuesday.



on their way from one place to another. Far down
Avenue, this beautiful building could be seen through the trees.

A recent PARC PAC poll of frequent voters showed that 38% of voters want a park, 38% want to sell the land to develop a hotel there.

Some people are making the silly argument that the park is expensive. In fact, the City already owns the land, and the cost of trees is quite low.

In comparison, the cost of those few hundred trees (that provided the base for the new McKibbin building at the Fine Arts Theater) *was over 10 million dollars*.

The same people who object to the park on the grounds of cost with the high price of that project!

Thanks for everything you do to keep Asheville beautiful.

from the folks at PARC.

.



PARC • PO Box 4093 • Asheville, NC 28805

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, August 30, 2012 6:41 AM
To: 'Helen Toms'
Subject: RE: Native In Favor of Basilica Purchase and Green-Space

Helen

Sorry to not immediately connect you with Bruce when you wrote earlier. I was with him yesterday evening, and he helped me with the connection. Please do let me know if you have questions. This is clearly a complex issue.

Thanks
marc

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

From: Helen Toms [mailto:helenet@charter.net]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:07 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Native In Favor of Basilica Purchase and Green-Space

Dear Mark, Thank you so much for your thorough reply! As I am short on time and out of town at present, I will read more thoroughly later. Helen

On Aug 5, 2012, at 11:36 AM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Ms Toms

>

> 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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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, McKibbin, 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 McKibbin 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

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Helen Toms [mailto:helenet@charter.net]

> 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: Leonard Carrier <lcarrier@charter.net> on behalf of Leonard Carrier
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 2:54 PM
To: Gordon Smith
Cc: Jan Davis;Chris Pelly;cecil@braveulysses.com;Terry Bellamy;Esther Manheimer;marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Re: Basilica

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 McKibbin 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: 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

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Sincerely,

Leonard S. Carrier
26 Stonebridge Dr.
Asheville 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: BARBARA GROOME <bgroome@charter.net> on behalf of BARBARA GROOME
Sent: Sunday, August 26, 2012 5:13 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: city property

Thank you for your response.
I will read carefully.
Barbara Groome

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 26, 2012 3:54 PM
To: 'BARBARA GROOME'
Subject: RE: city property

Ms. Groome

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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.

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pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working very hard toward that end.

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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

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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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbon and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should have us at a decision point 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 ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: BARBARA GROOME [<mailto:bgroome@charter.net>]
Sent: Sunday, August 26, 2012 8:50 AM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: city property

Hello Mr. Hunt-

I am writing to ask you to do all you can to save the land around St. Lawrence Basilica and put something there appropriate to the space; honoring the cultural and historical legacy that the church gives us. I realize with big money floating around and new tax dollars looking the City in the face, the temptation is to allow the building of a new hotel. After looking at the big box known as the Aloft Hotel, the urge is even greater to allow a more graceful, complimentary structure near St. Lawrence.

Thank you for the work and care you give to making our city the best, and for your consideration of this comment.

Sincerely,

Barbara Groome

13 Cedar Chine

Asheville NC 28803

230-7348

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Saturday, August 25, 2012 8:27 AM
To: 'Dot Sulock'
Subject: RE: hotel adjacent to St. Lawrence

Dot

Thank you. But only vote for me as long as I would earn it!

I think many well-intended folks in the community equate environmental responsibility with resisting greater development near their homes in town and also returning as much of our urban environment to natural green space as possible. A few years back, I would have been sensitive to those sentiments. But I think the trend that results in the most negatives for us environmentally is sprawl development and fragmentation/loss of the rural and natural landscape. That is a regional problem of course, but I think our urban duty is for already-developed areas to absorb population growth, so we should pursue thoughtful development consistent with principals espoused by <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/> and <http://www.newurbanism.org/>

I also think those principals yield higher-quality community living in addition to correlating completely with environmental duty.

If you are curious, browse those sites.

marc

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

From: Dot Sulock [mailto:dsulock@unca.edu]
Sent: Friday, August 24, 2012 12:47 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: hotel adjacent to St. Lawrence

Hi Marc,

I really appreciate this detailed statement and your cleverness in writing it and sharing it!

Keeps us well-meaning but uninformed liberals from an overly simplistic "nasty hotel or park" perspective!

I will vote for you always and am glad you are willing to help our fair city.

Dot

On Aug 24, 2012, at 10:09 AM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Dot

>

> You and I have met a couple times; I am a friend of Joe's. Below is my current "take" on all this. I'd be curious as to why a hotel/parking/retail would concern you compared to, say, a same-size/shape building with apartments/parking/retail.

>

> Hope you are well.

>

> Thanks

> 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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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> ☐ Ensures that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica.

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>

>

> Marc Hunt

> Asheville City Council Member

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Dot Sulock [mailto:dsulock@unca.edu]

> Sent: Friday, August 24, 2012 10:06 AM

> To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com

> Subject: hotel adjacent to St. Lawrence

>

> I hope you will vote against a hotel in this historic heart of Asheville.

> I certainly will not be supporting or voting for candidates supporting a hotel in that location.

> Lots of room in other places in Asheville for new hotels, if needed.

> Dot Sulock

>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Saturday, August 25, 2012 7:41 AM
To: 'Tracey Turner'
Cc: judydehavi@msn.com
Subject: RE: protecting our Basilica

Ms. Turner

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. Below is my “take” on all this that I am sharing with those who write. Before diving into that, I’d like to offer some clarification. In your email, you say, “There is a beautiful plan for the development of the property across from the Basilica that is multi-use and a part of the human scale of the city that so charmed me. Why, with no architectural provisions in place, would you propose another high rise?” Please understand that I am not aware of anyone on City Council that favors a development out of scale compared to the one you are speaking of. No one is advocating a “high rise”, though some in the community continue to spread that mistaken notion. Under the RFP process we currently have underway, and under any sale we might contemplate, the City has the opportunity to negotiate for and require whatever design/height/mass/site plan/setback limitations we wish. Since we own the property, we can go much further than our zoning code would otherwise allow if we were not the owner/seller.

This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community’s great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the Basilica, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
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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: Tracey Turner [mailto:traceyt@buncombe.main.nc.us]
Sent: Friday, August 24, 2012 3:47 PM
To: JUDITH DE* HAVILLAND; mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com; jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrisspelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Re: protecting our Basilica

Council Persons -

I have long felt that there are no "Keepers of the Asheville Historic Vision," if you will. I work at the Visitors Center and deal with visitors who have come here because they have heard that our city is charming, has a personal scale and our downtown fulfills that anticipation.

I, myself, was sold on Asheville when I stepped into the architecture of 3-4 story buildings with their embellishments. That was almost 18 years ago and it was a far different downtown. Still, I worked downtown and began a Downtown District Merchants' Association. Over time, Urban Pioneers revitalized downtown, returned its charms and drew and enchanted visitors from all over the world. I deal with nation-wide and international guests every week. They have come to Biltmore, to the mountains, to a world of active sports – and to experience downtown. All of them want to experience downtown, even if they have only a few hours.

The overwhelming scale you have allowed in the city proper disregards the history of our development and the legacy of the Twenties when much of Asheville was designed and, in large measure, still defines the town.

I have lived in and left large cities that are comprised of high rises. The high rises here, except for their residents, obstruct the citizens enjoyment or even awareness of our extensive natural beauty. It also creates "canyons." Asheville's history has no place for "canyons."

There is a beautiful plan for the development of the property across from the Basilica that is multi-use and a part of the human scale of the city that so charmed me. Why, with no architectural provisions in place, would you propose another high rise?

It's a travesty and a heartbreak.

Please, do not kill the Goose that lays the Golden Eggs in our town.

Sincerely,
Tracey Turner

On 8/24/12 7:42 AM, "JUDITH DE* HAVILLAND" <judydehavi@msn.com> wrote:

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, Council Members,

I understand that on Sept. 11, 2012 at 5pm you will be voting on whether to sell the property across from

our beautiful Basilica of St. Lawrence in downtown Asheville to either the McKibbon Hotel Developers to build yet another huge hotel or to the Catholic Diocese to construct a more pleasing plaza which would enhance this property and make it a public place for all while at the same time preserving the environment around our historic jewel, the Basilica.

I am a citizen of Asheville who frequently visits downtown as well as a Mass attendee on Sundays. I feel strongly about this issue and hope you listen to all of us who intend to attend THIS VERY IMPORTANT MEETING on the 11th of September.

Sincerely,

Judy DeHavilland

600 Merrimon Ave.

Asheville, NC 28804

P.S. I hope all of you have viewed the video of the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza at

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

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2012 9:41 PM
To: 'Gary Scalise'
Subject: RE: Basilica Proposal is a great idea

Mr Scalise

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Gary Scalise [mailto:gscalise@juno.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2012 9:37 PM

To: jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrisspelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com;

emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com

Cc: rdlive@charter.net

Subject: Basilica Proposal is a great idea

To Council Members:

I strongly support the Proposal from St. Lawrence Basilica to develop a center, in the architectural image of the Basilica, at the property directly across the street. I strongly **OPPOSE** the possible notion of building (yet another?) hotel on that property.

Rationale...There are other options for locations to build commercial properties such as a hotel, several options, and of reasonable choice. There are no reasonable expectations that the Basilica, which is a Landmark of Historic Significance to the city of Asheville, will be moved or razed, in the short or long term. The Basilica's proposal is a wonderful idea, with great merit and sure to provide a positive reception by the general citizenry of the Asheville. The value of such a faith center clearly outshines the (questionable?) need for another hotel. The choice is clear, and your decisions in this matter are being monitored closely.

Frankly, if any of council members vote for development of a hotel on said property, I will NOT support you in any future expectations for your holding a council seat or any other office in this City of Asheville.

The message again, united is >>>>

"We do not accept the 2007 McKibbin RFP as valid. We do not support a hotel on this site. We ask that you drop the 2007 RFP and abide by North Carolina General Statute 160A-266 written expressly to protect historic properties like the Basilica. The choice you make for this important piece of property comes down to an historic landmark vs. a brand hotel."

Gary D. Scalise, M.S.,CQE
IRCA Registered Lead Assessor & Instructor
191 Sweetwater Hills Drive
Hendersonville, NC 28791
(828)891-2822 office (800)804-2539 pager

Ben Fulmer

From: Cheryl Hemmer <cdhemmer@gmail.com> on behalf of Cheryl Hemmer
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 10:02 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: opposed to hotel in front of St. Lawrence

Thanks Marc, for your thorough explanation of the situation. I had heard that selling to the church was an option and agree that it would be better for the city to decide than the church. It is encouraging to hear the details of the process and gives me more faith that you and the council will make a good choice.

Cheryl Hemmer

On Tue, Aug 14, 2012 at 12:25 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms Hemmer

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed

with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am very excited about the potential for development of the site to include a large publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working very hard toward that end.

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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

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. The design McKibbon has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, set-backs, and public plaza very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. The 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should have us at a decision point 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 ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: Cheryl Hemmer [mailto:cdhemmer@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:04 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: opposed to hotel in front of St. Lawrence

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: Wendy Bell <wbellnc@yahoo.com> on behalf of Wendy Bell
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 2:32 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: St Lawrence property

very very helpful. Thanks for an insider's view! The pocket plaza may well be a far better solution than a traditional park.

the bells

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Wendy Bell' <wbellnc@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:31 PM
Subject: RE: St Lawrence property

Mr and Ms Bell

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Wendy Bell [mailto:wbellnc@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 7:02 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St Lawrence property

Asheville doesn't need another hotel.

Please give more attention to what is best for our city as far as use of space, parking, and employment opportunities overall vs honoring a past/lapsed/revived contract with McKibbon. The most recently offered compromise plan is better than the original, but is this really what we need?

Thank you--
Joe and Wendy Bell

Ben Fulmer

From: Jean Ann Wheelock <jeanann.wheelock@gmail.com> on behalf of Jean Ann Wheelock
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:54 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: property across from Basilica

Mr Hunt,

I appreciate your well thought out and articulated response. I trust that you are committed to the best possible outcome for this critical property and will continue to monitor the decision-making process.

Kind regards,

Jean Ann Wheelock

On Tue, Aug 14, 2012 at 1:13 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

MS Wheelock

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Marc Hunt

Asheville City Council Member

From: Jean Ann Wheelock [mailto:jeanann.wheelock@gmail.com]

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: Timothy Burgin <timothy@yogabasics.com> on behalf of Timothy Burgin
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:43 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: City-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Hi Mark,

Thanks for the email. I appreciate the details that you gave and I agree with everything you wrote. Specifically I agree that creating a park or selling to the church do not make sense.

Let me know how I can support your perspective on this issue.

Thanks,
Timothy

On Aug 14, 2012, at 1:00 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Mr Burgin

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. Regarding sales price, we will make sure we have a quality professional appraisal and receive at least fair market value. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Timothy Burgin [mailto:timothy@yogabasics.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 12:10 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: City-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Dear AVL City Council,

I am in support of the revised McKibbin plan for the city-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. From the renderings it looks good and fits in with the surrounding buildings.

The one concern I have is the selling price. I do not think the city should be selling the property at a loss. At the very least we should get what we paid for it and break even, but I'd prefer to see the city make a profit off of this real estate investment.

Thanks,
Timothy Burgin
135 Louisiana Ave
Asheville, NC 28806

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:19 PM
To: 'Sally G Kammann'
Subject: RE: Development of Site near US Cellular Center and Basilica of St. Lawrence

Ms Kamman

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am very excited about the potential for development of the site to include a large publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working very hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, set-backs, and public plaza very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should have us at a decision point 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 ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: Sally G Kammann [mailto:sk22334@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:31 PM
To: mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com
Cc: emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; Cecil Bothwell; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com; jandavis@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Subject: Development of Site near US Cellular Center and Basilica of St. Lawrence

Hello Mayor Bellamy and City Council members,

Much is happening at this time that will greatly impact the beauty and viability of downtown Asheville. As a resident of downtown, I am writing to urge you to vote for the Basilica and Kessler proposal for the city property across the street from the church and the civic center.

The building and plaza designed by the Kessler group is beautiful and very harmonious with one of our "crown jewel" of downtown Asheville. It will become another draw for visitors and area residents. Shops and restaurants which generate sales tax will add to the downtown value. It is my experience that we can more than a sufficient number of hotel rooms available for our out of town visitors.

The Kessler group has proved that they can deliver an attractive, pleasing building. The McKibbin group, on the other hand, has delivered a disappointing, architecturally inappropriate building.

Please vote for accepting the Basilica proposal.

Thank your time and attention.

Sally Kammann

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:14 PM
To: SallieNeville@aol.com
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence park

Ms Neville

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: SallieNeville@aol.com [mailto:SallieNeville@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:11 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence park

Please choose to put a park on the land in front of St. Lawrence Basilica. It will benefit all people (not just one developer) and add to the beauty and prosperity of Asheville.

Thank you,
Sallie Neville

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 1:09 PM
To: 'Diane Sparks'
Subject: RE: City-owned property across from the Basilica of St Lawrence

Ms Sparks

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Diane Sparks [mailto:dsparks@thedmshop.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:42 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: City-owned property across from the Basilica of St Lawrence

In any city, a park restores our contact with nature.
How beautiful Asheville looks each season of the year will be reflected in a simple park for all to use and appreciate.

Please don't sell out to commercial interests this time.

Diane Sparks
The DM Shop Inc
108 Mountain Meadow Circle
Weaverville, NC 28787
(828) 645-8411

dsparks@thedmshop.com



Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:56 PM
To: 'MARNIE MIKELL'
Subject: RE: Hotel Plan Near Basilica

Ms Mikell

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: MARNIE MIKELL [mailto:artdept@great-eastern-sun.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 12:43 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Hotel Plan Near Basilica

As a resident of Asheville, I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed hotel plan for the city-owned property across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. A recent poll conducted by PARC shows that most of those responding favor a public park on that location. It is open greenspace that would display the beautiful Basilica of St. Lawrence, and greenspace that would give a respite from the concrete and steel of the city. The hotel would make a lot of money for one developer. The park would create a memorable experience for Asheville residents and visitors alike.

Thank you for considering my message.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:47 PM
To: 'Barry Oliver'
Subject: RE: downtown property

Mr Oliver

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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The Scenario I Most Worry About – Surface parking lots kill downtown vibrancy. I fear that ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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: Barry Oliver [mailto:barryasheville@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 1:17 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: downtown property

I favor a park or perhaps selling the property to St. Lawrence. I do not favor another ugly hotel downtown.

Barry Oliver

15 Edgemont Road

Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:47 PM
To: 'Mary Evers'
Subject: RE: Proposed construction in the St. Lawrence Church area

Mr and Ms Evers

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. 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 the 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.

Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am very excited about the potential for development of the site to include a large publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working very hard toward that end.

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, McKibbin, 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. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, set-backs, and public plaza very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Mary Evers [mailto:mdevers03@yahoo.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:46 PM
To: 'will demull'
Subject: RE:

Mr. Demull

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: will demull [mailto:w_demull@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 1:20 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject:

Mon. 8/13/12

Council,

I believe the best use for the land across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence would be to build a public park.

Thank you,

W. DeMull

w_demull@yahoo.com

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:42 PM
To: SchreiberE@aol.com
Subject: RE: Please make the area a park!

Mr and Ms Schenck

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

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Public Park Space and/or and Buildings? – Great urban design is key to being a great city. A proper mix of well-designed public spaces, parks, infrastructure elements, and land uses like residential buildings, visitor amenities, retail, and offices is key. 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 and continue to play key roles in getting some great projects accomplished. I do not disagree that a stand-alone well-designed public park might be nice here, but I do not see that as an option here. Master plans the City has developed with exhaustive public input over the last five or so years have established many project priorities, and an additional park in this area of downtown did not register as a strategic priority in those plans. Given Asheville's very 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 high-priority parks and, greenways from other parts of town, I cannot support another full-scale park downtown. Our recently completed Downtown Master Plan did highlight that a combination of a well-designed private development and a public plaza would be a great outcome for this site and could strongly enhance the appeal and vibrancy of the Battery Park area. I am very excited about the potential for development of the site to include a large publicly-owned plaza – a “pocket park” of sorts - well-designed and including natural horticultural features. I am certain that this plaza in conjunction great architecture for privately-developed buildings and improved pedestrian/transportation infrastructure in that neighborhood would be a great outcome, so I am working very hard toward that end.

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Hotel versus Another Type of Development? – The City is currently in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, with structured parking included. The design McKibbin has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, set-backs, and public plaza very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. The negotiation is based on McKibbin'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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: SchreiberE@aol.com [mailto:SchreiberE@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:12 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Please make the area a park!

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:40 PM
To: 'Andra Cagle'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Green

Ms Cagle

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

Alongside our outstanding regional setting, our vibrant, historic, and authentic downtown is one of our community's great assets. I am fully committed to improving it. The Haywood street site is a critically important opportunity to enhance downtown. I am committed to an outcome for the site which:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Andra Cagle [mailto:h2andra@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:30 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence Green

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

Any saved greenspace is valuable-would New York be the same without Central Park? Large buildings block the great views that people come to visit and/ or move to Asheville. Please don't make us into every other city!

Thank You,

Andra Cagle
Concerned citizen of Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:36 PM
To: 'Robert Sauer'
Subject: RE: McKibbon's Haywood Hotel

Mr. Sauer

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. This matter offers complex challenges and complex solutions. There has been a bit of misunderstanding and some outright misinformation afloat regarding it. Please bear with me as I share my current thinking.

First, regarding your specific suggestions, I do not disagree, and I would encourage you to continue to engage!

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- ☐ From a design and quality standpoint enhances and adds to the vibrancy of that portion of downtown and especially complements the Basilica, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
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like this. 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. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza.

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. The design McKibbon has preliminarily shared indicate building height, mass, set-backs, and public plaza very similar to what the basilica folks have suggested. The 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 is a healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel rooms. I want to learn more about that, and do not immediately buy into the suggestion that we have too many hotels downtown already. 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.

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. Tax revenue generated from the site is key to expanding our ability to accomplish our goals.

Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbon and other stakeholders including the Basilica and the Asheville design center to see whether or not an acceptable site plan, design, and development agreement might be arranged. That process is ongoing and should have us at a decision point 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 ongoing political crossfire and stalemate along with limited unwillingness 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

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

From: Robert Sauer [mailto:robertoliver@charter.net]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 6:34 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: McKibbon's Haywood Hotel

Council Members,

Some notes on the newest McKibbon hotel project on Haywood St:

The presentation of the newest plan shows an option that includes realignment of Haywood Street to accomodate a larger plaza approaching St. Lawrence Basilica. The additional land would help to create the larger open public space that most people would prefer there and remove an awkward intersection. Please, consider making that happen.

The second floor garage windows are a dead space, but, could feature balconies or rooms to overlook Haywood. The garage could be recessed.

Also, Michael McDonough's suggestions to improve the roads for pedestrians by narrowing and paving with brick would greatly enhance the area. This would reinforce the plaza concept and increase safety in a congested area.

Sincerely,
Robert Sauer
Asheville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Andra Cagle <h2andra@yahoo.com> on behalf of Andra Cagle
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:30 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence Green

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

Any saved greenspace is valuable-would New York be the same without Central Park? Large buildings block the great views that people come to visit and/ or move to Asheville. Please don't make us into every other city!

Thank You,

Andra Cagle
Concerned citizen of Asheville

Ben Fulmer

From: SchreiberE@aol.com
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:12 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Please make the area a park!

