

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING  
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
300 W. CROWELL STREET  
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112  
APRIL 3, 2025 -- 3:00 PM  
AGENDA  
[www.monroenc.org](http://www.monroenc.org)**

1. Call to Order – Chair/Councilwoman Anthony
2. Welcome and Introductions Anthony
3. Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2025 Anthony

**STATUS AND UPDATES:**

4. Sanborn Maps Watson/Campo
5. Winchester Planning Land Design Update Wells
6. Brownfield’s Environmental Status/Remnant Properties Update Sholar/Wells/Campo
7. Winchester Oral History Project Update Campo
8. Winchester National Register, Survey, Study/Cultural Overlay Campo
9. Other Business (if any) Watson
10. Adjourn Anthony

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Next Meeting: May 1, 2025 @ 3:00pm

**WINCHESTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING  
MONROE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
300 W. CROWELL STREET  
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112  
FEBRUARY 6, 2025 – 3:00 PM  
MINUTES**

The Winchester Revitalization Committee of the City of Monroe, North Carolina met in the City Hall Council Chambers located at 300 West Crowell Street in Monroe, North Carolina at 3:00pm on February 6, 2025 with Chair Surluta Anthony presiding.

Members Present: Council Member Surluta Anthony (Chair), Council Member Julie Thompson, Mayor Robert Burns, Eleanor McGinnis, Eric Hall and Clerk Angie Carnes

Members Absent: Celestine Alsbrooks and Minnie Atwater

Staff: City Manager (CM) Mark Watson, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Lisa Hollowell, Assistant City Manager (ACM) Jeffrey Wells, Strategic Projects Manager (SPM) Teresa Campo (Staff Liaison), Director of Engineering Sarah McAllister, and Grant Administrator (GA) Lisa Kerner.

Visitors: Sloan Holt

**Item No. 1. Call to Order and Item No. 2. Welcome and Introductions.** Chair Anthony called the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of February 6, 2025 to order at 3:00pm and welcomed everyone in attendance. A quorum was present.

**Item No. 3. Approval of Minutes – September 5, 2024**

The Minutes from the September 5, 2024 Meeting were presented for review and approval. Council Member Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Eleanor McGinnis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Item No. 4. Meeting Location – Change Location**

There was a discussion that the City Hall location is better suited for those members that also have to attend the GSC meeting at 4:15, and Chair Anthony also noted it is best that the meeting not be held at the Winchester Center so as not to interfere with other activities being held there at the same time. Mayor Burns made a motion to approve the permanent location change of the

Winchester Revitalization Committee meeting to City Hall Council Chambers at 3:00pm. Member Eric Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Item No. 5. Status and Updates.** CM Watson announced that Jeffrey Wells has joined Administration as Assistant City Manager and is responsible for the Planning and Development Department. ACM Wells has a history with re-development projects as former Town Manager of Waxhaw and having overseen their downtown project. He will be involved in working with the Winchester project, and he is also responsible for the Downtown Department and Master Plan. CM Watson updated the committee regarding the transition since the September 5, 2024 meeting. The Monroe Union County Economic Development Commission was serving as staff liaison for the Winchester Revitalization project. We have a new Clerk, Angie Carnes, and Teresa Campo, Strategic Projects Manager with Administration, will serve as staff liaison and will coordinate the various pieces and keep us on track.

**Item No. 6. LED Lighting Project and Other Revitalization Updates.** CM Watson shared his experience regarding the insufficient lighting in the Winchester neighborhood. He contacted Rob Miller, newly appointed General Manager of Energy Services and Water Services with the City, and asked him to develop a lighting plan for the area. Mr. Miller advised there was a plan to re-lamp with more energy efficient LED bulbs. CM Watson directed the plan to start at Winchester. The total cost, including labor and parts, was ± \$45,000.00. The electric utility covers about 75% – 80% of that, so it left about \$15,000.00 that needed to be covered, and it is being covered out of the Winchester Project funds. Forty-five street lamps were able to be quickly replaced, but the remaining lights had to be ordered. It will take about six weeks to get the rest of them in, and the re-lamping of the entire Winchester neighborhood should be completed by the end of February. Chair Anthony stated that's great because it makes the neighborhood more walkable, makes it safer, and is a signal that progress is being made in the Winchester neighborhood. CM Watson stated there are still some dark spots where there is no street lamp on a pole. That will be step two. CM Watson also looked at what other neighborhoods in the City need the same kind of attention and asked the police and fire departments to give feedback from a public safety perspective of neighborhoods or areas in the City that they felt could benefit from the same re-lamping in adding the new LED bulbs. The Icemorlee Street area came up, the Houston Street area came up, and, the Concord Avenue re-development project area came up. There is money set aside for Concord Avenue, so that will be one we work on, but when the Winchester neighborhood lighting is complete, the focus will shift to the Icemorlee Street area. CM Watson stated that in the Icemorlee Street area, all three electric service providers of Duke, Union Power, and the City of Monroe provide service, so the City will change out the lights for the City of Monroe, and they have already reached out to the other two electric providers about changing theirs out. There will be systematic work through the core of Monroe to re-lamp and do away with those dim lights. CM Watson stated there was a social media post about the re-lamping in Winchester and there was a television station out of Charlotte that came down and did a story about it, so a lot of positives there.

