

DMV Site Project Working Group- Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2025

Members Present:

Tara Minter | Dr. Shawn Singleton | Dr. Ajamu Dillahunt-Holloway | Desmond Dunn | Clark Rinehart | Harold Mallette | Karen Haynes | Helen Tart | Anthony Pope | Tolulope Omokaiye | Harolynn Coplin

Members Absent:

Felts Lewis

Staff Present:

Community Engagement: Tiesha Mosley | Nadia Moreta | Shakera Vaughan

Engineering Services: Shelton Williams | Echo Swanzey

Manager's Office: Niki Jones

Planning & Development: Ken Bowers | Jake Levitas | Mary Elizabeth Russell

Housing and Neighborhoods: Jess Brandes | Angelina Blackmon

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources: Darrell Kain

i. **Welcome** (6:05 – 6:17 pm)

- a. PWG members reflected on their time with the project.
- b. PWG members submitted their votes for the 6/26 celebration speakers.
 - i. Desmond Dunn
 - ii. Tolulope Omokaiye

ii. **City Updates** (6:17 – 6:45 pm)

- a. Engineering Services provided a site demolition update.
 - i. March 2025 – Bidding process for abating the site
 - ii. May 2025 – Council awarded bid to Four Seasons Demolitions (Mebane, NC)
 - iii. Summer 2026 – Site will be ready for future development.
 - The site will be returned to a grassy pasture and gravel.
 - iv. PWG Suggestions
 - PWG requested the preservation of building's bricks and seal.
 - PWG requested surrounding neighbors of the site be notified of demolition process.
- b. Housing & Neighborhoods provided an update on Boyer – Waldrop Project (formerly Zack's Grocery).
 - i. Site Vision: Planned development includes affordable housing and mixed-use space next to the future Wake BRT station.
 - ii. Site Preparations: Demolition is complete; Site analysis and project scoping are now underway.
 - iii. Community Outreach: Staff will continue sharing updates through pop-ups and local events.
 - iv. PWG Suggestion

- PWG suggested a form of master plan related to the New Bern corridor to have cohesiveness to avoid duplication of efforts.
- c. Staff updated PWG on the Rose Court proposal and selected artist – Lamar Whidbee
- d. Staff reminded PWG of upcoming 6/17 Council Work Session at 11:30am. The session is open to the public, and project working group members can attend.
- e. Staff reminded PWG of upcoming 6/26 celebration dinner

iii. RFP Process – Questions Answered (6:45 – 7:30 pm)

- a. Questions addressed included security, market study timelines, property tax impacts, selection process, and MWBE/DBE inclusion.
 - i. Additional PWG Concerns and Ideas:
 - Can developers be incentivized to establish a tax-offset fund that supports residents in the surrounding area as property taxes rise?
 - Could Wake County be asked not to increase property values in this area, or could the City work to offset increased costs for long-time neighbors?
 - A historical comparison was made to Oberlin Village—a once-Black community now largely gentrified—as a cautionary example of displacement. Members emphasized that this redevelopment should not contribute to similar outcomes.
 - Project working group members suggested that the City should proactively include anti-displacement strategies in the RFP and require developers to demonstrate experience implementing such strategies.
 - Consider including case studies of funding sources and successful anti-displacement mechanisms in similar projects.
 - PWG expressed a desire for the City to lead with its own investment to help mitigate risk rather than relying solely on private developers.
 - PWG members requested clarification on minority participation goals, and city staff pointed out that while Raleigh sets targets for construction and repair jobs, no formal goals exist for professional services.
 - Members suggested the RFP ask about firms’ past performance in working with small businesses, particularly as a restorative act for historically underserved communities.
 - PWG also discussed the differences between an RFP vs. RFQ and emphasized the importance of ensuring the process, terminology, and scoring metrics reflect community priorities and transparency.
 - Some members would like to remain engaged beyond this phase, including potentially holding quarterly virtual or in-person meetings.
 - Request from members to ensure we include clarification that the Rose Court is intended to be a temporary activation.

iv. Finalizing the Vetted List of Site Opportunities (7:30 – 7:57pm)

- a. PWG members finalized their list of site opportunities to include in the upcoming Request for Proposal to identify possible site developers.
 - i. High Priorities

1. Affordable Housing (*Space Requirement & Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Housing options for 30-60% AMI. Diverse housing options for various family sizes and incomes; With priorities given to veterans, educators, and retirees that fall within 30-60% AMI.

2. Retail (*Space Requirement & Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Space for local, small businesses that reflect the historical New Bern Avenue corridor community and provide access to essential goods.
- b. Examples: Clothing, convenience store items, cleaning products, arts & crafts, stationery, beauty supplies, items that used to be sold at the old general store
 - i. Interest in looking into restricting certain types of businesses- vape shops, liquor stores.
- c. Essential goods examples: General store

3. Community Space (*Space Requirement & Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Multipurpose indoor space that has a variety of flexible-sized rooms that can be used for events, live entertainment, educational training, workforce development, community theater, classes, etc., with state-of-the-art technology.
- b. Examples: Hayti Heritage Center without fixed chairs. Similar to McKimmon Center's flexibility to have small rooms converted into larger spaces.
 - i. Desire for it to be for public use or partnership with a community organization like a sister site for Southeast Raleigh Promise.

4. Commissary Kitchen (*Space Requirement & Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Spaces providing fresh, healthy, and affordable food access.
- b. Examples: Coworking incubator space for food trucks who need access to a commercial kitchen, Weaver Street Market, Detroit food co-op.

5. Cultural Recognition (*Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Cultural destination with historical markers, recognition, and art.
- b. Examples: Murals, pictures, interactive exhibits, sculptures, benches, wayfinding, artifacts from the area, and bricks from the former DMV headquarters building.

6. Universal Site Design

- a. Goal: Universal design; accessible to everybody.
- b. Examples: Above and beyond ADA accessibility to encourage a space for all inside and outside.

ii. Low Priorities

1. Sustainability and Innovation (*Strategy*)

- a. Goal: Varied architectural style, project creativity, and sustainability.
- b. Example: Phil Freelon (architect)

2. Childcare Options (*Space Requirement*)

- a. Goal: Drop-in daycare.

v. Closing Thoughts & Final Q&A (7:57 – 8:05 pm)