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: Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com> on behalf of Cecil Bothwell
Sent: Sunday, August 12, 2012 7:17 AM
To: councilgroup Group;Gary Jackson;Dawa Hitch
Subject: Asheville voters DO NOT want a hotel on Haywood property

For immediate release 8/11/12

What: Public opinion poll of Asheville voters concerning Haywood Street property

Who: Cecil Bothwell, PARCPAC and Voice Broadcasting Corp. (an automated polling company)

Contact: 828-713-8840

Here is the text used in the public opinion poll of Asheville voters:

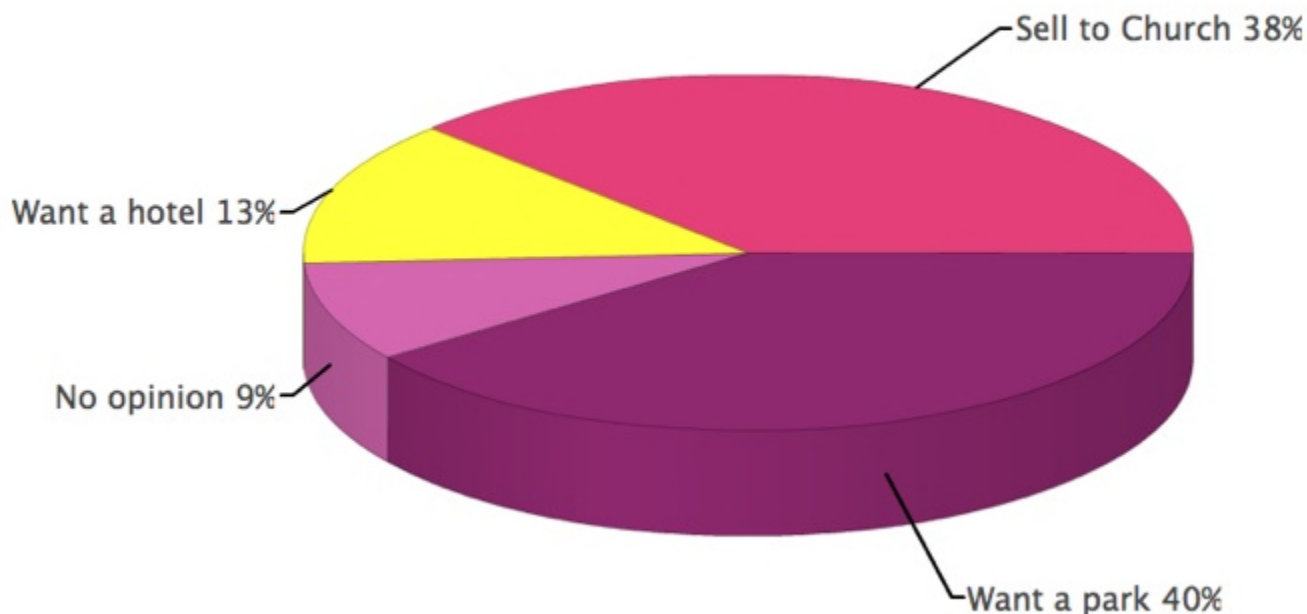
"The first question is about the city-owned land across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence. Some people favor a hotel, others selling the land to the church for their development, and others favor a public park.

If you favor the McKibbin Hotel, please press 1

If you favor selling the land to the Diocese of Charlotte, press 2

If you favor a public park, press 3

If you have no opinion, press 4"



A new poll released today shows that most Asheville voters do not want to see a hotel on the city-owned property across from the Civic Center.

PARC PAC obtained a phone list of all Asheville voters who cast ballots in at least two of the last three City elections. That list included 8,713 consistently engaged voters: Unaffiliated, Republican, Democrat. We employed an automated phone polling company to conduct the survey. 40 percent favored a public park, 35 percent want to sell the land to the Catholic church and 25 percent favor a hotel on the site (the rest indicated "no opinion.")



The poll was conducted after the *Citizen-Times*' big front-page story last Tuesday and McKibbin's public presentation of its plan. So even after all of our persuasion the developers must muster, the public still opposes a hotel in that location.

A seven story hotel looming over the Basilica came in dead last among those who answered the question.



The church has said that it would use the property for parking for now and would sell at a later date for development. This is their rendering of a four-story building and a paved patio.

Some people are under the mistaken impression that the church wants the property for greenspace but that is not the case.

I believe it is time to withdraw the defunct deal the City McKibbin back in 2008 (they defaulted on their contract to promise to complete the project within 2-3 years). We need to rethink use of this space in line with citizen preferences.

-Cecil Bothwell
Asheville City Council

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



Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 11:26 AM
To: Esther Manheimer
Subject: Upcoming discussion re: Basilica
Attachments: Public Meeting Presentation_Ashville Haywood Property_080712_FINAL.pdf

Esther

Thanks for stepping carefully as we get set to have discussions w/ the basilica folks and then discuss it at Council next week.

In advance, I wanted to share two things:

- The below email exchange w/ Ms. Livezey. In inviting us to meet with them, she made reference to their concerns over public statements made by some members of Council. Cannot help but think that some of her retorts below are what they want to talk with us about.
- McKibben's PowerPoint from their Tuesday night session. You might already have this.

Are you going to the CIBO lunch w/Dalton at noon? I might attend...

Marc

From: Rita Livezey [mailto:rdlive@charter.net]
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 1:00 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Councilman Hunt,

First, thank you for your thoughtful response and for keeping me updated on your evolving position in this matter. There is now obviously a great deal more common ground between us, and that is encouraging. However, as I'm sure you know, there are some key points of divergence.

High-rise

You mention that "many in the community seem to fear a high-rise." You bet, and for two very simple reasons: 1) 51 Biltmore and 2) your remarks about the Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments.

1) 51 Biltmore, a McKibben development, has utterly stunned and shocked residents and visitors of Asheville with its glaring inappropriateness in scale, style, and location. And, one must also note that it totally dwarfs, overshadows, and isolates Trinity Episcopal and the other historic churches from the Biltmore Ave. corridor. You may not be aware of the intense community dislike of that development. Everyone I have talked to both in my capacity with the Basilica, and also in private, day-to-day, non-political situations, asks "On whose watch did THAT happen?" and "Never again!" To borrow your phrase, "The Scenario I Most Worry About" is exactly the same thing happening to the Basilica, and by the same developer who has demonstrated such complete lack of sensitivity to the unique character of downtown. While we agree that surface parking is not an ideal long term use of the Haywood St. property, it is far

from the worst scenario because it is at least temporary and could always be changed. However, if another mistake like 51 Biltmore were to occur, it would be permanent.

2) You speak of a hotel that would "fit height-wise between the neighboring Vanderbilt Apartments and Battery Park Apartments." Councilman, by Asheville standards, those ARE high-rises. I'm trying to imagine something the height of Battery Park being built on the odd little triangle of land on Haywood St., and still managing to leave enough open space to, as you say, "ensure that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica." That conjures up a very strange vision indeed.

Hotel vs. Another Type of Development

As you are aware, the feasibility study done in connection with the original RFQ did not support further hotel construction and indicated we are above supply for many years into the future. Since those studies were done, occupancy rates have decreased further. You say you "have recently been hearing that there does seem to be healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel choices" and that you want to learn more about that. What you are hearing, and perhaps wishing, is not to our knowledge substantiated by studies. You may be a man of vision, Councilman, but facts are stubborn things:

From: Dennis Hulsing [<mailto:dennishulsing@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 8:07 AM
To: Herman.Turk@wcghotels.com; abc@shghotels.com; afraga@fircgroup.com; dpearson@hlihotels.com
Subject: Re: Asheville Haywood Street Basilica Site

Gentlemen,

As I indicated in our conversation Friday, the WNC average is 51% occupancy for 2011. The upscale hotels in WNC market average 60% occupancy, while the Asheville MSA average is 62%. Our industry standard is 65% to break even. All three are currently well below the 65% industry break even point. When Aloft opens for business occupancies could even drop further, let alone if they elect to support construction of McKibbons hotel.

Thank you,
Dennis I. Hulsing

DH/sc

While you may find it easy to dismiss hotel owners' objections as self serving or wanting to discourage competition, the City risks treading a veritable legal mine field when it conveys city-owned property in direct competition with private groups that have already invested and risked building in this city. The City is in fact competing with these private groups in sites such as 51 Biltmore and now potentially the Haywood St. site.

Even if one could demonstrate a proven need for additional hotel rooms, there are many sites more suitable: the Three Brothers' Restaurant site now available, the city-owned employee vehicle lot behind Cellular One, or the ATT lot on Haywood. All more commodious properties, easy walking distance from Cellular One, more convenient to the Interstate, less likely to increase traffic congestion on Haywood St., and most importantly, not in the heart of an historic cluster of architecturally significant buildings.

Basilica "Withdrawing From Discussions"

You state, "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." First, the term "control" is inaccurate: the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City and commits us to "show good faith in keeping discussions with the City open regarding pricing, meeting development requirements, timelines, and future controlling interests that the City may require."

Second, what actually happened, as one of our consultants, Matt Mores, writes:

"In March 2012 I had only one meeting with ADC that was very successful. This ended with receiving their support to help with designs of our plaza and they agreed to support, at that time, the Basilica having private state statute rights to the Haywood site development. The next day the director of ADC called me to apologize that he had to reverse their decision to support us and that he was informed by *certain city staff* (emphasis added) not to get ADC involved with the Basilica 'because this is too hot of an issue'."

Who brought the ADC into the mix anyway? The Basilica did not. Esther Manheimer told me the City did not. Did they inject themselves or did someone else bring them in?

"Delegating That Much Authority"

You are "uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community." Again, the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City, etc. Those are the terms, which, if you were not aware previously, should now alleviate your discomfort. Why you would want to perpetrate the false notion that the Basilica would be free to construct whatever and however we wanted without City input is puzzling, to say the least.

"Not A Hugely Different Outcome"

You wrote, "Note that representatives of the Basilica say they fully intend to sell the property to a developer just as the City might... 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." In fact, our approach and vision IS hugely different: 1) Our motivation of protecting and preserving not only the Basilica but the surrounding historical district is primary. 2) The scope of what we envision is smaller and more in keeping with the surroundings. This smaller scale is not financially viable without the philanthropic interests we bring to the table. 3) We have experts in Guastavino's architecture most qualified to ensure the Basilica is not damaged and the plaza design is compatible with its surroundings.

The Scenario You Most Worry About

Last February, when the Diocese's amended offer was made, you may well have been skeptical about our ability to pull together sufficient design, development, and investment resources to move forward with a plaza, and that the property would languish as surface parking indefinitely. However, as you may know, we now have a partnership with the Kessler Collection who, in the Grand Bohemian, unlike McKibbin, does demonstrate sensitivity to location and appropriateness of style. In addition, we have relationships with philanthropists as well as experts in the architecture of Guastavino, most notably Professor John Ochsendorf from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who has agreed to act as our consultant in design and preservation aspects. The Basilica is the most qualified steward of this site and best able to protect the Basilica and to work with the City to ensure St. Lawrence Plaza is designed and developed in the community's interests.

Very sincerely,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

From: Marc Hunt [<mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com>]

Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:30 AM

To: 'Rita Livezey'

Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Ms. Livezey

Thank you for your continued input.

I wanted to make sure you have my most recent "take" on this situation, below.

Marc

+++++

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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, McKibbin, 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 McKibbin 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: Rita Livezey [<mailto:rdlive@charter.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, July 31, 2012 2:44 PM
To: 'Cecil Bothwell'; 'Chris Pelly'; 'Esther Manheimer'; 'Gordon Smith'; 'Jan Davis'; 'Marc Hunt'; Mayor Terry Belamy
Subject: Haywood Street Property Petition

Madam Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, and Members of the Council,

Attached please find the output file of an online petition signed by over **860** people to date—voters and tourists alike—urging you to negotiate to sell the city-owned Haywood Street property opposite the Basilica of St. Lawrence to the Diocese of Charlotte so that the Basilica may become the steward of the site to protect and preserve the surroundings and the Basilica.

You may view the full text of the petition online and read people's comments at <http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

We hope you will take this strong and ever-growing popular support for the Basilica's position into account as you weigh the options for the fate of this property.

Best regards,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Vicki Nichols <vnichols1@earthlink.net> on behalf of Vicki Nichols
Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2012 3:39 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Basilica Park

Thanks!! Please do advocate for smoke free public spaces!!!

From: Marc Hunt [<mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2012 2:11 PM
To: 'Vicki Nichols'
Subject: RE: Basilica Park

Ms. Nichols

We now have a no smoking ordinance that applies to our parks, but not our streets and sidewalks. I'd like to look at expanding coverage as you suggest, and will look into that.

Thank You

Marc Hunt

From: Vicki Nichols [<mailto:vnichols1@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 1:19 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Basilica Park

Thanks for your response. Here's what I don't like about parks that are too small – there is no place to get away from cigarette smoke (or even worse – cigar smoke)!!! If Asheville is going to have parks – please make them SMOKE FREE!!

This is why I don't ever attend Bele Chere, or fireworks downtown, or Shindig on the Green – because in those tightly packed crowds some jerk will always light up a cigarette or cigar without any consideration for those around him or her, and it becomes impossible to escape their second hand smoke. The city of Greenville, SC is smart. They BAN smoking within 20 or 30 feet of all outdoor restaurant spaces, no smoking in any outdoor restaurant seating areas, and when they have an outdoor festival downtown, there is NO SMOKING within the festival area. It's WONDERFUL!

If Greenville can do that, so can Asheville!

Thanks!
Vicki Nichols

From: Marc Hunt [<mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com>]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:45 AM
To: 'Vicki Nichols'
Subject: RE: Basilica Park

Ms Nickols

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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.

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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 McKibbin 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: Vicki Nichols [<mailto:vnichols1@earthlink.net>]
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!!

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2012 7:55 AM
To: 'Jon'
Subject: RE: Too late for the green St. Lawrence Basilica?
Attachments: Haywood_View from Basilica Rendering_Entire Bldg.pdf; Haywood_View from US Cellular Rendering.pdf; Plaza Option 1.jpg; Plaza option 2.jpg

Jon

Thanks. I thought it was probably you when I responded earlier, but it would have been a bit embarrassing to have gotten that wrong.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness on this and your willingness to support the process. Stay tuned for when Council is to reach a decision point in 4-6 weeks on this, try to learn up a little on the specific proposal that will materialize then, and then weigh-in again with a thoughtful email to Council. (Our session next week is a simple staff update). Inspire others to engage similarly. Let me know if you have questions along the way.

McKibbon unveiled more detail at their presentation last night, and I have attached some of what they provided here. Still a lot of work to do...

Marc

From: Jon [mailto:anderson2118@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Tuesday, August 07, 2012 10:41 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Too late for the green St. Lawrence Basilica?

Marc -

BTW - this is Jon from CCA.

I love your approach and agree with everything you outlined. If I can help support your efforts, let me know how I can participate.

Best, Jon

Sent from my iPad

On Aug 5, 2012, at 12:08 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Jon

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.
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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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Jon [<mailto:anderson2118@bellsouth.net>]
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: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net> on behalf of Rita Livezey
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 1:00 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Councilman Hunt,

First, thank you for your thoughtful response and for keeping me updated on your evolving position in this matter. There is now obviously a great deal more common ground between us, and that is encouraging. However, as I'm sure you know, there are some key points of divergence.

High-rise

You mention that "many in the community seem to fear a high-rise." You bet, and for two very simple reasons: 1) 51 Biltmore and 2) your remarks about the Vanderbilt and Battery Park Apartments.

1) 51 Biltmore, a McKibbin development, has utterly stunned and shocked residents and visitors of Asheville with its glaring inappropriateness in scale, style, and location. And, one must also note that it totally dwarfs, over shadows, and isolates Trinity Episcopal and the other historic churches from the Biltmore Ave. corridor. You may not be aware of the intense community dislike of that development. Everyone I have talked to both in my capacity with the Basilica, and also in private, day-to-day, non-political situations, asks "On whose watch did THAT happen?" and "Never again!" To borrow your phrase, "The Scenario I Most Worry About" is exactly the same thing happening to the Basilica, and by the same developer who has demonstrated such complete lack of sensitivity to the unique character of downtown. While we agree that surface parking is not an ideal long term use of the Haywood St. property, it is far from the worst scenario because it is at least temporary and could always be changed. However, if another mistake like 51 Biltmore were to occur, it would be permanent.

2) Your speak of a hotel that would "fit height-wise between the neighboring Vanderbilt Apartments and Battery Park Apartments." Councilman, by Asheville standards, those ARE high-rises. I'm trying to imagine something the height of Battery Park being built on the odd little triangle of land on Haywood St., and still managing to leave enough open space to, as you say, "ensure that any structures are set back from the Basilica so as to maintain site-lines to the Basilica." That conjures up a very strange vision indeed.

Hotel vs. Another Type of Development

As you are aware, the feasibility study done in connection with the original RFQ did not support further hotel construction and indicated we are above supply for many years into the future. Since those studies were done, occupancy rates have decreased further. You say you "have recently been hearing that there does seem to be healthy and growing demand of quality downtown hotel choices" and that you want to learn more about that. What you are hearing, and perhaps wishing, is not to our knowledge substantiated by studies. You may be a man of vision, Councilman, but facts are stubborn things:

From: Dennis Hulsing [<mailto:dennishulsing@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 8:07 AM
To: Herman.Turk@wcghotels.com; abc@shghotels.com; afraga@fircgroup.com; dpearson@hlihotels.com
Subject: Re: Asheville Haywood Street Basilica Site

Gentlemen,

As I indicated in our conversation Friday, the WNC average is 51% occupancy for 2011. The upscale hotels in WNC market average 60% occupancy, while the Asheville MSA average is 62%. Our industry

standard is 65% to break even. All three are currently well below the 65% industry break even point. When Aloft opens for business occupancies could even drop further, let alone if they elect to support construction of McKibbons hotel.

Thank you,
Dennis I. Hulsing

DH/sc

While you may find it easy to dismiss hotel owners' objections as self serving or wanting to discourage competition, the City risks treading a veritable legal mine field when it conveys city-owned property in direct competition with private groups that have already invested and risked building in this city. The City is in fact competing with these private groups in sites such as 51 Biltmore and now potentially the Haywood St. site.

Even if one could demonstrate a proven need for additional hotel rooms, there are many sites more suitable: the Three Brothers' Restaurant site now available, the city-owned employee vehicle lot behind Cellular One, or the ATT lot on Haywood. All more commodious properties, easy walking distance from Cellular One, more convenient to the Interstate, less likely to increase traffic congestion on Haywood St., and most importantly, not in the heart of an historic cluster of architecturally significant buildings.

Basilica "Withdrawing From Discussions"

You state, "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." First, the term "control" is inaccurate: the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City and commits us to "show good faith in keeping discussions with the City open regarding pricing, meeting development requirements, timelines, and future controlling interests that the City may require."

Second, what actually happened, as one of our consultants, Matt Mores, writes:

"In March 2012 I had only one meeting with ADC that was very successful. This ended with receiving their support to help with designs of our plaza and they agreed to support, at that time, the Basilica having private state statute rights to the Haywood site development. The next day the director of ADC called me to apologize that he had to reverse their decision to support us and that he was informed by *certain city staff* (emphasis added) not to get ADC involved with the Basilica 'because this is too hot of an issue'."

Who brought the ADC into the mix anyway? The Basilica did not. Esther Manheimer told me the City did not. Did they inject themselves or did someone else bring them in?

"Delegating That Much Authority"

You are "uncomfortable delegating that much authority to any group for a site so important to the whole community." Again, the Diocese/Basilica offer clearly states that design and development would conform to requirements of the City, etc. Those are the terms, which, if you were not aware previously, should now alleviate your discomfort. Why you would want to perpetrate the false notion that the Basilica would be free to construct whatever and however we wanted without City input is puzzling, to say the least.

"Not A Hugely Different Outcome"

You wrote, "Note that representatives of the Basilica say they fully intend to sell the property to a developer just as the City might... 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." In fact, our approach and vision IS hugely different: 1) Our motivation of protecting and preserving not only the Basilica but the surrounding historical district is primary. 2) The scope of what we envision is smaller and more in keeping with the surroundings. This smaller scale is not financially viable without the philanthropic interests we bring to the table. 3) We have experts in Guastavino's architecture most qualified to ensure the Basilica is not damaged and the plaza design is compatible with its surroundings.

The Scenario You Most Worry About

Last February, when the Diocese's amended offer was made, you may well have been skeptical about our ability to pull together sufficient design, development, and investment resources to move forward with a plaza, and that the property would languish as surface parking indefinitely. However, as you may know, we now have a partnership with the Kessler Collection who, in the Grand Bohemian, unlike McKibbin, does demonstrate sensitivity to location and appropriateness of style. In addition, we have relationships with philanthropists as well as experts in the architecture of Guastavino, most notably Professor John Ochsendorf from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who has agreed to act as our consultant in design and preservation aspects. The Basilica is the most qualified steward of this site and best able to protect the Basilica and to work with the City to ensure St. Lawrence Plaza is designed and developed in the community's interests.

Very sincerely,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]

Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:30 AM

To: 'Rita Livezey'

Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Petition

Ms. Livezey

Thank you for your continued input.

I wanted to make sure you have my most recent "take" on this situation, below.

Marc

+++++

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.
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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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Rita Livezey [mailto:rdlive@charter.net]
Sent: Tuesday, July 31, 2012 2:44 PM
To: 'Cecil Bothwell'; 'Chris Pelly'; 'Esther Manheimer'; 'Gordon Smith'; 'Jan Davis'; 'Marc Hunt'; Mayor Terry Belamy
Subject: Haywood Street Property Petition

Madam Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, and Members of the Council,

Attached please find the output file of an online petition signed by over **860** people to date—voters and tourists alike—urging you to negotiate to sell the city-owned Haywood Street property opposite the Basilica of St. Lawrence to the Diocese of Charlotte so that the Basilica may become the steward of the site to protect and preserve the surroundings and the Basilica.

You may view the full text of the petition online and read people's comments at
<http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

We hope you will take this strong and ever-growing popular support for the Basilica's position into account as you weigh the options for the fate of this property.

Best regards,

Rita Livezey
Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Chris Pelly <chrispelly4asheville@gmail.com> on behalf of Chris Pelly
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 9:54 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: McKibbon Hotel Group Public Meeting - Haywood Street Project

Marc,

Well done summarizing what is at stake on this issue. I hew pretty closely to your position.

Thanks,
Chris

On Sun, Aug 5, 2012 at 10:58 AM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

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.

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A few more thoughts:

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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>

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: Sunday, August 05, 2012 5:33 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: concern about the civic center area

Thank you! We're on the same page!
Keep up the good work,
Maggie Lauterer

On 8/5/2012 11:35 AM, Marc Hunt wrote:

Maggie

Thank you for your years of concern and effort for our community. The decision Council faces is complex. Below is my current take. I would be glad to discuss my thinking further.