CM Watson discussed other revitalization and stated that the City has taken a renewed interest in the building that Parks & Recreation was using for the ceramics program and that it is one of the original school buildings for Winchester school. The City has worked with community action who had been using some offices in there, and they have now vacated that building. The City's Property Management group has done a fantastic job in cleaning out all of the old fixtures, shelves, and anything that was left behind (due to being outdated) out of the building. CM Watson stated that a contractor has evaluated the roof and suggested that the roof needs to be replaced, but at a very reasonable cost. CM Watson reported that Ground 40 has volunteered to help and used folks in their program to do all the major labor to clean that building out. He also stated there has been some environmental testing in the building for lead paint, mold, and asbestos to make aware the issues that may be in the building, and there are no major issues. CM Watson also stated that the building has been a drop area for all burned out fluorescent lights because you are not supposed to throw fluorescent lightbulbs in the dumpster because there is a special method for getting rid of them, and you have to buy a special machine that crushes the bulb and filters out all the mercury, etc. He stated that the special machine has been ordered and should be here soon so all those light bulbs can be discarded. CM Watson stated that once those bulbs are out of there, we can really spend some time getting the rest of it cleaned up. There is a concrete block wall out that was put up in the middle of the shop to divide the room, and that wall will be taken down to open up that entire room. Then all boards and vinyl siding and whatever else is covering up the windows will be removed, and we have a price to replace the broken windows and re-glaze them. He stated that if the City of Monroe were to replace that building with the same construction materials and the same square footage, that is a \$15M plus building. CM Watson stated that space needs are being evaluated and some departments and service areas may re-locate over to that building, so there will be a lot of activity in and out of that building every day.

Mayor Burns suggested when the building renovations are complete, there should be a grand opening and possibly have food trucks and make it a celebration for that community. He suggested Chair Anthony be given an opportunity to speak and introduce the building, and possibly someone like Pastor Tate could come and dedicate the building. CM Watson stated that might be a time to introduce the rest of the project to the community. Mayor Burns stated there could be a board with info/pics of Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III and would give the community something to look forward to and a great way of getting that information out to the people of the community. Mayor Burns made a motion that when the building is completed, the City to have an event. Council Member Julie Thompson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Item No. 7. Brownfield's Environmental Status and Updates.** SPM Teresa Campo announced that there is a kickoff meeting with the state being held simultaneously with this meeting, and Senior Staff Attorney Terry Sholar is on that call, along with Lisa Stiwinter, Planning and Development Director. SPM Campo stated that she and ACM Wells could not attend because they wanted to be in this meeting to share the news. SPM Campo stated that we are in the kickoff stage, the application was accepted, and now there will be a determination of the additional scope of work and what funding level we will need. SPM Campo stated she was advised this would be a lengthy process, but she will come back with what they ask us to do for further testing and to meet

their criteria. CM Watson inquired if we paid the fee to expedite, and SPM Campo stated yes, \$30,000, which was approved at the last meeting. She reminded the Committee that Mary Katherine Stukes (attorney) will manage the process and Resolve Environmental has also been contracted. Resolve Environmental completed Phase I and Phase II and have also completed additional testing.