Marc Hunt



Marc Hunt
City Council Member
55 Cambridge Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804
Cell 828.273.2172
marchunt@avlcouncil.com

+++++

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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, McKibbin, 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 McKibbin 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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Maggie Lauterer [<mailto:mplauterer@aol.com>]

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: Irene Slaughter <ikslaughter@charter.net> on behalf of Irene Slaughter
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:27 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: St. Lawrence Basilica Proposal for purchase and development of current city-owned property

Mr. Hunt

Thank you so much for your thoughtful reply. I appreciate all the information that you shared with me. I do certainly agree about not having another totally green park only on this site as the city is struggling with maintaining what it has in this area.

I appreciate your service on City Council and your informative reply.

Irene Slaughter

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

From: [Marc Hunt](#)
To: ['Irene Slaughter'](#)
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 10:42 AM
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Basilica Proposal for purchase and development of current city-owned property

Ms. Slaughter

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.
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A few more thoughts:

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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: Irene Slaughter [mailto:ikslaughter@charter.net]
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 7:33 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence Basilica Proposal for purchase and development of current city-owned property

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Asheville City Council members,

As a 41+ year member of another downtown Asheville church, Central United Methodist Church on Church Street, I support the plan of St. Lawrence Basilica to purchase and develop the current city-owned property across the street from its historic place of worship.

Asheville is a unique city, and I support all efforts to highlight and protect the special properties we already have here such as St. Lawrence Basilica, Grove Arcade, Biltmore House, our other downtown churches, All Souls, Grove Park Inn, etc. All other aspects being equal, i.e., purchase price, approximate tax revenue, I believe the Basilica deserves the right (with Council approval) to select the plan for the property facing theirs that this historic church feels mostly closely reflects the Basilica's special character, architecture, history, and place in our beloved community.

As an additional note, I have no special connection to St. Lawrence Church or any members or leaders past or present. As a long time "adopted" citizen of Asheville, it is my strong desire that this city's treasure, St. Lawrence Basilica, be allowed to purchase the city owned property directly across from its location and select the plan for its development. Hopefully, the rest of us residents of Asheville can protect and enhance the Basilica for the next century or so.

Irene K. Slaughter
14 Valle Vista Drive
Asheville, NC 28804
828/254-6258
e-mail: ikslaughter@charter.net

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:13 PM
To: 'Ruby D. Moore'
Subject: RE: st. lawrence

Ms Moore

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.

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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.

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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 McKibbin 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: Ruby D. Moore [mailto:rubydaliwal@yahoo.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:13 PM
To: rokli@charter.net
Subject: RE: Support for a St. Lawrence park

Robert

Thanks for writing and sharing your careful thinking. Below is my current take on this. I am not sure we differ much in our view. I'd be glad to converse further.

Marc

PS - I am past-due for an annual checkup, will book it soon, and look forward to seeing you!

+++++

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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Robert Kline [mailto:rokli@charter.net]

Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 3:20 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; info@ashevilleparc.org

Subject: Support for a St. Lawrence park

Dear Council,

Thank you for working diligently to maintain the distinctive character of our beautiful city. Sensible development has created an extraordinary transformation of our downtown since we moved here in 1983. We have become enthusiastic promoters for visitors and new residents, proud of what visionaries such as Julian Price and similarly what the collective foresight in our city councils have accomplished. What continues to draw people to Asheville, in my opinion, is the balance of traditional amenities in a unique, diverse setting. Intelligent growth makes Asheville a jewel known to many wherever I travel and so appreciated by our denizens. PLEASE reconsider acquiescing to yet another outside developer catering to the few, and take the opportunity to create more humane greenspace in our beautiful city. A highrise luxury building affords relatively small short term gain. We do not suffer lack of high priced hotels or condos. Your legacy as a governing body and our children deserve better.

Thank you.

Robert S. Kline MD

Kathie D. Kline

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:10 PM
To: 'Rebekah Craig'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence area should become greenspace

Ms Craig

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:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Rebekah Craig [mailto:rcraig1@peoplepc.com]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 4:51 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence area should become greenspace

To the Mayor and City Council:
I believe that the city-owned land in the St. Lawrence area should become greenspace.

Most sincerely,

Rebekah Craig
898 Old Fairview Road

Asheville NC 28803
828-274-0192

Rebekah

PeoplePC Online
A better way to Internet
<http://www.peoplepc.com>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:10 PM
To: 'S DUMONT'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence green space

Ms Dumont

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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: S DUMONT [mailto:sarahdumont@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 5:10 PM
To: City Council; PARC
Subject: St Lawrence green space

Good Day,

I strongly urge you to earmark the space proposed for hotel/parking development as a green space park. This will greatly enhance the downtown Asheville area, serving residents as well as tourists. We have adequate hotel rooms in or near downtown, but are sadly lacking in beautiful natural areas for locals and visitors to relax and recreate in. Asheville needs this to keep attracting tourists.

Please listen to the wishes of those of us who love Asheville, pay taxes, and vote, and make the progressive choice to say yes to preserving and creating a nurturing and beautiful space for all Asheville to enjoy for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Sarah Dumont

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:10 PM
To: rsternberg1@bellsouth.net
Subject: RE: Land in front of St. Lawrence'

Ms Sternberg

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Next Steps - Early in 2012, Council directed City staff to continue in the earlier-committed RFP process with McKibbin 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: Rachel Sternberg [mailto:rsternberg1@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 5:14 PM
To: City Council; PARC
Subject: Land in front of St. Lawrence'

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:07 PM
To: 'Robert Eaton Kelley'
Subject: RE: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Ms Kelley

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Robert Eaton Kelley [mailto:reatonkelley@charter.net]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 12:06 PM
To: 'Richard Stiles'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence

Richard

Below is my current take. If I am opposed to anything, it is to a project that crowds the Basilica. As for the 51 Biltmore project, I know there was some process of review of the design that occurred in the public light, though I was not involved. Seems like most of the focus was on the controversy over finance/cost. As long as this project involves the City partnering directly with a developer, I am certain the demand for great design will be strong. Please continue to weigh in on that.

Thanks, and hope you are well.

Marc

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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Richard Stiles [mailto:Richard.Stiles@ProsperaFinancial.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 10:36 AM
To: City Council; PARC
Subject: St Lawrence

Mayor and City Council,

I'm responding in regards to the City's deliberations surrounding the public property in front of the St Lawrence Basilica. While I appreciate the economic impact a hotel would contribute to the tax base, I'm opposed to crowding the historic Basilica with just another commercial big box.

Possibly if the proposed development was historic in nature or of such unique design as to compliment the existing church property I might feel differently; however, McKibbin's contribution to the City's "skyscape" on Biltmore Ave is visual proof that either the developer or the proposed development needs further review.

This reminds me of the 1980s effort to build a mall downtown. Too many in the leadership were convinced the mall was the answer when in fact we have learned that Asheville's success is derived from rebuilding upon our unique architectural inventory.

Guastavino's masterpiece must not be comprised! Treat it as a lode-stone and if a building is necessary, let it be complimentary and not a distraction.

Your consideration is appreciated,
Richard Stiles

Richard Stiles

Hansen Stiles & Associates
117 Cherry Street
Asheville, NC 28801
Phone (828)255-5227
Fax (828)505-4952

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:54 AM
To: 'Suzanne Fullar'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Basilica land

Ms Fullar

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:

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Suzanne Fullar [mailto:sfullar@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 1:21 PM
To: City+Council+; +PARC+
Subject: St Lawrence Basilica land

As a citizen of Asheville who loves our downtown and the St Lawrence Basilica, I urge you to keep the area next to this historic site beautiful and open to everyone - locals and tourists alike. I am opposed to another expensive hotel in downtown. Thanks.

Suzanne Fullar

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:53 AM
To: susankokora@charter.net
Subject: RE: a park

Ms Kokora

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:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Susan Kokora [mailto:susankokora@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 2:17 PM
To: City Council; PARC
Subject: a park

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:53 AM
To: 'Jack Bayliss'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street Property Development

Ms Bayliss

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:

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Jack Bayliss [mailto:jbayliss@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 6:26 PM
To: letters@citizen-times.com
Cc: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Haywood Street Property Development

I would like to urge the members of the Asheville City Council to allow the Basilica of St. Lawrence to lead the development of the Haywood Street Property opposite the Basilica. I feel strongly that the City of Asheville will receive the most benefit by allowing the Basilica to plan the development of the property so as to enhance the Basilica location and the local Asheville area.

My strong tie to the Basilica was forged by my grandfather, John O'Donnell, who was my inspiration as a child. He immigrated from Ireland and made his home in Asheville. He became a prominent businessman and property owner in Asheville and was an ardent supporter and financial contributor to St. Lawrence Church. His obituary states: "He ... donated the stone for the foundation of the church as well as paying for a major portion of the labor in the building of the church." At his death he was carried from the church funeral by his volunteer fire department comrades in their fire truck for burial in Riverside Cemetery. To me, this development would be a fitting tribute to John O'Donnell's life and others that led to its designation as a Basilica.

/s/ Kate O'Donnell Bayliss
39 Mountain Meadow Cir
Weaverville, N. C. 28787
(828) 484-9250

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:53 AM
To: 'susan paul'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence's Basilica

Ms Paul

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:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: susan paul [mailto:susanpaulbanyan@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 7:11 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: St. Lawrence's Basilica

Please stop selling out our once beautiful downtown...giving up old architecture, charm and character to dollars...perfect example the horrendously ugly and mundane hotel now being built across from the Fine Arts Theater on Builtmore Avenue. It looks like a prison to some of us...,how could you allow this? Where is respect and appreciation for history, style and integrity?

One BB&T building in town is enough, isn't it? Let's not even mention the industrial style monstrosity recently placed near City/County Plaza for administration of the park there. Who is approving these designs???? Leave St. Lawrence ALONE. You are clearly not equipped to make wise decisions in these matters.

Susan Paul

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:50 AM
To: 'Virato'
Subject: RE: Across from St. Lawrence Basilica

Virato

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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Virato [mailto:virato@att.net]
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 1:17 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Across from St. Lawrence Basilica

Please. no hotel across from St. Lawrence Basilica!!!

I am not Catholic, but I am a taxpayer!!

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:50 AM
To: Shinesign@aol.com
Subject: RE: MccKibbon

M Antiorio

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Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 1:50 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: MckKibbon

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:49 AM
To: 'Cathy Early'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Green

Ms Early

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Cathy Early [mailto:cearly@plumdogfinancial.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 3:53 PM
To: 'City Council'; 'PARC'
Subject: St Lawrence Green

I wholeheartedly support the Green area in front of St. Lawrence. That end of town is in desperate need of a face lift, plus it would be shame not to highlight and showcase a beautiful monument and building such as St Lawrence.

I hope City council can have a long term vision. The City of Asheville will continue to grow, and we should be cognizant of keeping some special areas of the City special, as the Green area in front of the church certainly would do.

Thank you.

Cathy Early

ID #58767

Mortgage Manager

PlumDog Financial

NMLS # 58590

p 828 274-1515

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c 828 242-7194

www.plumdogfinancial.com

PlumDog happily donates \$50 for every loan closed to Mission Children's Hospital.



Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:44 AM
To: 'Mike Walker'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Basilica "Park"

Mr Walker

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 McKibbin 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 McKibbin’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 McKibbin before any decision is made by Council. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the partnership with McKibbin. 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, McKibbin, 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 McKibbin 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: Mike Walker [mailto:walkmex@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 5:58 AM
To: City Council; PARC
Subject: St Lawrence Basilica "Park"

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:44 AM
To: 'Karen Loughmiller'
Subject: RE: Property across from St. Lawrence Catholic Church

Ms Loughmiller

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:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Karen Loughmiller [mailto:Karen.Loughmiller@buncombecounty.org]
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 3:41 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; info@ashevilleparc.org
Subject: Property across from St. Lawrence Catholic Church

Hello Council Members,

I’m writing to urge you to see to it that a public park is created on the city-owned property across from St. Lawrence Catholic Church.

This historic church should not be subjected to the very real danger of damage if high-rise construction is permitted on that property. Further, downtown Asheville certainly would benefit from additional greenspace, and this is an ideal spot for that. Commercial development has far outstripped the development of public space in Asheville in recent years; this opportunity to improve the QUALITY of the downtown environment should not be lost.

Public support for additional greenspace in Asheville is high, and for a greenspace at this site in particular has been demonstrated. I urge you, as elected officials, to respond positively to the public preference for a park rather than another high-rise building on this property.

Sincerely,

Karen H. Loughmiller, Asheville resident

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:36 AM
To: 'Joni Marie Davis'
Subject: RE: basilica and building

Ms Davis

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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Joni Marie Davis [mailto:jachete@me.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2012 10:16 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: basilica and building

Please don't allow a large scale construction project to jeopardize the beautiful St Lawrence Basilica and further spoil its environs. It is already difficult to get to and surrounded by a congested traffic area. It is a beautiful point of interest in the city and the view of it and access to it should be enhanced, not blocked. A parklike space to replace the ill-kempt

parking area across from the façade would be ideal. Could a remote parking area for the civic center be served by shuttles operating during big events?

As for the prospect of another hotel in this location: more of these hotels placed downtown will just make the city less desirable for those of us who live here, and it's the people who live here that make the place interesting to tourists, not the hotels.

Joni Marie Davis
54 Gertrude Place
Asheville NC 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Dave Nutter <dnutter@aol.com> on behalf of Dave Nutter
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:27 AM
To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com
Cc: emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com
Subject: Redevelopment of City-owned Parcel A: BEST PRACTICES

Marc:

Yes, this one is important for the Ages, the Ages of Asheville, I believe. Just as the Piazza della Signoria was to Florence in the renaissance time of the de Medici's.

I have suggested some edits to your excellent letter. See below.

However, there is one more central factor that is as important as it is uncomfortable. It does not appear that the City of Asheville has any defined process for a situation like this.

I have always found that developer selection, including architectural goals and standards, is one of the hardest things.

I can find no evidence that the City thinks in terms of having physical design principles as part of a development agreement or deed. It is so very crucial to have design standards. Esther Manheimer was quoted in recent months saying that the most important thing about this development was that ". . it should be THOUGHTFUL and BEAUTIFUL". I agree.

Marc, I am attaching a document which illustrates classic best practices in downtown redevelopment.

Please read Bill Potts' article entitled "Architectural Controls" on page 47. This is from ULI Technical Bulletin 51 - *Baltimore's Charles Center - A Case Study of Downtown Renewal*. It was edited by Martin Millspaugh, my boss in the Baltimore Inner Harbor projects, who I am now helping write a book about the redevelopment of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. It is dated November 1964. It is as valid today as it was then.

I am not saying that Asheville can be expected to emulate this process, but without the basic principle of required design standards, to be included in the development agreement and the deed, the "mandatory design review, voluntary compliance" procedure of the Downtown Commission (which has 3 excellent members conducting design review) will be like whistling in the wind.

I urge you to take the time to read these few pages and think about it.

See you Tuesday evening.

Best regards,

Dave

cc: Esther Manheimer
David G. Nutter, AICP

Principal
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
USA
Tel. 828-505-8242
Cell: 828-279-1820

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

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Dave Nutter' <dnutter@aol.com>
Sent: Sun, Aug 5, 2012 10:39 am
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Thanks for writing me regarding the future of the city-owned parcel across from the US Cellular Center, the Pack Library 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 the Basilica, the library, the US Cellular Center, and other surrounding buildings.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Dave Nutter [mailto:dnutter@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 4:48 PM

To: t2903@aol.com; kate@livingroomsinc.com; djohnson12@me.com; david@pearsonrussell.com; chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org; aglines@ashevillenc.gov; wlangdon@aol.com; alan.mcguinn@arca-design.com; joe@urban-three.com

Cc: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; gjackson@ashevillenc.gov; spowers@ashevillenc.gov; michael@mcdonougharchitect.com; HAZZARDCON@AOL.COM; msprouse@siteworkstudios.com

Subject: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Hi:

Below please find St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 from the Basilica of St. Lawrence, for your information.

Also possibly of interest, my wife Ellen and I took part in a tour of the new Aloft Hotel on Biltmore Avenue this afternoon. It was interesting and we recommend it to you.

Our tour was arranged by Meghan Rodgers of the Asheville Downtown Association. It was given by Sarah Bender Hope of Aloft Asheville Downtown (tel. 828-232-2064, email sarah.benderhope@aloftashevilledowntown.com). Both Sarah and Meghan welcomed inquiries.

Best regards,

Dave Nutter
David G. Nutter, AICP
Principal
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

USA
Tel. 828-505-8242
Cell: 828-279-1820
-----Original Message-----
From: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>
To: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>
Sent: Fri, Aug 3, 2012 11:02 am
Subject: SL Plaza Update #7

Friends and Members of the Basilica of St. Lawrence,

If you are personally acquainted with either Representative Patsy Keever or Senator Martin Nesbitt, please contact me. We would like to elicit their support in encouraging the City Council to abandon the McKibbin RFP for the Haywood St. property and follow North Carolina General Statute 160A-266 which allows the City to enter into private negotiation and development agreement with the Basilica of St. Lawrence to develop this property under certain parameters that both entities can agree upon.

NC General State Statute for Cities and Towns 160A-266: "a city may dispose of real property of any value and personal property valued at thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) or more for any one item or group of similar items by private negotiation and sale where (i) said real or personal property is significant for its architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural or historical associations, or significant for its relationship to other property [Basilica of St. Lawrence] significant for architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural, or historical associations, or significant for its natural, scenic or open condition; and (ii) said real or personal property is to be sold to a nonprofit corporation or trust whose purposes include the preservation or conservation of real or personal properties of architectural, archeological, artistic, cultural, historical, natural or scenic significance."

We believe the construction of a hotel and parking deck on the Haywood site presents potential harm to the Basilica and is precisely the sort of incursion this statute was written to prevent.

On another subject, you may have read that the McKibbin group is inviting the public to a presentation of their design. In their publicity, they mentioned "meetings with the Basilica" which gave many the mistaken impression that we are involved in some kind of collaborative relationship with McKibbin. Rest assured, we are not and have requested a public retraction. The www.stlawrenceplaza.com web site, and particularly the May 24, 2012 letter from counsel available from the web site, represents our position. We remain opposed to a hotel and believe the Basilica, especially with the new partnership with Kessler Development and our relationship with Professor John Ochsendorf from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a renowned expert in Guastavino's architecture who has agreed to act as our consultant, is the most qualified steward of this site and best able to ensure the Basilica is protected and St. Lawrence Plaza is designed and developed properly.

As always, thank you for your support.

Rita Livezey
Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC

View Proposed St. Lawrence Plaza
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

Sign Petition Supporting St. Lawrence Plaza
<http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 10:40 AM
To: 'Dave Nutter'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Dave

Thanks for your continued engagement and advice to the community. Below is the current form of my standard response. I plan to attend the McKibbon presentation Tuesday, as I suspect do you.

Marc

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. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project strongly supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, we should abandon the negotiation with McKibbin. 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 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, McKibbin, 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 and control the site. 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 McKibbin 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: Dave Nutter [mailto:dnutter@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 4:48 PM

To: t2903@aol.com; kate@livingroofsinc.com; djohnson12@me.com; david@pearsonrussell.com; chris@ashevilledesigncenter.org; aglines@ashevillenc.gov; wlangdon@aol.com; alan.mcguinn@arca-design.com; joe@urban-three.com

Cc: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; gjackson@ashevillenc.gov; spowers@ashevillenc.gov; michael@mcdonougharchitect.com; HAZZARDCON@AOL.COM; msprouse@siteworkstudios.com

Subject: St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 and tours of the new Aloft Hotel

Hi:

Below please find St. Lawrence Plaza Update #7 from the Basilica of St. Lawrence, for your information.

Also possibly of interest, my wife Ellen and I took part in a tour of the new Aloft Hotel on Biltmore Avenue this afternoon. It was interesting and we recommend it to you.

Our tour was arranged by Meghan Rodgers of the Asheville Downtown Association. It was given by Sarah Bender Hope of Aloft Asheville Downtown (tel. 828-232-2064, email sarah.benderhope@aloftashevilledowntown.com). Both Sarah and Meghan welcomed inquiries.

Best regards,

Dave Nutter
David G. Nutter, AICP
Principal
Nutter Associates, Community Planners & Development Professionals
169 Flint Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801
USA
Tel. 828-505-8242
Cell: 828-279-1820

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

From: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>
To: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net>
Sent: Fri, Aug 3, 2012 11:02 am
Subject: SL Plaza Update #7

Friends and Members of the Basilica of St. Lawrence,

If you are personally acquainted with either Representative Patsy Keever or Senator Martin Nesbitt, please contact me. We would like to elicit their support in encouraging the City Council to abandon the McKibbin RFP for the Haywood St. property and follow North Carolina General Statute 160A-266 which allows the City to enter into private negotiation and development agreement with the Basilica of St. Lawrence to develop this property under certain parameters that both entities can agree upon.

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As always, thank you for your support.

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC

View Proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

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

Sign Petition Supporting St. Lawrence Plaza

<http://www.change.org/petitions/city-council-of-asheville-north-carolina-negotiate-to-sell-property-opposite-basilica-to-diocese-of-charlotte>

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: PARC <ashevilleparc@gmail.com> on behalf of PARC
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2012 10:01 AM
To: hunt.marc@gmail.com
Subject: A Crack in the Dome of St. Lawrence

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[Times](#)
[Mountain Xpress](#)
[Asheville PARC](#)



A little bit like a park

by Cecil Bothwell

A Crack in the Dome of the Ba

Several years ago, more than 1,000 people signed a full page ad in our local daily paper, urging the City of Asheville to create a park opposite the Basilica St. Lawrence. City Council completely ignored the clear preference of all those citizens for a beautiful green space and attempted to sell the land to a hotelier.

In late 2011, the Catholic Diocese of Charlotte reawakened that dormant hotel plan when it offered (more or less) the City \$2 million for the property. Actually, the offer was for \$1 million, with the stipulation that the City knock down defunct buildings on the property and install surface parking which would be given to the church to operate at a profit until such time as it executed undetermined development plans. Somewhere down the line the City would receive another \$1 million. In February the offer was increased to \$2.6 million.

The deal was a non-starter because the City



This crack in the dome of the Basilica of St. Lawrence against heavy construction in front of the church.

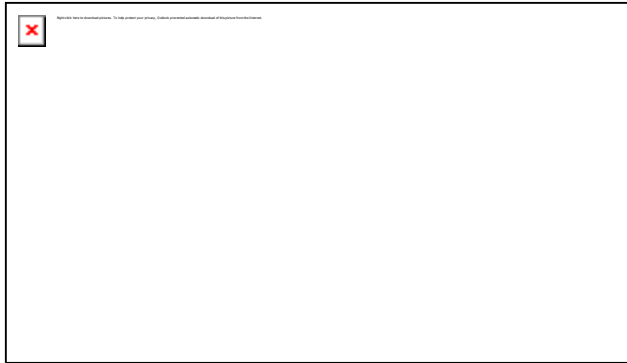
The crack has been there for several years. The metal object monitored to make sure the crack has not grown.

City Council is considering selling the land in front of the Basilica and fresh concerns have arisen about the wisdom of building which requires earth-shaking heavy equipment, and many people have a different prospect.

is constrained by law from selling property on the open market without an auction.

What the church offer did accomplish was to reawaken the sleeping deal cooked up with the McKibbin Hotel Group in 2008.

[Read More](#)



Based on [letters to C](#) letters to the editor, n city-owned land, not a

St. Lawrence Green w are: going and coming church, the Grove Arc two large residential b the Vanderbilt.

But those who want more corporate presence in Asheville are hotel is built instead.

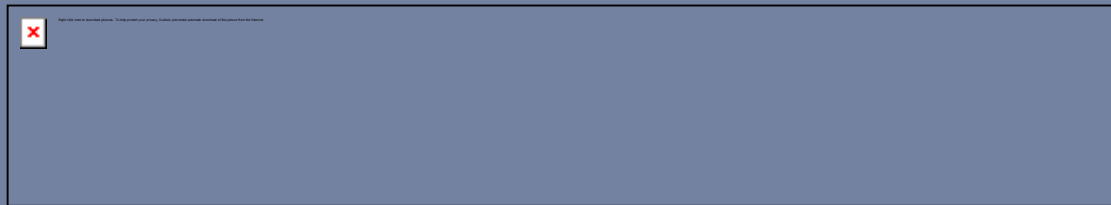
When Council members campaign for office, they promise us the residents, not out-of-state corporations. They promise th friendly.

Here and now, City Council can make a decision that will ben come—or they can make a decision that will mainly benefit ju community discussion on the best use of that city-owned spa writing a letter to the editor:

[Write to the Citizen-Times](#)

[Write to the Mountain Xpress](#)

Thanks for helping,
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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: 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"

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: 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!!

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: Cathy Early <cearly@plumdogfinancial.com> on behalf of Cathy Early
Sent: Thursday, June 28, 2012 3:53 PM
To: 'City Council'; 'PARC'
Subject: St Lawrence Green

I wholeheartedly support the Green area in front of St. Lawrence. That end of town is in desperate need of a face lift, plus it would be shame not to highlight and showcase a beautiful monument and building such as St Lawrence.

I hope City council can have a long term vision. The City of Asheville will continue to grow, and we should be cognizant of keeping some special areas of the City special, as the Green area in front of the church certainly would do.

Thank you.

Cathy Early

ID #58767

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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: 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,

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

Our beautiful city would do well do 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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, June 26, 2012 7:12 AM
To: reatonkelley@charter.net
Subject: Out of Office Re: Create St. Lawrence Green!

Thanks for writing. I'll be away on an extended trip through July 9th and unable to access email. I will reply upon my return.

Thanks

Marc Hunt

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 10:11 PM
To: anderson2118@bellsouth.net
Subject: Out of Office Re: Too late for the green St. Lawrence Basilica?

Thanks for writing. I'll be away on an extended trip through July 9th and unable to access email. I will reply upon my return.

Thanks

Marc Hunt

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'

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 5:10 PM
To: sarahdumont@bellsouth.net
Subject: Out of Office Re: St Lawrence green space

Thanks for writing. I'll be away on an extended trip through July 9th and unable to access email. I will reply upon my return.

Thanks

Marc Hunt

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Sunday, June 24, 2012 7:20 PM
To: mfgurley@charter.net
Subject: Out of Office Re: St. Lawrence Green

Thanks for writing. I'll be away on an extended trip through July 9th and unable to access email. I will reply upon my return.

Thanks

Marc Hunt

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Friday, June 22, 2012 9:47 AM
To: Marge Refroe
Subject: Re: ANOTHER HOTEL !

Thanks for thinking though this carefully with us!
marc

From: Marge Refroe <margerenfroe@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: Marge Refroe <margerenfroe@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu, 21 Jun 2012 11:39:04 -0700 (PDT)
To: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
Subject: Re: ANOTHER HOTEL !

Mr. Hunt

Thank you for the very clear review of where you're at in regard to this project; you also provided some information I needed. I appreciate your perspective, and agree with much of it.

My main concern about the use of this land is that the City will just want to facilitate this process, opt for as high a tax base as possible and sell to McKibbin. The residents (and tourists) will then be stuck with an incongruous and unattractive high-rise hotel, with retail space vying competitively with our local merchants, adding nothing but a corporate presence and increased traffic congestion - and detracting greatly from the ambience of our historic buildings. There are two hotels in the immediate area, with a 65 % occupancy rate (I hear), and one being currently built on Biltmore Avenue; we don't need another.

It sounds like we have some similar visions and concerns. I hope you'll stand with your convictions.

Marge Renfroe

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: Marge Refroe <margerenfroe@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 9:19 AM
Subject: Re: ANOTHER HOTEL !

Ms Renfroe

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

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. Some in the community are promoting the idea of a park here as being a simple choice. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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. By the way, to see more of my take on Asheville’s fiscal challenges, check this out: <http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20120609/OPINION03/306090005/City-faces-grinding-fiscal-dilemma?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7Cfrontpage%7Cs>

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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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Marge Refroe <margerenfroe@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: Marge Refroe <margerenfroe@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, 20 Jun 2012 11:55:55 -0700 (PDT)
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <AshevillePARC@gmail.com>
Subject: ANOTHER HOTEL !

I want to add my opinion along with the writers of recent letters in local papers. Selling the property across from St. Lawrence basilica to McKibbin (a George hotel chain !), who plans to build yet another hotel in downtown Asheville, is a highly irresponsible use of city land, originally purchased by taxpayer money. No one I've spoken with, particular downtown residents, want another hotel there. Most are upset. It is up to them to contact you about their opinion, but I'm wondering if the only people in favor of it, considering that the Indigo hotel was built fairly recently "around the corner," are connected with McKibbin in some way, and stand to profit financially.

I believe a park on that property will benefit both residents and tourists. There will continue to be open space around the basilica, insuring its structural integrity. A park - rather than more cars and increased need for additional parking - will prevent extreme congestion.

If a hotel is built, it will be a clear statement to me, and also a symbol, that Asheville officials/Council members, chose a financial payoff, irregardless of many valid considerations for a park put forth by Asheville citizens. And the Charlotte diocese has already offered to buy the land!

Marge Renfroe
75 Haywood Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:44 PM
To: Cunningham, Patricia
Subject: Re: email subject

Ms. Cunningham

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

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: "Cunningham, Patricia" <pcunningham@brchs.com>
Date: Thu, 21 Jun 2012 12:38:00 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: email subject

Please designate the area surrounding St. Lawrence Basilica as a green area and protected from development

Ben Fulmer

From: Cunningham, Patricia <pcunningham@brchs.com> on behalf of Cunningham, Patricia
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:38 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: email subject

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:21 PM
To: Paloma Cor
Subject: Re: Selling Our Land

M Cor

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Paloma Cor <paloma.cor@communityactionopportunities.org>

Organization: Community Action Opportunities

Date: Thu, 21 Jun 2012 10:48:18 -0400

To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>

Subject: Selling Our Land

Please reconsider selling the land in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence to McKibbon, a Georgia hotel chain. This would be a grave mistake.
It should be a park not a hotel.

Preserve the beauty and liveability of our city.
Paloma Cor
828-230-0469

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:17 PM
To: Pat McKee
Subject: Re: Basilica property

Ms McKee

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Pat McKee <PMcKee@CarolinaEHS.com>

Date: Thu, 21 Jun 2012 12:04:44 -0400

To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com"

<AshevillePARC@gmail.com>

Subject: Basilica property

I urge you to vote against selling the property across from the St. Lawrence Basilica to McKibbin 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: 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

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Pat McKee
25 Brookwood Road
Asheville NC 28804

Ben Fulmer

From: Pfbeyer@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 10:45 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov;ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: St. Lawrence Park

Asheville needs more green space and not more hotels!!!!!! Do not destroy what has made Asheville a beautiful town.

Resident for 14 years.
Patsy Beyer

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 9:12 AM
To: Lin Brown
Subject: Re: A park not a hotel across from St. Lawrence church

Ms Brown

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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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Lin Brown <linbrown5@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: Lin Brown <linbrown5@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed, 20 Jun 2012 09:10:00 -0700 (PDT)
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <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.

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 9:07 AM
To: Lew Gelfond
Subject: Re: land in front of Basilica of St. Lawrence

Ms Jensen

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

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Lew Gelfond <mail@lewelfond.com>
Date: Tue, 19 Jun 2012 16:52:48 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <AshevillePARC@gmail.com>
Subject: land in front of Basilica of St. Lawrence

Dear City Council Members - I am opposed to selling the parcel of land in front of the church to be used for a hotel. The church is a beautiful landmark, and the residents of Asheville would be better served if the parcel of land in front of it were developed as a park. Susan Jensen, 43 Vermont Court 28806

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 9:04 AM
To: Bill Maloney
Subject: Re: Sell the land to the Basilica

Mr Maloney

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

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Bill Maloney <maloneyw@bellsouth.net>
Date: Tue, 19 Jun 2012 14:51:20 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <AshevillePARC@gmail.com>
Subject: Sell the land to the Basilica

To City Council Members:

I would like to see the City sell the land to the Basilica of St. Lawrence.

We have plenty of hotels and the occupancy is around 63%.

We have only One Historic Basilica.

Asheville is a Tourism City. People do not come here to see our hotels.

Invest in one more reason why people should visit us.

Selling the property to the Basilica is wise for tax dollars and it's a smart investment in the future of Asheville.

Sincerely,

Bill Maloney
President, Software Solutions of Asheville, Inc.
Custom Microsoft Database Applications
MCAS Microsoft Certified Application Specialist

Office: 828-258-1171
Cell: 828-230-0103
www.swsolution.com

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:53 AM
To: Leonard Carrier
Subject: Re: PARC proposal

Mr Carrier

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

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Leonard Carrier <lcarrrier@charter.net>
Date: Mon, 11 Jun 2012 15:29:50 -0400
To: councilgroup <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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:51 AM
To: Granelle, Kimberly A.
Subject: Re: A park beside the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Ms Granelle

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: "Granelle, Kimberly A." <Kimberly.A.Granelle@nccourts.org>
Date: Mon, 11 Jun 2012 17:56:00 +0000
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: A park beside the Basilica of St. Lawrence

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:51 AM
To: Twodogtoo@aol.com
Subject: Re: (no subject)

Ms Booth

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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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: <Twodogtoo@aol.com>
Date: Mon, 11 Jun 2012 12:10:05 -0400 (EDT)
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: (no subject)

Dear City Council,

I have been a parishioner of St. Lawrence's Basilica for fifteen years, and have watched the negotiations about the property across from St. Lawrence's with great interest.

I am simply adding my voice to others requesting that you allow the Basilica (Or the Diocese of Charlotte?) to purchase the property across from the Basilica, in order to build something aesthetically pleasing which would compliment both the Basilica AND the historic aspects of the city of Asheville. I was involved in creating the Urban Trail here, and am acutely aware of Asheville's unique history and would like to see the property concerned developed in a way which would please us all.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Mary (Mickie) T. Booth

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:49 AM
To: katherine soniat
Subject: Re: In put on St. Lawrence Basilica and proposed Park

Ms Soniat

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

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: katherine soniat <ksoniat@vt.edu>
Date: Mon, 11 Jun 2012 10:24:47 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: In put on St. Lawrence Basilica and proposed Park

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:46 AM
To: Anne Smith
Subject: Re: Gordon Smith: Haywood/Page city-owned property

Ms Smith

I am doing my best to get the word out, and that included providing input like the letter below to ACT. I honestly appreciate your continued thinking on this; I know you see it as a complex situation with no easy solutions.

Thanks
Marc

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

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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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Anne Smith <annefitzsmith@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, 11 Jun 2012 08:22:08 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Gordon Smith: Haywood/Page city-owned property

Copy of email to Mr. Gordon SmithBegin forwarded message:

From: Anne Smith <annefitzsmith@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Haywood/Page city-owned property
Date: June 11, 2012 8:00:26 AM EDT
To: Gordon Smith <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>

Dear Gordon Smith -

Thank you for your email.

I think it would be really helpful if city officials would make a statement to the public (through Asheville Citizen-Times?) about the Haywood/Page city-owned property. It is abundantly clear (from letters generated by the public) that the public does not have an understanding of options for that site.

City officials could clearly let the public know that

- 1) installing a park at that site is not an option, because a park is an expense in terms of maintenance and security, and the city does not have the money to spend for a park;
- 2) The Diocese of Charlotte, owner of the Basilica of St. Lawrence is promoting St. Lawrence's Plaza, but it is not simply a paved park-like plaza. It is big buildings with a paved 'plaza' out front. See images at www.stlawrenceplaza.com
- 3) McKibbon Hotel Group wants to build a 5-story hotel.

So, what are the issues?

1. We are not going to have a park, so stop asking for one.
2. The name St. Lawrence Plaza is misleading. It is not simply a plaza.
3. McKibbon is the wrong developer for that site. McKibbon will spoil the beauty of that area. McKibbon is not known for its beauty. One look at the eyesore McKibbon is building at 51 Biltmore shows that we don't want McKibbon to develop that site. If we do get a hotel, let's 'go for' an elegant hotel like the Bohemian in Biltmore Village.

Giving the public real information would help everyone to speak intelligently

about real options and issues for that site.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Smith
P O Box 8966
Asheville NC 28813

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:44 AM
To: Laura Livaudais
Subject: Re: PLEASE OPPOSE THE SALE TO MCKIBBON by the Basilica

Ms Livaudais

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

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Laura Livaudais <laura@preferredprop.com>

Date: Sun, 10 Jun 2012 22:15:32 -0400

To: Terry Bellamy <mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com>, Esther Manheimer <emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com>, Cecil Bothwell <cecil@braveulysses.com>, Jan Davis <jandavis@avlcouncil.com>, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>, "chrispelly@avlcouncil.com" <chrispelly@avlcouncil.com>, <gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com>, Gary Jackson <gjackson@ashevillenc.gov>, Jeff Richardson <jrichardson@ashevillenc.gov>

Subject: PLEASE OPPOSE THE SALE TO MCKIBBON by the Basilica

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

My name is Laura Browne Livaudais, I am a third generation Asheville native and love this wonderful city but I am very concern about the future. I am horrified as is my parents, Marilyn and Fleming Browne, that you are considering ruining one of the most beautiful historical landmarks in Asheville – the Basilica of St. Lawrence and destroying the charm of downtown Asheville.

I have the pleasure to sell real estate and I am with the public looking at Asheville as an destination every day – one of the main reason why people are considering Asheville is because of the Historical downtown and that it has not been over developed. Lately people have asked “what has happened to Asheville why is your city council allowing the high rises - it is going to ruin the city.” They are moving from areas that allowed this and do not want this in the next destination. I think that you are not looking at the big picture and long term effect of allowing the McKibbon group to put up another ugly building in the heart of downtown – once it is built there is no turning back. I know some of you are new to Asheville and probably do not care about the long term effect your decisions as council members will have and the impact it will have in the future but I do not think any of you would be proud to tell your grandchildren that the ugly building beside one of the largest freestanding domes in the United States and in the heart of downtown was your decision.

I am very aware of all that has been disclosed regarding the financial benefits that you think the McKibbon group will offer the city but I think you have a fiduciary responsibility to do what is right for the city in the long term and not short term financial gains.

I feel as an Asheville native it is my duty to protect and preserve the historical landmarks of downtown and prevent over develop that will ruin our town. I hope that all of you will have children and grandchildren that are blessed to be able to live here in the future and will thank you for keeping Asheville beautiful!!!

**PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW MCKIBBON TO BUILD AND PLEASE
SELL TO THE CHURCH!!!!!!**

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to seeing you on June 12th.

Best regards,
Laura

Laura Browne Livaudais
Broker CRS, GRI, ABR
Preferred Properties of Asheville, Inc.
39 Woodfin Street Asheville, NC 28801
800-951-4646
828-258-2953 office
828-712-5445 cell
Laura@preferredprop.com

Agency Disclosure: North Carolina REQUIRES that a real estate licensee must provide Agency Disclosure before providing property information. These are consumer protection laws that require us to provide you with a [Working with Real Estate Agents](#) brochure, review it with you, and determine how you would like to be represented by your agent in your real estate transaction. Please see the link for additional information: <http://www.preferredprop.com/workingWith.php>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:36 AM
To: George Fleming
Subject: Re: St, Lawrence Green

Mr Fleming

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: George Fleming <georgefleming6@yahoo.com>

Date: Sun, 10 Jun 2012 16:23:27 -0400

To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <AshevillePARC@gmail.com>

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:31 AM
To: Andrew Hart
Subject: Re: Hotel Next To St. Lawrence?

Mr. Hart

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

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Andrew Hart <hartsx5@bellsouth.net>
Date: Fri, 8 Jun 2012 10:07:47 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Cc: "AshevillePARC@gmail.com" <AshevillePARC@gmail.com>
Subject: Hotel Next To St. Lawrence?

Please note my opposition to the sale of city land located near the basilica to McKibbin. I support the creation of a park.
Andrew Hart
60 Baird Street

Asheville, NC 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 8:31 AM
To: Jim Mulrooney
Subject: Re: Land near the Basilica of St Lawrence

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Jim Mulrooney <jimmulrooney@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, 08 Jun 2012 09:35:26 -0400
To: councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>, <info@ashevilleparc.org>
Subject: Land near the Basilica of St Lawrence

Dear Council Members,

Please -- do not sell this land to a developer.

Jim Mulrooney
39 Westover Drive
Asheville 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2012 2:40 PM
To: Liz.Seaborn@self-help.org
Subject: Out of Office Re: St Lawrence Green

Thanks for writing. I'll be away on an extended trip through July 9th and unable to access email. I will reply upon my return.

Thanks

Marc Hunt

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.

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: 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: 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: Marc Hunt - Asheville City Council <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
- Asheville City Council
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2012 5:25 PM
To: Roger Hartley
Subject: Fwd: Support St Lawrence Green

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ellen Clarke <ellengclarke@gmail.com>
Date: June 6, 2012 6:15:41 PM EDT
To: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
Subject: Re: Support St Lawrence Green

Marc:

Thanks for your well thought-out reply. I supported your candidacy for this reason and hope your conservation values continue to inform a balanced development approach. That said I remain unconvinced about the need for another hotel complex in that area of the city. I hope the stalemate you fear doesn't ensue and that a fair compromise can be worked out that complements the Basilica, furnishes as much greenspace that's reasonably possible and doesn't burden the City's already strained resources. Surely you and your able colleagues can work this out.

Here's hoping,
Ellen Clarke

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 6, 2012, at 2:54 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms. Clarke and Mr. Byrd

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt

Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Ellen Clarke [mailto:ellengclarke@gmail.com]

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: 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: Frank Coney <fcms1982@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Frank Coney
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2012 10:08 AM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: Proposed McKibben Purchase

Dear Marc,

Thank you for the detailed response to my inquiry about the lot across the street from the Basilica. You seem to have a reasonable and balanced approach to this issue. I would point out, however, that yet another hotel downtown is not the best use of the land. We have three relatively new hotels downtown: the Indigo, the New Bohemian and the ugly box on Biltmore. Then there are the numerous existing hotels such as the very well done Haywood Park Hotel. Why not a mixed use building with perhaps a restaurant, nightclub, professional offices, and perhaps a floor of condos? The conditions you set forth in your email sound good, but like so many intentions of City Council, I am concerned they won't hold up if the developer threatens to pull out of negotiations if he can't have his way. I can only hope you will do what is in the long term interest of most of the city's residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Frank Coney

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 3:59 PM
To: 'Frank Coney'
Subject: RE: Proposed McKibben Purchase

Mr. Coney

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Asheville City Council Member

From: Frank Coney [<mailto:fcms1982@bellsouth.net>]

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:20 PM
To: 'Jack Clement'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence vs. McKibbon

Mr. Clement

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbon’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbon if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbon. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbon or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, with a willingness to entertain City input. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Jack Clement [mailto:jackclem@aol.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:19 PM
To: 'Gail Jolley'
Subject: RE: Say "NO" to McKibbon

Thanks for your additional thoughts. I do not think our ordinance allows for additional B&B's by the way... and I love the ones we have.
marc

From: Gail Jolley [mailto:g9jolley@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:11 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Say "NO" to McKibbon

Marc Hunt:

I realize that your email is necessarily a template that you are sending out as a reply to all concerned citizens, but I hasten to assure you that I am not necessarily interested in seeing the Basilica buy that lot either. I am mainly concerned that we not create another towering behemoth in the downtown area that blocks the sun and creates wind tunnels. Do we really need another hotel? You talk about something that will "activate" the use of the Civic Center (I refuse to use it's new commercial name). There are plenty of other hotels in the area that could house people using the Civic Center. Another hotel would simply drain business from existing hotels as well as from B&B owners who have done so much to preserve Asheville's unique character by renovating our lovely old homes. Do you want these beautiful homes to be torn down and replaced by apartment buildings? That's what might happen if the people who own these homes couldn't afford to maintain them. Another consideration: why do we want to benefit some company that is not locally based? Aren't there plenty of local business people with good ideas for the appropriate development of that site?

Perhaps it might be best to submit the project to a new RFP process in order to benefit from new thinking on the subject.