Regarding the remnant properties, SPM Campo reported that it is not certain if those will be able to be purchased. She stated that will not impact the Brownfield's project. The project will continue to move forward, but we will let the State direct us on how we will go forward. SPM Campo showed a map of the area in 1947 and pointed out the turntable, the roundhouse, and the environmental hot spots on the property. CM Watson stated that this illustration is how he visualizes the project being developed. He stated you can see the roundhouse and a lot of spurs coming off that turntable where some of the equipment, trains, etc. were parked outside of covered storage, but the equipment shops and the machine shops are out there and near the track is where a large coal bin, a large water tank, and a sandpit were located. He stated that at the time, the engines had a big dome on top of the boiler and if the engine was having a hard time getting traction, the engineer would release some of that sand onto the track, and it would give them enough traction to start moving, so they would fill up with sand, coal, and water, and it all happened right there. Council Member Thompson inquired if the map could be hung somewhere where it could be a visual that people could see. SPM Campo stated she will work on getting a copy of that Sanborn map and getting it framed.

**Item No. 8. Oral History Project Update & NC African American Heritage Commission.**

SPM Campo stated that the videos have been completed and have been provided through a Vimeo link. She met with the State in regards to their archive criteria, and the process would require a survey as an important step in a designation. She stated we have to prove that there are no contributing resources that trigger a national register designation. She wants feedback on partnering with Planning and Development as part of the City's National Register update. SPM Campo stated there does not have to be any action taken now because it does not close until April, and it will be fairly simple to put together. GA Kerner will be helping us with that. SPM Campo stated there has been talk in the past about the heritage community program that allows City Council to recognize a neighborhood or an area. It allows a community that has lost resources and no longer qualifies as being a national register to be able to show that they have significance and designation. Greensboro has this, Durham has this, and Raleigh has this. She stated there is a total of possibly 17 cities with a total of 23 cities that will go into that; and basically there has to be boundaries, which Winchester has, and then some of the things it requires looks at cultural, which we can show and demonstrate that for the area as well as industrial. She stated it does not impact taxes or zoning, it is just basically a recognition or designation of the neighborhood. Winchester has people of note that have lived and do live there. Chair Anthony stated there was a USO there and after the USO time was complete, it turned into the recreation center, so we have that significance as well. SPM Campo stated there is no action needed now and she will coordinate with Planning and Development to make sure about the survey but does think it's a good opportunity to look at the Certified Local Government grant opportunity and do a survey for

Winchester in order to be able to get the designation for the national historic registry; but, if we can't, then this is something else, calling it a heritage community and will allow there to be signage and recognition. Mayor Burns inquired, basically we want the national designation, correct? SPM Campo stated yes, we would and also when the state came, we toured with them. Mayor Burns inquired so you're saying that even if we don't qualify, this is a great way to still honor this community? SPM Campo stated yes. SPM Campo stated it's a survey not a study, so it doesn't require inventorying all the houses, it just requires us to get a qualified person to survey to see what's left there and what's lost, so she would like to pursue looking at what the surveys would cost us if the Committee is interested in pursuing this. Council Member Thompson made a motion to pursue the survey and to take the next steps and have it be an item on next month's agenda so we can keep moving forward. Member Eric Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Item No. 9. Greenway & Winchester Linear Park Design Update.** ACM Wells gave the following update:

- CM Watson tasked me with reviewing a very broad scope of services originally initiated by the old EDC group regarding the Winchester redevelopment site.
- The goal was to come up with a manageable scope that continues the positive momentum and continues to position the city to complete the project.
- Teresa and myself have been working with Land Design on a revised scope of work that has 3 focus areas:
  - Continued site planning and linear park/trail of history early design work
  - Greenway alignments and feasibility
  - Branding and wayfinding
- There are several reasons why we keyed in on these opportunities
  - The first is funding. I wanted to make sure that we continued the positive momentum we have in Winchester planning and implementation, but also being mindful of the current budget that we have. This scope fits within the current budget and will allow planning to continue while additional funding is sought in upcoming budgets.
  - It also takes advantage of the opportunity to plan for additional greenway connectivity. Knowing that we have a funded PARTF project to extend our greenway trail to Creft Park, now is the time to look at the feasibility of extending that greenway to the Winchester Community Center and redevelopment site.
  - We'll start to hone in on the first phase of the project:
    - Preliminary studies for demolition, erosion control, utility, grading, etc.
    - Preliminary cost estimates.
    - This will get us in line and ready for construction documents for the first phase.
  - Lastly, it also will explore branding for the community, placemaking that is consistent with city branding but also provides some distinction.
    - The community will be engaged in our planning efforts, supporting the overall direction and visioning for the Winchester redevelopment project.