Gail Jolley

On Wed, Jun 6, 2012 at 4:32 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms Jolley

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Marc Hunt

Asheville City Council Member

From: Gail Jolley [mailto:g9jolley@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 9:09 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; +PARC+
Subject: Say "NO" to McKibbon

The entire City Council must know that the majority of city residents support a better use of the site across from St. Lawrence than another ugly hotel. So why are you even considering selling the land to them? No doubt it all has to do with long-term money grubbing and nothing to do with what the people want.

Who elected you to City Council? Why do all City Council members seem to forget the fact that they represent the people's wishes as soon as they get into office? Is this city to be sold lock, stock and barrel to any and all highest bidders? Pretty soon this city will be so uglified that all those hotels will be empty for lack of tourist trade.

I have already heard many bad reviews of the Indigo (a very ugly hotel). And that new monstrosity on Biltmore Avenue is one of the ugliest eyesores I have seen anywhere in Asheville.

I hope you will all come to your senses and decide on a use of that property that all Ashevilleians can use and be proud of.

Gail Jolley

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:03 PM
To: 'Harry Woggon'
Subject: RE: PLEASE A PARK NEXT TO THE BASILICA OF ST. LAWRENCE

Mr and Mrs Woggon

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Harry Woggon [mailto:hakw@charter.net]
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

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 4:42 PM
To: Igrantsmom@aol.com
Subject: RE: Cheap Election

Igrantsmom

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 3:54 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: Cheap Election

To the members of the City Council

If you want to know how to have very very inexpensive election, just allow a hotel in front of St. Lawrence. Then you needn't spend any money on the next election because NO MATTER WHAT ELSE YOU DO YOU WILL BE OUT!

Don't do this to our city. St. Lawrence is the most beautiful building in Asheville. Don't ruin it with another ugly building. We already have plenty of those!

Ben Fulmer

From: William W. Crownover <billcrownover@bellsouth.net> on behalf of William W. Crownover
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 4:11 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Property near St. Lawrence Cathedral

Thank you for your reply and I understand your position. Thank you for being thorough and up front.

Bill

On 6/6/12 3:46 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

> Mr. Crownover
>
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> resulting in the commitment to a quality outcome by the City. The
> City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue
> negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design
> and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to
> ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served
> in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to
> do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first
> sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge
> of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, with a
> willingness to entertain City input. I am uncomfortable delegating
> that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would
> receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's
> structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.
>
> 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
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> That would be tragic.
>
>
> Marc Hunt
> Asheville City Council Member
>
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Bill Crownover [mailto: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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 4:01 PM
To: 'FRED FLAXMAN'
Subject: RE: A park in front of the Basilica

Mr Flaxman

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, with a willingness to entertain City input. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again not a hugely different outcome than what the City is currently negotiating for.

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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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: FRED FLAXMAN [mailto:fflaxman@frontier.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 4:47 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: PARC
Subject: A park in front of the Basilica

A tree-shaded public park in front of the Basilica of St. Lawrence, using land already owned by the City of Asheville for the purpose, would seem to be a non-brainer for those who want to improve the appearance, functionality, and joyful daily use of downtown. Please support this idea for the future benefit of this great little city!

Fred Flaxman

Author of [Sixty Slices of Life ... on Wry: The Private Life of a Public Broadcaster](#),
winner of the 2011 Pinnacle Book Award for memoir.

Rave reviews at Amazon.com, Rhapsody in Books, Reading at the Beach, BookPleasures.com, The Book Nook, and Radio World.

Editor of The Timeless Tales of Reginald Bretnor.

Producer/Presenter of Compact Discoveries.

36 Pickens Lane,
Weaverville, NC 28787-9321 - telephone:
828-645-8580

www.fredflaxman.com

www.sixtyslices.com

www.compactdiscoveries.com

www.bretnor.com

fredflaxman.wordpress.com/

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 3:58 PM
To: 'Ferguson, Thomas E'
Subject: RE: The Basilica of St. Lawrence Project

Tom

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.
- Activates improved use and function of the US Cellular Center.

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A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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.

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“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.

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Seems like I have not seen much of you around CCA recently, probably owing to the decline in my golf (and increase in handicap) since I headed onto City Council. Hope you are well.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Ferguson, Thomas E [mailto:Thomas.E.Ferguson@morganstanleysmithbarney.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 11:46 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: The Basilica of St. Lawrence Project

Dear Mayor Bellamy and Members of the Asheville City Council,

I have been a resident of the City of Asheville since 1976. I am also a native of Western NC. As a resident, I have witnessed and enjoyed the resurrection of our downtown into one that is vibrant and unique. I am strongly requesting that you reject the McKibbin Group plan to build another architecturally uninteresting hotel across from the beautiful and historic Basilica. I feel the proposal from the Diocese of Charlotte for purchase and development of this piece of property is far superior with regards to the long term goals of Asheville. Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Ferguson
28 Crestwood Lane
Asheville, NC 28804
828-251-5326

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Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:40 PM
To: 'Karen Poehlein'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street property

Ms.Pohlein

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Karen Poehlein [mailto:karlein@charter.net]
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: Karen Poehlein <karlein@charter.net> on behalf of Karen Poehlein
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Sincerely,
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June 6, 2012

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:04 PM
To: 'Dot Sulock'
Cc: 'Rebecca Sulock'
Subject: RE: park near St. Lawrence

Dot

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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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, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbon’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbon if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbon. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbon or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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. They have not identified a developer yet nor do they have a final design. Representatives say that their vision is retail/office/rental apartments with plaza, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

It's all a lot more complicated than some would want the public to believe. I would hope Julian would have respected this sort of deliberate careful approach. Some key folks he worked closely with on downtown projects seem to.

Thanks again for your interest.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Dot Sulock [mailto:dsulock@unca.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 9:04 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Rebecca Sulock
Subject: park near St. Lawrence

Hi my previously beloved city council,

It is hard to imagine that you are not awesomely happy with the proposal of St. Lawrence to buy the lot. Asheville is a tourist city. People don't visit cities to see hotels, they visit cities to see sights. Building a hotel where you could be enhancing the tourist attractiveness of Asheville is short-sighted and dangerous. Killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

What are you thinking? If you make a mistake on this one, Julian Price will roll over in his grave.

Fondly, Dot Sulock

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 1:54 PM
To: k4noff@charter.net
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence

Ms Kelly

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: k4noff@charter.net [mailto:k4noff@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 1:04 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; PARC
Subject: St. Lawrence

Please, No hotel in front of St. Lawrence Church. Make a park for all to enjoy.
Kathy Kelly
Asheville, NC 28805

Ben Fulmer

From: William Hamer <hamer220@bellsouth.net> on behalf of William Hamer
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2012 6:32 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: RE: city owned property

Thank you for your response and update to the property. I am not Catholic so I do not have any agenda regarding their position. However, as I have reviewed all the information I would vote against the McKibbon group. I believe that the diocese will make choices that will better serve Asheville as property owners. Their vision will look forward to 20,30, 50 and more years down the road. Their plans will ALWAYS protect the basilica. Private enterprise will not do this as their goals will be for the next 5 + years and private companies do not have vested interest in the long term. Their corporate option will always be to sell in the future or go into bankruptcy if the future economic climate continues to suffer and spiral downward. The diocese will not use these options. I look towards future generations and therefore it is an easy decision to be made. I hope that you will also come to this conclusion. I used to live in Charleston, SC and decisions are always about preserving history in the best possible way. Economics follow with positive results. I have visited Savannah, Ga and love the historical value of the city. Decisions obviously have been made with historic preservation as their base. Asheville has the opportunity to follow their example and I implore you to follow their lead.

--- On Mon, 6/4/12, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

> From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
> Subject: RE: city owned property
> To: "'William Hamer'" <hamer220@bellsouth.net>
> Date: Monday, June 4, 2012, 4:30 PM
> Mr. Hamer
>
> 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 for the future of the site and the
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> meet my hopes for the site.

> It features a six-story structure and open plaza area separating the
> building from the Basilica:
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> demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park)
> would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think
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> 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 the project that would be
> several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc.,
> from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another
> full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. I do feel that
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> estate development project can work and be aesthetically great, so I
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>

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> 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, and that the site will
> devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

>

>

> Marc Hunt
> Asheville City Council Member

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: William Hamer [mailto:hamer220@bellsouth.net]

>

> Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 6:26 PM

> To: Marc Hunt

> Subject: RE: city owned property

>

> I was informed by WLOS TV tonight that the lot will be sold to the
> McKibbin group. I am beyond dismayed at this. What good does it do to
> inform reasonable objections to the people who represent the citizens
> of Buncombe county with the voting power? Another hotel in that small
> space is not needed and disgusting. I salute Charleston, SC and
> Savannah, Ga. for their foresight. I continue to see that Asheville,
> NC is not in their league. The historical Basilica deserves
> better!!!!!!

>

> --- On Mon, 4/23/12, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>

> wrote:

>

>> From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>

>> Subject: RE: city owned property

>> To: "'William Hamer'" <hamer220@bellsouth.net>

>> Date: Monday, April 23, 2012, 7:59 PM Mr. Hamer

>>

>> Thanks you for writing regarding future use of the

> City-owned property

>> across from the Civic Center and the Basilica of St.

>> Lawrence. I apologize

>> for not responding immediately.

>>

>> Please know that I am committed to a use for that

> property

>> that:

>> . Respects the architecture of the

>> Basilica and the Civic Center.

>> . Does not allow a tall building to

> encroach near the Basilica.

>> . Includes a significant and aesthetically

> great open public plaza

>> providing separation from the Basilica.

>> . Relies on construction techniques that

> do not harm the structural

>> integrity of the Basilica and other nearby buildings.

>> . Benefits the entire community and adds

> to the vibrancy of

>> downtown and Asheville as a great destination for

> visitors.

>>

>> I view the site as one of the most important for the

> future quality of

>> our community, and we must "get it right" as to its

> development.

>>

>> The City has been underway for some time in negotiation

> with McKibbon

>> Hotel Group for development of the site. A

> well-defined process is in

>> place to assure that the City would only move forward

> with McKibbon if

>> excellent design and execution are assured. I am

> glad to learn that

>> representatives of the Basilica (led by local attorney

> and former

>> Asheville Mayor Lou Bissette), City staff,

> representatives of the

>> Asheville Design Center, representatives of McKibbon

> Hotel Group, and

>> others have been in dialogue about advancing that

> process. I assure

> > you I will support moving forward with McKibbon only if
 > I am confident
 > > of the great design outcome our community deserves.
 > >
 > > Many emails and calls have come to me advocating that
 > the property be
 > > sold to the Diocese, and they have reinforced to me the
 > need that
 > > whatever development that occurs honors and protects
 > the Basilica.
 > > While Diocese ownership could ensure that, I am
 > confident that a good
 > > planning process and strong leadership by our City
 > Council can ensure
 > > it as well under different site ownership.
 > >
 > > Another thing that many have been discussing is
 > realignment of Page
 > > Avenue to the west to allow for a better-configured
 > public plaza and a
 > > greater setback (away from the Basilica) of any
 > building constructed
 > > on the site.
 > > Achieving that realignment would require constructive
 > partnership with
 > > the Basilica, and I hope its leadership would commit to
 > thorough
 > > discussion of that.
 > >
 > > Again, thank you for writing me about this. I
 > look forward to further
 > > review and dialogue.
 > >
 > > Marc Hunt
 > >
 > > -----Original Message-----
 > > From: William Hamer [mailto:hamer220@bellsouth.net]
 > >
 > > Sent: Monday, March 12, 2012 10:24 AM
 > > To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
 > > Cc: spowers@ashevillenc.gov;
 > > gjackson@ashevillenc.gov;
 > > scole@ashevillenc.gov
 > > Subject: city owned property
 > >
 > > I am writing regarding the property across from the
 > basilica of St.
 > > Lawrence Catholic Church. I urge you to sell it
 > to the Catholic
 > > Church and not to the McKibbon group. I believe that
 > one of
 > > Asheville's biggest assets to draw increased tourism

> dollars is our
> > historical buildings and the European feel of downtown.
> To put up
> > another downtown hotel that would crowd and diminish
> the basilica is
> > absurd. Knowing that economic fluctuations can
> determine whether a
> > business is productive or empty in bankruptcy should
> help make this
> > decision. It is my understanding that occupancy in
> downtown hotels is
> > less than 65% so there is no need for another one.
> > Additionally, I believe
> > most tourists try to get accommodations closer to the
> Biltmore House
> > and the interstate. Therefore, there are presently
> enough downtown
> > hotels. The basilica is such a treasure and it should
> be an eye
> > catcher and not reduced to barely noticed. The Catholic
> Church wants
> > to purchase this property and they want to build a
> plaza with smaller
> > buildings at the back of the plaza.
> > Asheville should be mindful of cities like
> Charleston, SC and Savannah,
> > Georgia and the historical preservation that is
> foremost in their
> > actions.
> > As I speak to my friends and neighbors I have learned
> that they also
> > support selling to the Catholic Church.
> > Thank you for your time and attention to this very
> important matter
> > that truly is a physical change to the appearance of
> downtown
> > Asheville. I implore you to do the right thing and
> choose what is
> > right and preserve our historical treasure that is
> downtown Asheville.
> >
> > Sincerely,
> > Marilyn Hamer
> >
> >
>
>

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: Tami Ruckman <tamibennettruckman@yahoo.com> on behalf of Tami Ruckman
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 10:10 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Query about the Basilica

Thank you, Marc. Esther also sent a very thoughtful reply. I will try to spread the word about the difficult choices facing the council.

Tami Ruckman
54 Yow Drive
Swannanoa, NC 28778
(828) 215-8074

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Tami Ruckman' <tamibennettruckman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 4, 2012 4:30 PM
Subject: RE: Query about the Basilica

Ms. Ruckman

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

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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A few more thoughts:

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elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Tami Ruckman [mailto:tamibennettruckman@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 10:12 PM

To: mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com;

jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com; chrispelly@avlcouncil.com

Subject: Query about the Basilica

I don't live in the City, but I do work in the City, and am very interested in sustainable growth for our entire community.

I'd like to comment on the Basilica issue.

As I understand it, the City owns land near the Basilica. Though I understand that the land would be purchased by the Charlotte Diocese, the stewards would be Asheville residents. This group (with a strong, local tie) offered \$2.6 million, and the McKibbin Group (from Gainesville) offered \$2.3 million, but the City is still selling the land to them.

I looked for minutes from the last meeting where this issue was presented to try to gain a better understanding, but they are not yet available on the website.

If the issue the revenue generated by the development, versus no revenue from a park, then the reason for the sale is clearer, but still troubling.

I would prefer to honor St. Lawrence, one of our most revered and venerable landmarks, and members of our local community by awarding them the land they seek. In my opinion, they have a more compelling reason to be good stewards, and a better long-term plan for the land, despite the revenue implications.

If the difference in price were put in the housing trust fund or other investment fund, presumably that would offset at least a portion of future revenue losses. Further, it would keep stewardship local.

I am sure I am greatly oversimplifying the issue, but I wanted to express an opinion. Thank you for your time.

Tami Ruckman

54 Yow Drive

Swannanoa, NC 28778

(828) 215-8074

Ben Fulmer

From: cmitchell28@charter.net
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 9:18 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: RE: Proposed hotel across from St. Lawrence

Thanks for your encouraging reply. If you accomplish your stated goals, I will be perfectly satisfied. Best Regards, Connie Mitchell

On Mon, Jun 4, 2012 at 11:30 AM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Ms Mitchell

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- § 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think

approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin's providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer.

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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt

Asheville City Council Member

From: cmitchell28@charter.net [mailto:cmitchell28@charter.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 3:34 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Proposed hotel across from St. Lawrence

Dear Council Member, I am writing to express my displeasure at the prospect of building another hotel at one of downtown's busiest intersections. While Asheville attracts visitors because of its cohesive collection of Art Deco buildings, ambiance and human scale, Council seems determined to plunk yet another plain-faced eyesore in the midst of it. Now that we see the white elephant we bought on Biltmore Ave, we have no excuse for inviting McKibben Group to deface the nexus of three of the city's most celebrated properties. Why not get some professional advice and straighten out the mess of roads while putting something of more suitable size and character on that parcel? Please say no to the hotel.

Sincerely,

Connie Mitchell

28 Robinhood Rd.

Asheville, NC, 28804

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 5:14 PM
To: 'Patricia Hynes'
Subject: RE: Development opposite St. Lawrence

Ms. Hynes

Thank you for thinking further with me. I actually do not view tourism as the solution to our economic woes here. If you are interested, the below link highlights what I think is our best path.

<http://www.ashevillechamber.org/economic-development/asheville-5x5-campaign-5-year-plan-job-creation>

Retail, residential rental, and offices do not constitute economic growth; they are actually by-products of it.

I believe strongly that a more vibrant downtown and higher visitation to downtown will support the goals of that plan. So tourism is not an end in itself, but critical to greater outcomes.

Thanks again

marc

From: Patricia Hynes [mailto:hynes.tricia@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 5:07 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Development opposite St. Lawrence

The real tragedy will be if we continue to see our community as oriented toward tourism to the exclusion of those who live and work here. Retail, offices and rental units seem far superior to another hotel.
I hope you will rethink your position.

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>
To: 'Patricia Hynes' <hynes.tricia@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 4, 2012 4:53 PM
Subject: RE: Development opposite St. Lawrence

Ms Hynes

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Patricia Hynes [\[mailto:hynes.tricia@yahoo.com\]](mailto:hynes.tricia@yahoo.com)
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:40 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; ashevilleparc@gmail.com
Subject: Development opposite St. Lawrence

PLEASE - help preserve the qualities of Asheville that have drawn so many of us to this jewel of a city and make a park opposite St. Lawrence so that the entire community can benefit. It would also draw shoppers to the Arcade area and help business there.

NO MORE HOTELS in the the city center.

*Thank you -
Tricia Hynes*

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:52 PM
To: jfhubbard@preferredprop.com
Subject: RE: Basilica of St. Lawrence and Asheville Water System

Ms. Hubbard

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0A5NGEW3Gc>

A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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.

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“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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again not a hugely different outcome than what the City is currently negotiating for.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: jfhubbard@preferredprop.com [mailto:jfhubbard@preferredprop.com]
Sent: Friday, April 27, 2012 1:47 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence and Asheville Water System

Dear council Members,
Please protect the beautiful Basilica of St. Lawrence! We will always have another hotel downtown but there is only one historic church. Is commerce so important to Asheville that we will do away with the important sites such as the Biltmore House and the Basilica of St. Lawrence which draw so many visitors to our beautiful city? I don't think so.

I am very opposed to any change in our water system and view this controversy over it as a ploy to privatize something that is working well as it is. The last and most insane issue that has come up recently is to allow skateboards on the city streets. There will be many injured if this issue is passed!

Thank you for your time, Joan F. Hubbard

Agency Disclosure: North Carolina REQUIRES that a real estate licensee must provide Agency Disclosure before providing property information. These are consumer protection laws that require us to provide you with a Working with Real Estate Agents brochure, review it with you, and determine how you would like to be represented by your agent in your real estate transaction. Please see the link for additional information:
<http://www.preferredprop.com/workingWith.php>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:52 PM
To: 'Mari Lucey'
Subject: RE: Support St Lawrence Plaza

Ms. Lucey

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Mari Lucey [mailto:marilucey@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2012 4:26 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Lucey John
Subject: Support St Lawrence Plaza

Dear Asheville City Council Member,

I hope you will consider in favor of the St Lawrence Plaza. You have one opportunity to save the viewscape that is unique only to Asheville. There are other real estate infills more suitable for a residence hotel in Asheville.
Respectfully, Mari Lucey 828-658-1388

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:51 PM
To: 'Lucey John'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence plaza

Mr. Lucey

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Lucey John [mailto:john.lucey4@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2012 6:45 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Lucey John; Mari Lucey
Subject: St. Lawrence plaza

Dear Sir/Madam, I urge you to consider accepting the proposal by the Diocese of Charlotte to purchase the property adjacent to the Saint Lawrence Basilica presently offered for sale by the City of Asheville. There is an obvious need for increased space for the many truly positive activities offered by the parish. The Basilica has a unique character and history which greatly contributes to the architectural grandeur of Asheville. The proposed architectural drawings by the Diocese respect that grandeur, allowing a considerable amount of open space to appreciate the Basilica's majestic facade. I fear another hotel in that space would be little different from the recent development of the property just one block away with essentially little character. One of the basic principals in architecture is the enhancement of sight lines. A high rise development placed upon the property in question would essentially destroy the sight lines. This would be a disservice to the the citizens of this area as well as the many tourists who visit Asheville annually. I do hope you will vote to accept the Diocese of Raleigh proposal and do what is right and not expedient. Thank you for your kind attention. Sincerely, John D Lucey, M.D.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:50 PM
To: 'Diane Wright'
Subject: RE: Basliica of St.Lawrence DM

Ms. Wright

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project. By the way, I assure you that there has been ongoing intensive engagement with designated representatives of the Basilica, and I hope that it continues.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the

negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Diane Wright [mailto:dianewgia@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, May 04, 2012 11:07 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Basliica of St.Lawrence DM

Hello,

I am writing concerning the Basilica of St. Lawrence and its preservation. This is a "National Treasure" to be preserved not destroyed by overdevelopment in the City of Asheville. Why has the Basilica not been involved in all the process of the preservation and discussions of the Basilica ? Do you not think that would be the "right" thing I as a Buncombe County resident , native , believe that the City is making a terrible mistake , just as the mistake of putting the Civic Center in place when another suggestion would have been revenue and more accomodating to the Asheville and surrounding areas. The idea of just "making money" isn't what Asheville is about, the area is a "beauty" and a "treasure" in itself, why destroy the "special" place that Asheville is and lets keep it as "beautiful" as it is. The plan the Basilica has will attract many, many more visitors and the design wil not only "show off" downtown, but the Grove Arcade and will look like it "belongs"

in downtown, rather than another hotel as "offensive" as the Indigo. That is a rather ugly place and doesn't go into the design of the area at all and is just a "eyesore" . Please do the right thing and lets keep Asheville as beautiful as it always has been.

I thank you for your time in this matter.

Regards,
Diane Wright
Buncombe County Native
"

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:47 PM
To: 'Pat Peterson'
Subject: RE: mckibbon hotel

Msr. Batchelder

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbon’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbon if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbon. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Pat Peterson [mailto:pat@billashearchitect.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 10, 2012 9:12 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: mckibbin hotel

hello...

this email is in support of the basilica of st. lawrence and their proposal to purchase the property across from their church - developing it as a park like environment. the mckibbin group proposed hotel is not the best use of this property.

pat peterson
north asheville resident
and active downtown participant

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:46 PM
To: 'Debbie Lyman'
Subject: RE: Basilica of St.Lawrence

Ms. Lyman

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- ☐ 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Debbie Lyman [mailto:d.lyman@att.net]
Sent: Sunday, May 13, 2012 11:05 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Basilica of St.Lawrence

Please think about the effect of building another hotel on the corner. Do not do it.

Sent from my iPad

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:45 PM
To: 'Doris Albrecht'
Subject: RE: Property across street fr Basilica of St Lawrence support

Ms. Albrecht

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Doris Albrecht [mailto:dorisalb@charter.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 10:47 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Property across street fr Basilica of St Lawrence support

Dear Council,

The Basilica is a landmark of Asheville and should be considered important enough to accept the offer for sale to the Diocese of Charlotte. Asheville already has enough hotels!!! It is more important to keep this landmark which enhances this area of downtown. Another hotel would only cause more obstruction to this section near the Civic Center. Doris & Eugene Albrecht

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:45 PM
To: 'Ken Hillberry'
Subject: RE: The Basilica and property on Haywood St...

Mr. Hillberry

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Ken Hillberry [mailto:kenehill@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 2:37 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc: Rita Livezey
Subject: The Basilica and property on Haywood St...

The decision concerning regarding the considered parcel of property across from the Basilica of St Lawrence has important relevance to the city in an historic and aesthetic sense, which points to the benefit(s) past and future.

The past hundred plus years has seen thousands of visitors who have trekked through our unique city, and taken tours to see the highlights and thousands of dollars spent. The integrity of the architecture of the Basilica is far more important to me in this consideration, as well as, the reality that there are several additional hotels being actively sought in more feasible locations.

Having seen the proposed conceptual approach presented by the Basilica (Diocese of Charlotte) that promotes a sustainable, practical and pedestrian friendly environment that would suit and promote the confines of our downtown...please, I respectfully insist that the issue be approached from a viewpoint that involves an aptitude and a result which brings Asheville and the Basilica more in line with this now and in our future.

**Sincerely,
Ken Hilberry**

--

Ken

[www.absolutearts.com/kensart
crs.org](http://www.absolutearts.com/kensartcrs.org)

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:44 PM
To: 'Patrick Mahoney'
Subject: RE: Hotel proposal & St. Lawrence Basilica

Mr. Mahoney

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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- Includes a public plaza in the open space resulting from the setback.
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- 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Patrick Mahoney [mailto:celtic_nomad67@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 2:37 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Hotel proposal & St. Lawrence Basilica

Dear City Council Members,

I really feel that it would benefit not only Asheville residents, but also all visitors from out of town to accept the proposal for the Basilica of St. Lawrence Plaza. There are more than enough hotels downtown that are very expensive to stay in, along with the Haywood Park Hotel's plan to add approximately 100 additional rooms & the hotel group's plan to build a hotel where TK Tripp's is on Charlotte Street, as well as across from The Basilica of St. Lawrence. Which if it were approved, the hotel group would only be in it for the short term of 5 years or so & sell the hotel for whatever profit they can get....that is assuming that the economy, real estate & tourism doesn't suffer a major downfall and collapse sometime after building such a hotel.

There are many more people who can benefit from an open plaza for gathering and to appreciate this part of downtown, other than only tourists who can stay anywhere else while in town.

As a long time parishioner of St. Lawrence, and a transplant from New Jersey approximately 21 years ago, I believe that as parishioners of this church that has been around for so many years longer than most buildings downtown, that we all have a say in what happens to the fate of our church that is open to all people, and the physical foundation of the church may also be jeopardized by the construction of a hotel...not to mention in taking away from the aesthetics of St. Lawrence Basilica being blocked out and overshadowed by the other buildings.

It's time to stop thinking only about money, and taking a gamble that such a place would even be successful in the long run.

Please consider what is truly important, and allow a plaza to be constructed for everyone to enjoy, including future generations.

Sincerely,

Patrick Aloysius Mahoney

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:40 PM
To: 'Scianna, Alex'
Subject: RE: The Basilica of St. Lawrence

Mr Scianna

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- Utilizes construction techniques that ensure no structural damage to the historic Basilica.
- Activates improved use and function of the US Cellular Center.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Scianna, Alex [mailto:ascianna@montreat.edu]
Sent: Monday, May 21, 2012 1:41 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: The Basilica of St. Lawrence

Dear Sir or Madam,

When you are deliberating about the sale of the property adjacent to the Basilica of St. Lawrence, I hope you will side in favor of selling it to St. Lawrence Catholic Church. I won’t belabor all the issues that favor this position as I doubt I can add anything new except that I am among those who favor seeing the property sold to St. Lawrence. I realize this would be in the best interest of the Basilica, but it would equally be in the best interest in the City of Asheville, especially in the preservation of its downtown area.

Thank you,

Alex Scianna
308 Pinnacle Drive
Black Mountain, NC 28711
H: 828-664-9648
C: 813-928-6285

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:39 PM
To: 'Kris Kjellquist'
Subject: RE: Basilica of St. Lawrence /Lot Sale

Kris

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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.
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A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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.

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City-Led of 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Kris Kjellquist [mailto:kkjellquist@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 10:47 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Basilica of St. Lawrence /Lot Sale

Just writing to let you all know I FULLY SUPPORT the sale of the city lot across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence.

Thanks
Kris Kjellquist
65 Henrietta St

And by the way, Worthy missed the 1983 playoffs, but Lenny Bias missed the playoffs from 1987 through 2004. So there's that. - Bill Simmons

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:24 PM
To: AshevilleAnnie@aol.com
Subject: RE: building

Ms. Condie

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome which:

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: AshevilleAnnie@aol.com [mailto: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 McKibbin'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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 4:21 PM
To: 'Pat Peterson'
Subject: RE: Plaza

Mr. (or Ms.) Peterson –

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Pat Peterson [mailto:pat@billashearchitect.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 5:02 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Plaza

Hi all City Council Members.:

This email is in support of The Basilica of St. Lawrence's desire to purchase the property across the street. I do think the church should work with a local Architectural Review Board along with their selected developer to design an appropriate structure for this very important site. Also....this end of Haywood St. is largely dead on nights of no Civic Center activity. A people plaza would promote pedestrian traffic flow from Pritchard Park, the Grove Arcade and N. Lexington....assisting all the retail along the way.

On a positive note: thanks for all your work in supporting our unique and vibrant city.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 2:47 PM
To: moonspirit48@bellsouth.net
Subject: RE: Make St. Lawrence GREEN

Kathleen

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

Public Park/Green Space Versus Buildings? – As long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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 the project that would be several million, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US

Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer. 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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City’s structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: moonspirit48@bellsouth.net [mailto: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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:41 AM
To: 'Susan & Dean Presson'
Subject: RE: greenspace in front of St. Lawrence

Mr and Ms Presson

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- 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 not at all inconsistent 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:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Susan & Dean Presson [mailto:4pressons@gmail.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:39 AM
To: 'Sarah P'
Subject: RE: Proposed hotel downtown

Ms Peterson

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Sarah P [mailto:babybug111@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, May 30, 2012 10:59 PM

To: mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com; cecil@braveulysses.com; jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrisselly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com

Subject: Proposed hotel downtown

Council Members,

I am very concerned about another hotel downtown. The Basilica of St. Lawrence is one of our city's most beautiful landmarks. I admire this area every morning on my way to work. Please consider selling to the Basilica, which has invested in our community for over a hundred years. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Peterson
Asheville Resident for 8 years

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:28 AM
To: 'Demos Builders'
Subject: RE: No hotel! St Lawrence Green!!!

Mr Demos

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Demos Builders [mailto:demosbuilders@gmail.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:25 AM
To: 'Ilene Procida'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence property

Ms Procida

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Ilene Procida [mailto:ileneprocida@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 5:45 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: St. Lawrence property

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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:24 AM
To: 'Susan Eggerton'
Subject: RE: greenway @ St. Lawrence

Ms Eggerton

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Susan Eggerton [mailto:seggerton@roastedgarlic.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 6:01 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; +PARC+
Subject: greenway @ St. Lawrence

I am in favor of the property across from St. Lawrence Basilica becoming a greenway. Please strongly consider this option!

Susan Eggerton
Pearson Drove
Asheville 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:21 AM
To: 'Lynne Diehl'
Subject: RE: Hotel in front of St. Lawrence Basilica

Ms Diehl

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- ☐ 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer.

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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Lynne Diehl [mailto:jandldiehl@charter.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 8:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; info@ashevilleparc.org
Subject: Hotel in front of St. Lawrence Basilica

Please pay attention to those of us who are opposed mightily to construction on the tiny plot of ground in front of the Basilica with ANOTHER HOTEL. There is no need for such building, and as one who values quality of life in downtown Asheville, I add my objection to such foolhardy building.

Sincerely,
Lynne Diehl, 400 Charlotte St., #401, 28801

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:21 AM
To: 'Stanley Corwin'
Subject: RE: Land use in front of the Basilica

Mr Corwin

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Stanley Corwin [mailto:colnstash@att.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2012 9:04 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; PARC
Subject: Land use in front of the Basilica

Please not another luxury hotel --Two have recently been built in the downtown area. Please go with the option presented by St. Lawrence.
Colette Corwin

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:20 AM
To: 'Martin Barnes'
Subject: RE: Basillica Green

Mr Barnes

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Martin Barnes [mailto:mabarnes@charter.net]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:19 AM
To: 'Amy Renigar'
Subject: RE: Please make St. Lawrence GREEN

Ms. Renigar

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: Amy Renigar [mailto:amyrenigar@gmail.com]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:18 AM
To: 'C. Walgate'
Subject: RE: St. Lawrence Green Space

Mr Walgate

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: C. Walgate [mailto:cwalgate@bellsouth.net]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:17 AM
To: johndanielsdrr@charter.net
Subject: RE: Lot across from Basillica

Mr Daniels

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

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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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: johndanielsdrr@charter.net [mailto:johndanielsdrr@charter.net]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2012 6:00 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Lot across from Basilica

As much as I appreciate the need for a city to grow, I appeal to you to consider what ANY building would do to the historic structure of St. Lawrence Basilica. Not only would it visually impose itself on one of Asheville's landmarks, but the construction that would take place so close to it would endanger its structure. The tiles in its ceiling are not cemented in but held in place by sheer force of pressure. If that pressure is disrupted, the integrity of the ceiling would be compromised and it would collapse.

Please use the property for street level parking or even a park. Do not allow it to go into commercial hands.

Thank you,

John Daniels, Asheville citizen and voter

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:15 AM
To: 'Jessica Goodrum'
Subject: RE: Property downtown

Ms Goodrum

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome 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 in the open space resulting from the setback.
- ☐ 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 not at all inconsistent 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 long-time chairman of the Asheville Greenway Commission and land conservation professional, I am a strong advocate for parks and green space. I do not see this site working out as a stand-alone green park however. Intensive use demands that would result in this part of town (think Pritchard Park) would make it infeasible for a fully green park. But I think approximately half of the site being dedicated to public open space featuring some horticultural elements would be great. Another issue is funding. The effort to build 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, and the competing demands for parks, greenways, etc., from other parts of town, I cannot support prioritization of another full-scale park downtown, nice as it would be. 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 McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site to feature retail spaces at street level, hotel on upper floors, and perhaps structured parking included. That negotiation is based on McKibbin’s providing an initial winning proposal under a competitive RFP process four years ago. I will only support a development agreement with McKibbin if the project supports all the principals outlined above, and if it does not, I will gladly support abandoning the negotiation with McKibbin. I am supportive of a hotel because that use would best activate use of the US Cellular Center. Note that the vision for the site put forward by the Basilica/Diocese could work quite well as a hotel (see above video link). A plan much like this is what I would aim to see achieved by McKibbin or another hotel developer.

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 City owns the property now and has the opportunity to continue negotiating directly with a developer, thus ensuring a great design and implementation to benefit the entire community. I was elected to ensure that the best interest of the entire community will be served in situations like this. We have a process underway that allows us to do that. The Diocese of Charlotte has proposed that the City first sell the land to the Diocese, and that the Diocese then be in charge of negotiating with a developer for design and implementation, subject to City approval. I am uncomfortable delegating that much authority 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, again 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 much more critical than the purchase price the City would receive. The City must be fairly compensated, and given the City's structural fiscal challenges, we really need to see the property productively on the tax role.

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, and that the site will devolve to surface parking for years to come. That would be tragic.

Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

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

From: Jessica Goodrum [mailto:jesshyland@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2012 9:09 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Property downtown

Please consider the acceptance of St. Lawrence Basilica's offer to purchase and develop the land adjacent to the church. They have been long term stewards of their property which attracts locals and visitors. They propose an addition that would beautify our downtown and add long term value to our city. We DO NOT need another hotel downtown. Future generations will appreciate our beautiful public squares much more than some hotel or more likely to be retail space. Please consider the proposal of the Basilica.

Regards,
Jessica H. Goodrum

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2012 11:15 AM
To: 'TI Carrelli'
Subject: RE: Haywood Street property across from Basilica of St Lawrence

Mr Carrelli

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 for the future of the site and the community. Let me share my current thinking on the project.

I am committed to an outcome which:

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A few more thoughts:

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Marc Hunt
Asheville City Council Member

From: TI Carrelli [mailto:tlcarrelli@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2012 8:23 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Haywood Street property across from Basilica of St Lawrence

I strongly support the purchase of the Haywood Street property by the Charlotte Diocese. This purchase would serve in the preservation of what is already a historic site. This area in downtown Asheville is already congested and does not need another hotel. Thank you.

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: 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: Rita Livezey <rdlive@charter.net> on behalf of Rita Livezey
Sent: Monday, May 07, 2012 12:37 PM
To: 'Marc Hunt'
Subject: RE: See the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

Councilman Hunt,

I appreciate the time you took to reply to my numerous questions, and I'm glad to hear the lines of communication between the City and the Basilica's representatives are open, even though they are not formal negotiations acknowledging the Diocese's offer.

However all of your points—those discussions, the City's awareness of the historic statute, the overwhelming public sentiment against the hotel—all would seem meaningless as long as you are single-mindedly bent on **"staying with the path that we laid out."** You do not say why **"the City is not electing that course for now."**

You say **"McKibbon has not defaulted or neglected its duties under the arrangement."** I believe it was reported in the Asheville Citizen-Times in 2009 that the McKibbon group said they lacked adequate funding to move the project forward. I'm sure you're aware that adequate funding is required of all qualified bidders.

Whether or not another **"conference-oriented hotel very close to the Civic Center"** is justified, the Haywood St. site would be blatantly inappropriate, squarely in the middle of the Historic District. If one were in fact justified, a far more appropriate site would be the public employee lot behind the Civic Center.

FYI, the controversy regarding 51 Biltmore contends that the City used a great deal of taxpayer money to build the foundation and parking decks for McKibbon.

We sincerely hope you will recognize the propriety of opening formal negotiations with the Diocese/Basilica.

Rita Livezey | Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

From: Marc Hunt [mailto:marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Saturday, May 05, 2012 11:40 AM
To: 'Rita Livezey'
Subject: RE: See the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

Ms. Livezey

Thank you for your continued interest and concern. I have provided responses to your comments, inserted below. Please also re-read my email to Mr. Boustead which you included further below as I think it also addresses many of your concerns.

Marc Hunt

From: Rita Livezey [mailto:rdlive@charter.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2012 12:06 PM

To: marchunt@avlcouncil.com

Subject: FW: See the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

Councilman Hunt:

Your email below, forwarded to me recently, mentions the Basilica eight times but begs several questions:

1. Why is the Basilica/Diocese not even at the table in these planning stages with their architect John Ellis to help decide the future of this site in front of the Basilica, over four months after their initial offer? **City staff and various Council members have met numerous times with various representatives of the Diocese, including Mr. Ellis. I myself have been involved in several of the sessions with Diocese representatives, including a few discussions with Mr. Ellis, whom I know personally. I have another meeting scheduled this coming week. The Diocese has engaged Lou Bissette as representative, and he is assuring that communications are frequent and ongoing. The City is not avoiding discussions.**
2. Why is the state statute for historical significance (N.C. General Statute for Cities and Towns 160A-2660) that allows such a private partnership between the city and the Basilica/Diocese being ignored? **The City is aware of that statute. My understanding is that it might give us the opportunity to negotiate directly with the Diocese. Though it might be available, the City is not electing that course for now. We are staying with the path that we laid out in the RFP process some time back.**
3. In the 12-year history of this site, when has the city proven they can steward this project alone, without the Basilica's input and influence in the community? **The future use of this site continues to be of great public controversy. We on Council continue to get large volumes of input from folks favoring various outcomes – some advocating a hotel with piazza, some an open green park, some wanting surface parking, some simply selling to the Diocese. There may not be one single solution that would make everyone happy. My own aim is to help ensure the best outcome for the entire community, and that includes architectural and historic respect for the Basilica, including an open-space plaza or piazza in front of the Basilica.**
4. Why does the city not partner with the most obvious choice here, the Diocese/Basilica? **We are committed to exploring the option identified under the RFP process. Until we determine that path will not be fruitful, I believe we should stay with it.**

Councilman, what is your real agenda here? **I am working hard to ensure the best use of the project site in the interest of the entire community here.**

Regarding McKibbin, why is this group still on a failed, 5-year old RFP on this site, when it is clear: **First, the process under the RFP has gone very slowly thanks to the economy, the evolution of the downtown master plan, and the City played a role in not pushing it forward. McKibbin has not defaulted or neglected its duties under the arrangement. Could the City and/or McKibbin have pushed the process forward earlier? Probably so. But I am not sure that would have changed the dynamic now underway in the community, it seems that it would have simply had it happen earlier.**

1. The feasibility study for hotel rooms does not support this sale by the city, **Regarding feasibility for hotel rooms, one view many have emphasized is that in order for the Civic Center to realize its potential to**

host meetings, conferences, and events, there is a very high need for a conference-oriented hotel very close to the Civic Center, and that does not exist now. A more active Civic Center could ultimately increase hotel visits well beyond the number that a new hotel on this site could serve.

2. There are serious moral, ethical, and possibly legal questions raised by the city competing with all private hotel groups on the Haywood site, and **Not sure of your exact point here nor what those questions might be, but any kind of development here that creates economic activity (parking, retail, housing, hotel - several of which the Diocese might advocate if it were to develop the site) would seem to lead to more businesses and more competition. Economic development and improving the aesthetic allure of downtown are key goals for me.**
3. There is apparent conflict of interest and grey areas surrounding the city's existing partnership with McKibbon on the 51 Biltmore project. **I am unaware of any conflicts...**

Where has the McKibbon group demonstrated that they can design and develop an architecturally and historically significant plaza project?

See <http://www.mckibbon.com/ckibon-hotel-group-opens-new-hotel-in-savannah-historic-district-replicating-19th-century-railroad-w.xhtml>

But any agreement with McKibbon (or any other developer) would be subject to a development agreement with the City and possibly deed restrictions, and those approaches would help ensure a sensitive design and construction. Please know that that for me, any development of this property must honor and protect historical and architectural values of the neighboring properties. If you attended the April Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting, you witnessed a sharp exchange between the McKibbon executive and myself over these matters, where I strongly advocated protecting these outcomes even if it were to mean abandoning the engagement with McKibbon.

If the McKibbon group also has the Tripp's site available to develop, why does the city keep advocating they develop the Haywood St. site? **I am not aware that they have the Tripp's site available. But again, I am interested in the best outcome for the community as it relates to this site.**

Supporters of the Diocese/Basilica offer are most anxious to know your answers to these troubling questions.

Most sincerely,

Rita Livezey

Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

View Proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

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

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com>

Subject: RE: See the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

Date: April 23, 2012 8:27:57 PM EDT

To: 'Mike Boustead' <mikeboustead@mac.com>

Mr. Boustead

Thanks you for writing regarding future use of the City-owned property across from the Civic Center and the Basilica of St. Lawrence. I apologize for not responding immediately.

Please know that I am committed to a use for that property that:

- Respects the architecture of the Basilica and the Civic Center.
- Does not allow a tall building to encroach near the Basilica.
- Includes a significant and aesthetically great open public plaza providing separation from the Basilica.
- Relies on construction techniques that do not harm the structural integrity of the Basilica and other nearby buildings.
- Benefits the entire community and adds to the vibrancy of downtown and Asheville as a great destination for visitors.

I view the site as one of the most important for the future quality of our community, and we must “get it right” as to its development.

The City has been underway for some time in negotiation with McKibbin Hotel Group for development of the site. A well-defined process is in place to assure that the City would only move forward with McKibbin if excellent design and execution are assured. I am glad to learn that representatives of the Basilica (led by local attorney and former Asheville Mayor Lou Bissette), City staff, representatives of the Asheville Design Center, representatives of McKibbin Hotel Group, and others have been in dialogue about advancing that process. I assure you I will support moving forward with McKibbin only if I am confident of the great design outcome our community deserves.

Many emails and calls have come to me advocating that the property be sold to the Diocese, and they have reinforced to me the need that whatever development that occurs honors and protects the Basilica. While Diocese ownership could ensure that, I am confident that a good planning process and strong leadership by our City Council can ensure it as well under different site ownership.

Another thing that many have been discussing is realignment of Page Avenue to the west to allow for a better-configured public plaza and a greater setback (away from the Basilica) of any building constructed on the site. Achieving that realignment would require constructive partnership with the Basilica, and I hope its leadership would commit to thorough discussion of that.

Again, thank you for writing me about this. I look forward to further review and dialogue.