- Again, this keeps the momentum moving forward, continues the overall community planning and investment process, adds new opportunity, and begins to advance the design of the first phase: the linear park/trail of history.
- I'd like to get committee feedback on the scope before finalizing.

ACM Wells stated that committee members received the scope of work earlier today so hopefully there was a chance to review it, and he asked to get the committee's feedback on the scope before it is finalized and starts moving forward. He stated that it does have a four-month timeline and there is excitement about that, and a lot can be accomplished in short order and get us set up for the future out there. Chair Anthony stated we are all excited and ecstatic over it. She stated she thinks this is doable, she likes the timeframe, she likes the momentum and is excited to see that it is moving. Member Eric Hall inquired if there is a map of what the greenway would look like. ACM Wells stated not yet but one will be produced. He stated different options and different ways of topography, geography, constraints, and whether to go along a street or perhaps easements through private property will be looked at and also looking at the different options for the most feasible way to get from Point A (Creft Park) to Point B (Winchester Community Center and redevelopment site). Mayor Burns inquired do we need a motion to proceed, and ACM Wells stated he would like support from the committee, yes. Mayor Burns made a motion in support of the plan. Council Member Thompson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Item No. 10. Other Business.** Sloan Holt, a senior student at UNC-CH, spoke and indicated she is doing a senior thesis on the Winchester Avenue School. She was glad to hear Ms. Campo's presentation and stated she is interested in it. She is writing a thesis about the school and how important it was to the graduates and the broader community and how that importance has continued today, especially through this committee and through the reunion. She stated also the state archives were mentioned, and she stated that if she possibly has access to those videos, she can submit them to the UNC Archives as well, and it's probably an easier process than the state archives, so she asked if the Committee would be ok with that. Chair Anthony asked if she was offering help and if so, that is appreciated, and Ms. Holt stated yes. Chair Anthony and Mayor Burns thanked Ms. Holt, and CM Watson stated SPM Campo would be Ms. Holt's contact and asked SPM Campo to give Ms. Holt her contact information.

Mayor Burns inquired of Bradley Lucore that because all of the Committee meetings are now in City Hall, could they be video recorded and put on YouTube. CM Watson inquired of the Committee if it is the desire that the meetings be recorded and made available on YouTube for the general public. It was discussed and decided that right now until we do have something more tangible to show, there is no reason to show them live, but when we do have more plans and processes to show that that might be an opportunity we would consider moving in that direction, so it will be assessed at a later meeting and a decision will be made at a later time.

CM Watson stated that ACM Hollowell has been working on developing a podcast and asked her to speak about this. ACM Hollowell stated the podcast could be something that is held on a

consistent basis. It could be once a month, more frequently, or less frequently. Big topics such as the Winchester project update, the renovations at the ceramics building, the roof replacement and everything going on there in addition to the heritage project and all of these other projects that are underway could be the subject of a podcast. She has been working with Bradley Lucore, Communications Supervisor, and they are discussing how it could be structured. Mayor Burns asked if this is what he had mentioned and she responded no it would be a City initiative so not really the elected officials, but Committee Members would be welcomed to join anytime, but it would need to be planned out, specifically what topics are going to be covered and what would have the most impact for the community. ACM Hollowell stated it could help with communication in many different ways and there are so many interesting things going on at the City that there are a lot of possibilities. She stated there have only been two that she has seen in the State of North Carolina. She stated a lot is being done with public communications, and Communications Supervisor Bradley Lucore has done an amazing job and is taking communications to really a different level than it was before and a lot of attention is being paid from the City Manager's office. Council Member Thompson stated a City podcast is a very good idea. The Committee Members agreed.

CM Watson stated there was one other update and that is the replacement of the front of the Winchester Community Center's glassed-in terrarium being replaced with a sitting porch out on front. He stated contractors have already been engaged to make plans and that's been funded in the budget, so he is looking forward to Property Management and Parks and Recreation working together to get that completed this spring. Chair Anthony stated that at one time on Winchester, everybody had a porch. She said residents would sit on their porches and talk neighbor to neighbor or to whomever was walking up the street, and stated that this project is exciting.

**Item No. 11. Adjourn.** There being no further business, Council Member Thompson made a motion to adjourn the Winchester Revitalization Committee Meeting of February 6, 2025. Member Eric Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4 00pm.

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Surluta Anthony, Chair

Attest:

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Angie Carnes, Clerk