Marc Hunt

From: Mike Boustead [<mailto:mikeboustead@mac.com>]

Sent: Saturday, March 17, 2012 1:16 PM

To: cecil@braveulysses.com; jandavis@avlcouncil.com; marchunt@avlcouncil.com; chrisspelly@avlcouncil.com; gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com; mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com

Subject: Fwd: See the proposed St. Lawrence Plaza

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council members,

With my whole heart, I support the Diocese of Asheville's proposal for a beautiful plaza instead of a proposed high-rise.

I hope you will agree and support the Basilica as well.

Mike Boustead

Dear friends of the Basilica,

I invite you to watch an animation of the plaza proposed by the Diocese and Basilica's artists and architects knowledgeable in the work of Guastavino. To see it without a lot of ads for unrelated videos, go to www.youtube.com and type **St. Lawrence Plaza Asheville** into the search field.

Also, if you have not seen it, you may be interested in Alice Cella's guided tour titled **Basilica of St. Lawrence**. A link to it will also be in the search results.

Please forward this email to all who may be interested, and encourage the City Council to support the Diocese' proposal for this magnificent plaza instead of a high-rise, sidewalk-to-sidewalk hotel. As mentioned in my earlier email, the proposed plaza will maintain and enhance access, visibility, and prominence to two of our finest architectural treasures, the Grove Arcade and the Basilica, as well as the Civic Center. Fronting the plaza would benefit all three instead of literally overshadowing them.

The Council's contact info is:

Cecil Bothwell cecil@braveulysses.com

Jan Davis jandavis@avlcouncil.com

Marc Hunt marchunt@avlcouncil.com

Chris Pelly chrispelly@avlcouncil.com

Gordon Smith gordonsmith@avlcouncil.com

Email should also be sent to Mayor Terry Bellamy mayorbellamy@avlcouncil.com and Vice Mayor Esther

Manheimer emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com

Many thanks,

Rita Livezey | Social Justice Commissioner | Roman Catholic Parish of the Basilica of St. Lawrence | Asheville, NC | 828.299.0668

I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other.... ~Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2012 8:32 PM
To: 'Sybil Riddle'
Subject: RE: proposed St Lawrence Plaza

Ms. Riddle

Thanks you for writing regarding future use of the City-owned property across from the Civic Center and the Basilica of St. Lawrence. I apologize for not responding immediately.

Please know that I am committed to a use for that property that:

- Respects the architecture of the Basilica and the Civic Center.
- Does not allow a tall building to encroach near the Basilica.
- Includes a significant and aesthetically great open public plaza providing separation from the Basilica.
- Relies on construction techniques that do not harm the structural integrity of the Basilica and other nearby buildings.
- Benefits the entire community and adds to the vibrancy of downtown and Asheville as a great destination for visitors.

I view the site as one of the most important for the future quality of our community, and we must “get it right” as to its development.

The City has been underway for some time in negotiation with McKibbon Hotel Group for development of the site. A well-defined process is in place to assure that the City would only move forward with McKibbon if excellent design and execution are assured. I am glad to learn that representatives of the Basilica (led by local attorney and former Asheville Mayor Lou Bissette), City staff, representatives of the Asheville Design Center, representatives of McKibbon Hotel Group, and others have been in dialogue about advancing that process. I assure you I will support moving forward with McKibbon only if I am confident of the great design outcome our community deserves.

Many emails and calls have come to me advocating that the property be sold to the Diocese, and they have reinforced to me the need that whatever development that occurs honors and protects the Basilica. While Diocese ownership could ensure that, I am confident that a good planning process and strong leadership by our City Council can ensure it as well under different site ownership.

Another thing that many have been discussing is realignment of Page Avenue to the west to allow for a better-configured public plaza and a greater setback (away from the Basilica) of any building constructed on the site. Achieving that realignment would require constructive partnership with the Basilica, and I hope its leadership would commit to thorough discussion of that.

Again, thank you for writing me about this. I look forward to further review and dialogue.

Marc Hunt

From: Sybil Riddle [mailto:sybilriddle@beverly-hanks.com]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 9:13 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: proposed St Lawrence Plaza

Dear Council Members,
Please vote for the proposed St Lawrence Plaza. Thank you.

Kind regards,
Sybil Riddle **ABR, E-PRO, RCC, ECO, NAR GREEN**
Broker, REALTOR®



828.230.9116 Mobile
828.255.8994 Fax
sybilriddle@beverly-hanks.com
www.RealEstateAshevilleHomes.com

300 Executive Park
Asheville, NC 28801
www.beverly-hanks.com

Please consider the environment before printing this email. Thank You!

If you do not wish to receive future emails, please click the link to Unsubscribe: [Unsubscribe](#).

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2012 6:27 PM
To: 'David Johnson'
Subject: RE: St Lawrence Basilica area redevelopment
Attachments: Map to Marc&Cat's House.pdf

Dave

Sorry to have not gotten back with you. Would you like to get together in the next few days? How about Monday at 12:30? Would you be willing to come to my house; with luck the weather will be nice and we could sit on the deck. Map attached.

As our planning committee meets Tuesday, it would be great to get together in advance.

Marc

From: David Johnson [mailto:djohnson12@mac.com]
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

Asheville Citizen-Times - Feb. 16, 2012

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.

Ashevilleans 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:

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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

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Written by
David Johnson

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<http://tlt.unca.edu/video/productions/guastavino-vaulting-barcelona-black-mountain>

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: earl davis <memkat2@gmail.com> on behalf of earl davis
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 7:55 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: St Lawrences

Typical political argument ... good plan, bad plan ... only two choices???

The property belongs to the citizens of Asheville and should be put to their service as a green space something downtown is in great need of considering the city government has chosen to pave over Prichard Park and City County Plaza ...

On Thu, Feb 9, 2012 at 4:54 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Mr Davis

Thank you for writing me on this. Below are some thoughts I have recently been sharing on the subject. I assure you I have no allegiance to the financial profit of developers. But I do want what is best for the city.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence

February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.

- After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design, including its seven-story height (two stories shorter than the Vanderbilt Apts. directly across the street and hardly a high-rise), was to be only a starting point.
- Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.
- A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:
 - The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.
 - The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.
 - Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
 - The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the

Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.

- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.
- Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park. As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban park would require millions.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: earl davis [mailto:memkat2@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 12:17 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; +letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: St Lawrences

When the dust clears from the developer feeding frenzy will there be anything of Asheville left???

There's a reason people want to come to Asheville to visit, spend money and to live and the reason isn't just to stay in another tacky boutique hotel ...

The developers are eating the goose that lays the golden eggs and the greedy politicians are feeding it to them ...

The developers do not live here and have no emotional investment in Asheville, for them it's simply another cash cow, and St Lawrences just another pile of bricks in the way of their bottom line.

Earl Davis

Alexander Dr.

Asheville, NC 28801

--
Earl-Vincent

Ben Fulmer

From: Jennifer Woodward <jenwoodward@gmail.com> on behalf of Jennifer Woodward
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 5:15 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: stop Hi-Rise Hotel development from blocking St. Lawrence Basilica

I will be sure to send your initial reply to our Five Points Neighborhood online group. I'm sure there are many people that will find the information valuable.

Thanks again!

On Feb 9, 2012, at 5:09 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Ms Woodward
>
> Thank you so much. Please help add some balance to all this by
> informing others, and please offer constructive feedback to anyone who
> might be under or mis-informing the public about this.
>
> Marc
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Jennifer Woodward [mailto:jenwoodward@gmail.com]
> Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 5:06 PM
> To: Marc Hunt
> Subject: Re: stop Hi-Rise Hotel development from blocking St. Lawrence
> Basilica
>
> This was incredibly helpful information to receive. Many times I feel
> the public only receives one side to an issue - which is why it's so
> important to reach out to council members like yourself. After reading
> the financials and also that McKibbin's original plan was only 7
> stories tall, I feel much more comfortable with the outcome that will most likely occur.
>
> Thank you for taking the time to explain the details.
>
> Best regards,
> Jennifer Woodward
>
> On Feb 9, 2012, at 4:57 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:
>
>> Ms Woodward
>>
>> Thank you for writing me on this. Below are some thoughts I have
>> recently been sharing on the subject.
>>
>> Since you raised the topic of conversion of the site to a park, let
>> me address that first. I too would love to see only a park on the site.
>> But I am concerned that it is not realistic.

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>> Attached is the list of priorities and approx. costs excerpted from
>> our Parks Master Plan. You can see that it totals well over \$50
>> million when you consider the long-term priorities that do not have
>> costs yet attached. A downtown park is not prioritized. These
>> priorities were established based on exhaustive public input from
>> hundreds of citizens. You can find the entire plan on the City's
>> website. While the Plan does make reference elsewhere to the need
>> for urban parks generally in the downtown area, it says the same for
> neighborhoods throughout town.

>>

>> Our Parking Enterprise Fund, the net proceeds of which fund our
>> transit system, originally paid for this site. The Parking fund
>> needs to be made whole. In addition to the \$2MM+ cost that would
>> need to be justified as to park acquisition, converting the site to a
>> park would cost multiple million more dollars more, and then there
>> would be the challenge of funding the operations and maintenance. We
>> struggle to spend even \$1 million/year in capital outlay for parks.

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>> Pack Square Park is an enormous commitment to a downtown park that is
>> not fully funded yet despite heroic efforts by many, and I am
>> currently putting some serious work in with advocates trying to
>> figure out how we can financially make it thrive going forward, no easy task.

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>> I hope you see that our resources to build parks are extremely
>> limited and our priorities are great. A park on this site is just
>> not feasible in the next several years.

>>

>> Hope you find all of this helpful, and I apologize for the length -
>> it is a complex situation.

>>

>> Marc Hunt

>>

>> An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the
>> Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012

>>

>> Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the
>> City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I
>> appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a
>> historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the
>> Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community.
>> I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be
>> insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur.
>> I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come
>> to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our
>> citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in
>> the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:
>> . The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface
>> parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set
>> out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a
>> much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and
>> become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In

>> order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and
>> fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified
>> potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the
>> City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
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>> Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel
>> Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design
>> judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me
>> emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design,
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>> directly across the street and hardly a high-rise), was to be only a
> starting point.

>> . Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a
>> development agreement and final design. The City, at its own
>> choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and
>> abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize.
>> Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the
>> disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption
>> of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further
>> guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has
>> been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.

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>> intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this
>> letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the
>> Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:

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>> upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated
>> buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a
>> requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000.
>> At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the
>> sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site
>> as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property
>> might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be
>> incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for
>> many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a
>> poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the
>> City and downtown to
> that outcome.

>> o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when
>> development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be
>> many years before the City would realize that final installment of
>> the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica
>> advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but
>> again,
> timing would be uncertain.

>> o Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the
>> picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the
>> City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a
>> steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax
>> revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the
>> City would net less than

>> \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase
>> money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward.
>> Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary
>> responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible
>> trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and
>> character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning
>> regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use
>> and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach
>> where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves
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> interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
>> o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain,
>> or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A
>> parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might
>> consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the
>> Diocese or its designated representative.
>> . Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the
>> RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City
>> wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first
>> have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all
>> comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless
>> of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose
>> control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this
>> path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.
>> . Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is
>> that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park.
>> As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong
>> advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a
>> park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as
>> much higher priorities for parks and open space and because
>> conversion of
> this site to an urban
>> park would require millions.
>> If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would
>> declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a
>> fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified
>> partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that
>> process in order for the City to negotiate directly.
>> As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City
>> could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese
>> proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also
>> not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final
>> design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all
>> this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by
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> this with others.
>> Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course
>> is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007
>> and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable
>> arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I
>> will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified
>> to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs

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>> that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side
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>> this project and our community.
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>> Truly yours,
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>> Marc Hunt
>> Member, Asheville City Council
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>> Subject: stop Hi-Rise Hotel development from blocking St. Lawrence
>> Basilica
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>> 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
>> <Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf><PRCA Master Plan Priorities.pdf>
>
>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 5:06 PM
To: 'KITTY MCKEITHEN'
Subject: RE: Land across from Basilica
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf; PRCA Master Plan Priorities.pdf

Ms McKeithen

Thank you for writing me on this. Below are some thoughts I have recently been sharing on the subject.

Since you raised the topic of conversion of the site to a park, let me address that first. I too would love to see only a park on the site. But I am concerned that it is not realistic.

Attached is the list of priorities and approx. costs excerpted from our Parks Master Plan. You can see that it totals well over \$50 million when you consider the long-term priorities that do not have costs yet attached.

A downtown park is not prioritized. These priorities were established based on exhaustive public input from hundreds of citizens. You can find the entire plan on the City's website. While the Plan does make reference elsewhere to the need for urban parks generally in the downtown area, it says the same for neighborhoods throughout town.

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Hope you find all of this helpful, and I apologize for the length - it is a complex situation.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

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. After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design, including its seven-story height (two stories shorter than the Vanderbilt Apts. directly across the street and hardly a high-rise), was to be only a starting point.

. Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.

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Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.

o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.

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Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off.

The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).

o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property.

A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.

. Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

. Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is

that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park. As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to

an urban park would require millions.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner.

The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt
Member, Asheville City Council

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

From: KITTY MCKEITHEN [mailto:kittymckeithen@bellsouth.net]

Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 4:57 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Subject: Land across from Basilica

Please protect the Basilica which is one of Asheville's finest structures!!!

Use the land across the street for a lovely park. It would definitely help set off the beauty of our Basilica and the mountains beyond. Don't let Asheville become an ugly spot of concrete with little or no green spaces.

Sincerely,

Kathryn McKeithen
828-257-4018

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

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: Crawford Murphy <ccmarch@skyrunner.net> on behalf of Crawford Murphy
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 7:06 AM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Basilica and Hotel conflict

Hope so, as the process is out of control at this point. Other point is to encourage or demand local professional involvement. The Biltmore Ave. Hotel is almost 100% money stream to outside interests and as a side point the structure, designed by non Asheville pros is 100% unsustainable and toxic. I could have designed it totally sustainable and non toxic and no noise and a third speedier construction using Cross Laminated Timber technology, CLT which my Asheville company CLT USA expects to manufacture in the US soon and is importing from Europe and Canada for USA project now. AS another note, the City has not given our venture any support. Things to keep in mind for the overall best interest of Asheville other than city tax revenue.

Crawford Murphy MDS10 Asheville

On 2/8/2012 9:35 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Mr Murphy
>
> I really, really, appreciate your vision. I'll work hard to ensure a
> vigorous collaborative planning role by the City, along the lines you
> suggest.
>
> Please read below for thoughts I have been providing to interested citizens.
>
> Marc Hunt
>
> ***
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> such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to

> consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

> Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of

> this project and our community.

>

> Truly yours,

>

> Marc Hunt

> Member, Asheville City Council

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Crawford Murphy [mailto:ccmarch@skyrunner.net]

> Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 2:52 PM

> To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com

> Subject: Basilica and Hotel conflict

>

> It is hard for me to understand why the Basilica/Hotel conflict exists.

> In the hands of a conscientious and creative Architect designer and

> Planner and cooperation of the now under utilized land owned by the

> City and the Diocese, a hotel with parking away from the Basilica,

> which will respect downtown sight lines and avoid construction

> vibration which might harm the Basilica structure and a beautifully

> landscaped and functional plaza can be achieved. The mixed use

> complex would be an asset to the Basilica gathering function

> ,compliment the hotel as a green outlet and augment the Civic Center as a pre event staging area.

> Greater than these, the results would stand as a "monument to

> cooperation:" in design and urban development if only the City, the

> Basilica/Diocese and the Hotel owners would stand back and understand

> the value of cooperation. The details are in the process and the

> earnest enthusiasm of the principles involved. The alternative is

> civic war.The example to avoid repeating is the insensitive Biltmore

> Ave Hotel design and development.

> Crawford Murphy, Architect of MDS10 Asheville.

Ben Fulmer

From: Christina Wehmeyer <cswakw@bellsouth.net> on behalf of Christina Wehmeyer
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 9:39 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: No High Rise, Please

Very well written argument containing a lot of clarifying information. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts. I do agree with a number of them.

On Feb 8, 2012, at 9:20 PM, Marc Hunt wrote:

> Ms Wehmeyer
>
> Thank you for writing me on this matter. Below is a letter that I
> have provide the last couple days to folks curious as to my position.
> Since you raise the question of a park specifically, I'd like to
> address that in a little more detail.
>
> Attached is the list of priorities and approx. costs excerpted from
> our Parks Master Plan. You can see that it totals well over \$50
> million when you consider the long-term priorities that do not have costs yet attached.
> We can typically afford only \$1 million - \$3 million per year at best for
> funding these priorities. A downtown park is not prioritized. These
> priorities were established based on exhaustive public input from
> hundreds of citizens. You can find the entire plan on the City's
> website. While the Plan does make reference elsewhere to the need for
> urban parks generally in the downtown area, it says the same for all areas of town.
>
> Our Parking enterprise fund, the net proceeds of which fund our
> transit system, originally paid for this site. The Parking fund needs
> to be made whole. In addition to the \$2MM+ cost that would need to be
> justified as to park acquisition, converting the site to a park would
> cost multiple million more dollars more, and then there would be the
> challenge or funding the operations and maintenance.
>
> Pack Square Park is an enormous commitment to a downtown park that is
> not fully funded yet despite heroic efforts by many, and I am
> currently putting some serious work in with advocates trying to figure
> out how we can financially make it thrive going forward, no easy task.
>
> I appreciate your vision, really. But as my letter below indicates,
> we have to be strategic and realistic.
>
> Regards
>
> Marc Hunt
> ***
>

> An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the
 > Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012
 >
 > Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the
 > City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I
 > appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a
 > historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the
 > Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community.
 > I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be
 > insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur.
 > I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come
 > to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our
 > citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in
 > the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:
 > . The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface
 > parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set
 > out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a
 > much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and
 > become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In
 > order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and
 > fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified
 > potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City
 > final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
 > . After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of
 > possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of
 > Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbin Hotel
 > Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design
 > judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me
 > emphasize here that McKibbin's preliminary suggested design, including
 > its seven-story height (two stories shorter than the Vanderbilt Apts.
 > directly across the street), was to be only a starting point.
 > . Next steps under the process with McKibbin would be negotiation of a
 > development agreement and final design. The City, at its own
 > choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon
 > the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize.
 > Negotiation with McKibbin did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the
 > disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of
 > the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further
 > guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been
 > slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.
 > . A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of
 > intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this
 > letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the
 > Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:
 > o The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property
 > upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings
 > and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the
 > City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage,
 > the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I
 > would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface
 > parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove
 > financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for

> the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to
> come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term
> use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.

> o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when
> development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be
> many years before the City would realize that final installment of the
> purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica
> advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.

> o Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the
> picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbin proposal, the
> City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a
> steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax
> revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the
> City would net less than
> \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase
> money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward.

> Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary
> responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible
> trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and
> character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning
> regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use
> and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach
> where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).

> o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain,
> or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A
> parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might
> consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese
> or its designated representative.

> . Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the
> RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City
> wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first
> have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all
> comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless
> of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose
> control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this
> path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

> . Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is
> that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park.

> As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong
> advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a
> park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as
> much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban
> park would require millions.

> If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would
> declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a
> fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified
> partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that
> process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

> As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City
> could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese
> proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also

> not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final
 > design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all
 > this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.
 > Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course
 > is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007
 > and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable
 > arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I
 > will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified
 > to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs
 > of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City
 > does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very
 > positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be
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 > structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote
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 > spectacular outcome for all concerned.
 > Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of
 > this project and our community.
 >
 > Truly yours,
 >
 > Marc Hunt
 > Member, Asheville City Council
 >
 >
 > -----Original Message-----
 > From: Christina Wehmeyer [mailto:cswakw@bellsouth.net]
 > Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 11:57 AM
 > To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
 > Subject: No High Rise, Please
 >
 > Please listen to the voice of the Asheville citizens. We WANT and
 > NEED a lovely park, plaza, green space, peaceful spot to set off the
 > Basilica. We do not need a high rise of any kind in that small space.
 >
 > Thank you,
 >
 >
 > <Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf><PRCA Master Plan Priorities.pdf>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 9:28 PM
To: 'Mary Lou Sartoris'
Subject: RE: Preservation of Land near Basilica of St. Lawrence
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf; PRCA Master Plan Priorities.pdf

Ms Sartoris

Thank you for writing me on this matter. Below is a letter that I have provide the last couple days to folks curious as to my position. Since you raise the question of a park specifically, I'd like to address that in a little more detail.

Attached is the list of priorities and approx. costs excerpted from our Parks Master Plan. You can see that it totals well over \$50 million when you consider the long-term priorities that do not have costs yet attached.

We can typically afford only \$1 million - \$3 million per year at best for funding these priorities. A downtown park is not prioritized. These priorities were established based on exhaustive public input from hundreds of citizens. You can find the entire plan on the City's website. While the Plan does make reference elsewhere to the need for urban parks generally in the downtown area, it says the same for all areas of town.

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Pack Square Park is an enormous commitment to a downtown park that is not fully funded yet despite heroic efforts by many, and I am currently putting some serious work in with advocates trying to figure out how we can financially make it thrive going forward, no easy task.

I appreciate your vision, really. But as my letter below indicates, we have to be strategic and realistic.

Regards

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

. The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair

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. Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.

. A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:

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- o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.

- o Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).

- o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.

. Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

. Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park. As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban park would require millions.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt
Member, Asheville City Council

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

From: Mary Lou Sartoris [mailto:marylousartoris@charter.net]
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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 8:55 PM
To: 'LS'
Subject: RE: land in front of Basilica
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf

Ms Alfredson

Thank you for contacting me. Please read the below open letter I have drafted; it explains some trade-offs and my views.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- . The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.

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Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.

- o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.

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- o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.

Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

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If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

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Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt
Member, Asheville City Council

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

From: LS [mailto:lsalfredson@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 10:12 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: land in front of Basilica

To City Council,

I understand your intentions for smart growth with a high rise hotel and condos and retail on the bottom floor.

Honestly, I do. More tax revenue.

However, also I feel that some of the most important buildings in town need to be preserved to keep the character of Asheville alive.

I have talked to many tourists and friends who have come to visit about the issue of changing Asheville's cityscape to include tall, modern buildings and the answer is inevitably, "Why would they want to do that?? Asheville is so nice now." The new Isotel hotel is a primary example of a bulding that looks like a fancy prison. I rarely ever see their parking lot full. And the vacancy rates for condos in town is not very high. The Civic Center needs more parking. Why not sell the land to the church and allow them to make it into a outbuilding with some parking, and a park? Everybody wins if the city gets money from the land, subsequent taxes on it and parking fees, the church gets more useful land for them, the Basilica is saved from possible damage and the public gets another green space. The person who loses is the McKibbon group. They are already doing one project, why should they get all the say in how Asheville looks and functions.

Look inside yourselves and try to find the right answer. A win,win, win, lose situation is only the one that makes sense to me.

Linda Alfredson
21 Red Oak Road
Asheville
828-231-7534

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 8:49 PM
To: nstuckcol@aol.com
Subject: RE: Land sale
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf; PRCA Master Plan Priorities.pdf

Ms Stuck

Thank you for writing me on this matter. Below is a letter that I have provide the last couple days to folks curious as to my position. Since you raise the question of a park specifically, I'd like to address that in a little more detail.

Attached is the list of priorities and approx. costs excerpted from our Parks Master Plan. You can see that it totals well over \$50 million when you consider the long-term priorities that do not have costs yet attached. A downtown park is not prioritized. These priorities were established based on exhaustive public input from hundreds of citizens. You can find the entire plan on the City's website. While the Plan does make reference elsewhere to the need for urban parks generally in the downtown area, it says the same for all areas of town.

Our Parking enterprise fund, the net proceeds of which fund our transit system, originally paid for this site. The Parking fund needs to be made whole. In addition to the \$2MM+ cost that would need to be justified as to park acquisition, converting the site to a park would cost multiple million more dollars more, and then there would be the challenge or funding the operations and maintenance.

Pack Square Park is an enormous commitment to a downtown park that is not fully funded yet despite heroic efforts by many, and I am currently putting some serious work in with advocates trying to figure out how we can financially make it thrive going forward, no easy task.

Regards

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence
February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.

- After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design, including its seven-story height (two stories shorter than the Vanderbilt Apts. directly across the street), was to be only a starting point.
 - Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.
 - A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:
 - o The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.
 - o The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.
 - o Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
 - o The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
 - Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.
 - Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park. As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban park would require millions. If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.
- As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would

unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbin. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbin is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbin, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbin in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt
Member, Asheville City Council

From: nstuckcol@aol.com [mailto:nstuckcol@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 9:59 AM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: Land sale

Dear City Council members,

Please know that my vote would absolutely be for the area in front of the Basilica to be used as a city park. I live in downtown Asheville, and have great affection for the green spaces now available. Having one in the suggested area would only enhance the value of the adjoining properties, both economically and esthetically.

Thank you,

Nona Martin Stuck
100 Coxe Ave., #305
Asheville, N.C. 28801

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: Sarah Larson <sarahlarso@gmail.com> on behalf of Sarah Larson
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 8:41 AM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: Bascilics

The Park was turned over to a Conservancy as I understand it which was insuring the city that it would manage the Park's restoration and then in turn hopes to make it a money making proposition for them. A public/private entity I am told usually is a sticky one at best and not a wise decision. The park has proved to be faulty in many respects to its intended use. Bele Cher is not using it, the Symphony had to delay a concert for half an hour due to facing in the wrong direction and couldn't read the music. Traffic barrels right through the middle creating noise and pollution. Yet there is much to enjoy and admire about the Park. I admire you for taking on this huge job. I am one of your supporters and I wish you well on the Council.

When you process all the facts on any issue don't forget to weigh in on the history of Asheville, the city as it has always been envisaged and the image we want to continue, as well as the esthetics of living here. I would also like to see Green UP Asheville be encouraged. Since there is little space on ground level to make green, lets use our rooftop space especially on residential buildings. Perhaps the Art Museum in its reconstruction will consider making their rooftop green.

Thanks for responding to my question and have a great day.

On Wed, Feb 8, 2012 at 6:32 AM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms Larson

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Pack Square Park is an enormous commitment to a downtown park that is not fully funded yet despite heroic efforts by many, and I am currently putting some serious work in with advocates trying to figure out how we can financially make it thrive going forward, no easy task.

Thank you

Marc

From: Sarah Larson [mailto:sarahlarso@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 10:44 PM

To: Marc Hunt

Subject: Re: Basilics

Mr. Hunt, Please identify the areas to which you refer in : " I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban park would require millions."

Thank you.

On Tue, Feb 7, 2012 at 9:11 PM, Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms Larson

Below is a letter I put together on this earlier. Thanks for contacting me.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica
of St. Lawrence
February 7, 2012

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Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt
Member, Asheville City Council

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

From: Sarah Larson [mailto:sarahlarso@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 11:40 AM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com

Subject: Bascilics

Think of the draw that Greenvilles parks have for tourist. Choosing the Bascilicas proposal means making the right decision for Asheville.

Sarah B LarsonSent from my iPhone

--

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." Dr.Howard Thurman

Sarah B. Larson
12 S. Lexington Avenue #208
Asheville, NC 28801
[828-450-5462](tel:828-450-5462)
sarahlarso@gmail.com

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Asheville, NC 28801
828-450-5462
sarahlarso@gmail.com

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 9:21 PM
To: 'Sandi Anton'
Subject: RE: A city park
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf

Ms Anton

Below is a letter I put together on this earlier. I do think you should consider contacting the church and encouraging that they partner in the development. Between this site and their existing surface parking lot next to it, plenty of room for park/piazza/fountain plus an acceptable development. I do not see an affordable scenario where this becomes a stand-alone park; too many priorities for parks in other places around town.

Thanks for contacting me.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 7, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

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Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: Sandi Anton [mailto:srussanton@aol.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 1:26 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com

Subject: A city park

No question, we'd love a park in the area across from the church. We live at the Grove Arcade and are in sour need of more green space. Let me know if there's anything more I can do...

Thanx, Sandi Anton

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 8:19 PM
To: 'Michael Hurd'
Subject: RE: Across from the Basilica

Mr Hurd

Thanks for contacting me on this matter. Making a park there would cost millions, and there are much higher priority sites for parks and greenways elsewhere in the city. Please read below for a fuller response.

Marc Hunt

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 - The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the

Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.

- The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price. There are some parishioners of the Basilica advocating for near-term sale and development of the property, but again, timing would be uncertain.
- Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbin proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
- The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.
- Another suggestion that I have heard much about since yesterday is that the site be retained by the city and converted to a city park. As former chairman of the City's Greenway Commission, I am a strong advocate for parks and open space. I do not support this site as a park because our planning indicates many other sites around town as much higher priorities for parks and open space and because conversion of this site to an urban park would require millions.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbin would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbin. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbin is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbin, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbin in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: Michael Hurd [mailto:shephurd@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 9:28 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; +letters@citizen-times.com

Subject: Across from the Basilica

Please make that space into a park!!!!!!

The city already gave up a beautiful potential green space (on Biltmore between Doc Chey's and the old Hot Dog King), and that was a real loss. Please make the space across from the Basilica and the Civic Center into a beautiful park that generations and generations will come to love. We don't need more concrete. It doesn't have to be a massive project like Pack Square. Just plant some trees, do some landscaping, put it out to local builders, landscapers etc.

PLEASE!!!

Thanks for hearing my voice on this.

-Michael Hurd

West Asheville

--

Right Building

rightbuilding@gmail.com

(828) 702-7930

Contact: Michael Hurd

Right Building is a fully-insured, green-building company in Asheville, NC. Awards include 2010 and 2011 [Angie's List Super Service Award](#) for maintaining an "A-rating."

Our team is comprised of a carefully selected group of like-minded individuals who put quality and the environment first. No job is too large or too small. From punch-lists to full renovations and additions, we are here to do things *right*, for you.

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- Commercial & Residential Construction
- Interior/Exterior projects
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- Windows/Doors
- Flooring/Tile
- Electrical/Plumbing
- Framing/Trim
- Saunas
- Tree Houses
- Custom Kids Furniture
- Roofing
- Project Management/Consulting

Call for a free consultation/estimate. We will help you find the right products and services to meet your needs.

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 8:08 PM
To: 'Bower, Virginia'
Subject: RE: the Basilica

Ms Bower

I appreciate your admonitions and reminders.

I assure you that I have no allegiance to McKibbon, developers in general, or corrupting our downtown or viewshed. And I will do my best to exercise oversight and diligence.

marc

From: Bower, Virginia [mailto:VBOWER@mhc.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 8:40 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: RE: the Basilica

I hope, Marc, that when you assert--"that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood"--that your "vision" coincides with the vision of people who love mountain views, low-level downtown buildings, and attention to aesthetics above avarice. I'm afraid that "meeting the needs of the entire community" can be widely interpreted. Take, for example, the construction currently underway on Biltmore--might some agree that this is somehow "meeting the needs of the entire community" simply because it is providing additional parking and, at some future point, additional lodging for tourists? To me, the new construction is mostly obscuring what *was* a lovely mountain view, is dominating the downtown landscape with its height, and will, in the end, be an eyesore realized only too late. We are all here because of the natural beauty--unfortunately, it seems there is now a "price" for such beauty--one can only afford such views if one pays for upper-end mountain-view housing or if one wants to stay in these high-rises built up not because they are "meeting the needs of the entire community," but rather, are meeting the financial needs of a few--the 1%? I hope you'll make wise decisions, decisions that those who newly elected you would support. Thanks for your explanation.

Virginia Bower

From: Marc Hunt [marchunt@avlcouncil.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:25 PM
To: Bower, Virginia
Subject: RE: the Basilica

Ms. Bower

Thank you for contacting me on this matter. See below for a letter on this topic I just completed. I'd be glad to answer any follow-up questions or discuss it further.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 6, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
- After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design was to be only a starting point.
- Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.
- A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:
 - The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.
 - The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price.
 - Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to

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- The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: Bower, Virginia [<mailto:VBOWER@mhc.edu>]

Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:00 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com

Subject: the Basilica

PLEASE do NOT let more ugly, obstructive, usurous development take place in front of the Basilica. Money is **not** always the bottom line--and I would hope that as part of city council, you would support the idea of a beautiful, livable, aesthetically pleasing, people-pleasing downtown rather than a developer-pleasing and money-grubbing downtown. Please don't sell our lovely city to the highest bidder--consider those of us you represent! Establish a park (green spaces are invaluable!!) and/or sell the land to the Basilica who will in turn use the land constructively and for one-level purposes! Thank you for listening and taking action based on what your constituents are asking!

Virginia Bower
Kenilworth
AVL, NC

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: 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: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:31 PM
To: 'Bobbie Burdett'
Subject: RE: Public green space, not another high-rise
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf

Ms. Burdett

Thank you for contacting me on this matter. See below for a letter on this topic I just completed. I'd be glad to answer any follow-up questions or discuss it further.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence **February 6, 2012**

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
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- A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:
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 - The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price.
 - Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbin proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
 - The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbin would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbin. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbin is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City

does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbon in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: Bobbie Burdett [mailto:bobbie@authenticcoach.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:26 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov; letters@citizen-times.com
Subject: Public green space, not another high-rise

Come on folks, are you really seriously considering another stupid decision in favor of corporate greed instead of what is good for Asheville?

People visit Asheville because it's fun and a unique place to spend a vacation. They can get high rises in New York or Chicago. They want to see the beautiful architecture of the Basilica and they want to see the mountains, not another senseless hunk of steel, concrete, and glass!

Stop this insanity. Preserve what makes Asheville the desired vacation destination for those who contribute to our number one industry.

There are other options. Get you pinkies out of the corporate pockets and do what's right!

Bobbie Burdett, BCC, ACC
Authentic-Life Coaching
Director of Training, HealthWorld Online
828-258-0067
bobbie@authenticcoach.com
www.authenticcoach.com
<http://www.wellpeople.com/certification.asp>
<http://www.mywellnesstest.com/>

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:31 PM
To: 'ginny daley'
Subject: RE: land across the street from the Basilica
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf

Ms. Daley

Thank you for contacting me on this matter. See below for a letter on this topic I just completed. I'd be glad to answer any follow-up questions or discuss it further.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 6, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
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- The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price.
- Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
- The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the

Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbin in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: ginny daley [mailto:ginny.daley@att.net]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:25 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: land across the street from the Basilica

Please do not allow inappropriate construction to go on in the current parking lot across the street from the Basilica!

For me inappropriate would be a high rise building (parking deck, condos, hotel, etc.). Also inappropriate would be any kind of construction, esp. digging, that might cause any threat of damage to the somewhat frail and expensive to repair Basilica dome.

My preference would be for the city to maintain the lot as a small park or greenspace that could be enjoyed by many of the local residents and out of town visitors that use that end of the town - to visit the Basilica, go to an event at the Civic Center, or shop on that end of downtown. A green space provides a benefit to our residents. Its also a decision that can be reversed later on if the space is needed for something else.

My second choice would be to sell the space to the church as I understand they have come up with the funds to purchase the land from the city.

Please release the land from its current use as an unattractive and inefficient parking lot, but PLEASE do not sell it to another developer. We don't need another view-stopping fiasco like the recent parking lot purchase/sale on Biltmore (to PIP). Be smart and pro Asheville this time PLEASE.

Thank you for your careful consideration -

Ginny Daley
2 Winnfred St
Asheville NC

Ben Fulmer

From: Marc Hunt <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> on behalf of Marc Hunt
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:26 PM
To: 'MaryAnn Lawrence'
Subject: RE: Basillica
Attachments: Diocese Letter of Intent.pdf

Ms. Lawrence

Thank you for contacting me on this matter. See below for a letter on this topic I just completed. I'd be glad to answer any follow-up questions or discuss it further.

Marc Hunt

An Open Letter Regarding the Haywood St. Property Across from the Basilica of St. Lawrence February 6, 2012

Many citizens have written me recently regarding the future of the City-owned area across from the Basilica of Saint Lawrence. I appreciate and share the concerns being expressed. The Basilica is a historical and architectural treasure we must protect, and the Catholic Church has always been a strong contributor to our community. I want to assure citizens that as a member of City Council, I will be insistent on very high standards for any development that might occur. I have worked very hard to understand the complex situation and come to a stance that I believe represents the best interests of our citizens. I'm also concerned about significant misunderstanding in the community of the City's path and its options. Let me explain:

- The property has in recent years been made up of substandard surface parking and dilapidated unoccupied structures. In 2007, the City set out to see the property returned to the tax rolls and converted to a much better use - one that would complement surrounding buildings and become a strong positive element for the vitality of downtown. In order to assure the best possible outcome, the City began an open and fair process of soliciting preliminary proposals from qualified potential partners. This carefully-designed RFP process gives the City final approval authority of uses, design, and timeline for development.
- After very active encouragement by the City of a broad range of possible partners (including the Basilica and the Diocese of Charlotte, who chose not to make a proposal then), McKibbon Hotel Group came out in 2008 as being the best-qualified with a design judged to be a reasonable starting point for negotiation. Let me emphasize here that McKibbon's preliminary suggested design was to be only a starting point.
- Next steps under the process with McKibbon would be negotiation of a development agreement and final design. The City, at its own choosing, could reject any proposals made by the developer and abandon the negotiation if an acceptable arrangement were not to materialize. Negotiation with McKibbon did not proceed in 2008 due in-part to the disruption of the economic crash that year and the pending adoption of the Downtown Master Plan which would provide further guidance/regulation for development of the site. The process has been slower than hoped-for, but it has not been terminated.
- A few weeks ago, the Diocese of Charlotte transmitted a Letter of intent to the City, a copy of which is attached. Note that this letter is the entirety of the proposal the City has received from the Diocese. Key elements of the proposal include:

- The Diocese would advance \$1.0 million to the City for the property upon completion by the City of demolition of the dilapidated buildings and conversion of the property to surface parking, a requirement the City estimates would cost it greater than \$500,000. At that stage, the City would have netted less than \$500,000 for the sale, and I would assume the Diocese would begin operating the site as surface parking. Because the parking operation on the property might prove financially lucrative for the Diocese, there could be incentive for the Diocese to maintain the site as surface parking for many years to come. I feel very strongly that surface parking is a poor long-term use of the site, and I am not willing to expose the City and downtown to that outcome.
- The Diocese would only advance an additional \$1 million if and when development of buildings on the property would occur. It could be many years before the City would realize that final installment of the purchase price.
- Fiscal outcome in the interest of our citizens is only part of the picture here, but note that under a successful McKibbon proposal, the City would receive well over \$2 million at the time of purchase and a steady flow of tens of thousands of dollars in property and sales tax revenue annually for years to come. Under the Diocese proposal, the City would net less than \$500,000 at purchase, uncertainty as to if/when additional purchase money might arrive, and little or no tax revenues going forward. Again, this is not about just money for me, but I do have a fiduciary responsibility to our citizens and am troubled by such a possible trade-off. The Diocese would completely control the shape and character of any development, subject only to the City's zoning regulations. While I believe that the Diocese would only allow a use and design that would not harm the Basilica, I prefer an approach where the City can assure its citizens that the use and design serves the interest of the entire community (including the Basilica).
- The Diocese has not directly proposed that a park, piazza, fountain, or any certain design of development be installed on the property. A parishioner of the Basilica has suggested that the Diocese might consider such things, but the City has not heard that from the Diocese or its designated representative.
- Importantly, the City does not have the flexibility to abandon the RFP process and negotiate directly with the Diocese. If the City wants to fairly entertain the offer from the Diocese, it would first have to open the process to competitive offers from any and all comers, and it would then have to consider the highest bid regardless of the buyer or the plans for the site. The City could easily lose control of the property's future in this scenario. Heading down this path of very uncertain outcomes is not one I am willing to support.

If the City wished to negotiate directly with the Diocese, it would declare the existing RFP process dead and start all over with a fairly-administered competitive process to identify a qualified partner. The Diocese would have to participate and prevail in that process in order for the City to negotiate directly.

As I hope you can see, there is no reasonable scenario where the City could simply abandon the RFP process and either accept the Diocese proposal or begin a direct negotiation with the Diocese. It is also not true that McKibbon would unilaterally control the final design/implementation on the site. There is misinformation about all this in the community, and I hope you will help clear that up by sharing this with others.

Given the situation as it stands today, I believe the prudent course is for the City to fairly continue the process that we began in 2007 and carefully consider whether we can arrive at an acceptable arrangement for development with McKibbon. I want you to know that I will be insistent on assuring that McKibbon is at least as qualified to perform as they were earlier, that a final design meets the needs of the entire community including the Basilica, and that if the City does move forward with McKibbon, the development would be a very positive outcome for the City and the neighborhood. I would be insistent that any demolition/construction activity not threaten the structural integrity of the Basilica. I would also avidly promote that the design incorporate open park-like space on the north side near the

Basilica, and that the architectural design of the entire project complement the Basilica and support the historic character of the Basilica. Some have suggested the Diocese consider negotiating/partnering with McKibbin in the development to assure that such things occur, and I would hope the two parties will meet soon to consider that. Nothing I have heard causes me to think any of this is out of reach and that we cannot end up with a spectacular outcome for all concerned.

Again, thank you for your interest and concern about the future of this project and our community.

Truly yours,

Marc Hunt

Member, Asheville City Council

From: MaryAnn Lawrence [mailto:malawren@unca.edu]

Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:00 PM

To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Subject: Basillica

Hello,

This is a letter in support of preserving the Basilica. Please do what ever is necessary to protect this land. A public plaza or green space would be ideal.

--

Mary Ann Lawrence

Graphic Designer

Communication and Marketing

828.251.6971

Ben Fulmer

From: Gary Jackson <GJackson@ashevillenc.gov> on behalf of Gary Jackson
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2012 6:19 PM
To: Marc Hunt
Subject: Re: (Haywood St. Property near Basilica) RE: City Property. Please scroll down to see image and text. Thank you so much!

Masterful response.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 21, 2012, at 4:04 PM, "Marc Hunt" <marchunt@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Ms. Smith

Thank you for this input. I sit on Council's Planning and Economic Development Committee, and we together with staff have reviewed this complex matter extensively over the last few weeks.

As do you, I want to make sure that whatever development occurs on the site is high quality, aesthetically appealing, and especially, complementary and protective to the Basilica and other surrounding architecture. I am committed to a fair return to the City if we sell the land, and I am committed to continuing a fair and transparent process going forward.

The City had just before the recession gone through an extensive and fairly-administered Request for Proposals (RFP) process to gather proposals for the site from buyers/developers. From that competitive process, the City selected a developer to which we remain committed. Because of the way we conducted the process, design, setback, open space, and all other aspects of a possible project with that selected developer are subject to negotiation. With economic conditions improving after the recession, that developer has recently indicated eagerness to move forward with a negotiation, to be adaptive as to design, and has expressed financial readiness to proceed. The City intends to advance that process now. I'll emphasize that we are not bound to necessarily move forward with this developer should we not be able to come to acceptable terms in a negotiation, including project design.

Under law, if the City wanted to consider the recent offer from the Western Diocese of Charlotte, which was not submitted as part of our RFP process, we would have to open bidding widely to all comers and would be forced to take the highest financial bid no matter the bidder or their intent for the property. We would have extremely limited ability to negotiate on design aspects of a project under this scenario. Please note that the dollar amount of the Diocese offer is much lower than that proposed from the developer with which we currently have a commitment to negotiate. Note also that the Diocese has not proposed a specific design nor a timetable for any development. A representative of

the Basilica has informally indicated his personal hopes for what a design might look like if investment from a compatible third-party developer were to be committed in the future.

I would not support the City abandoning a fair and well-planned approach that offers a path toward a potentially great development on the property by what appears to be a capable and qualified developer. If we are unable to reach an acceptable arrangement under the current strategy, I'd be then willing to consider alternative approaches with others.

Again, thank-you for being in touch about this, and please let me know if you have further questions.

Marc Hunt

<image004.jpg>

Marc Hunt

City Council Member

55 Cambridge Rd.

Asheville, NC 28804

Cell 828.273.2172

marchunt@avlouncil.com

From: Anne Smith [mailto:annefitzsmith@gmail.com]
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!

<image005.jpg>

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

