



# Livable Streets Update (FIVE IN FIVE)



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## CITY COUNCIL APPROVES AGREEMENTS FOR CONVENTION CENTER HOTEL, UNDERGROUND PARKING DECK

The Raleigh City Council voted 6-1 today to approve agreements regarding the new Marriott convention center headquarters hotel and an underground parking deck that will be beneath the hotel. The agreements essentially formalize the relationship between the City and Noble Development Group, the hotel developer, regarding development of the two downtown facilities.

The council approved a revised development agreement for the four-star Marriott hotel to reflect construction of the underground parking deck. The hotel's original development agreement was adopted by the council in 2004 prior to approval of the underground parking deck. The other agreement approved by the council at the meeting was the reciprocal easement, construction, parking, operating and use agreement (REA).

Some of the major provisions in the two agreements are:

- The City will provide 200 parking spaces in the underground parking deck and 200 spaces in adjacent lots. This will allow the City to provide the hotel with 400 total parking spaces, as was agreed upon in the hotel's original development agreement;
- The City and the Noble Development Group jointly agree to a development timetable in which completion of the Marriott hotel, the underground parking deck and other public improvements will be tied to the projected opening of the new downtown convention center in the summer of 2008;
- The granting of surface easements and encroachment authorizations for the hotel and underground parking deck; and
- Noble Development Group agrees to contribute \$3.2 million, which is the hotel's portion of the cost of constructing the underground parking deck.

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## CITY COUNCIL ENDORSES ACTION PLAN FOR PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF DOROTHEA DIX CAMPUS

The Raleigh City Council voted unanimously Nov. 21 to take the first exploratory steps regarding a proposal that the City acquire the Dorothea Dix hospital campus from the State of North Carolina. Council members approved an action plan that includes developing a strategy to garner support of the Wake County legislative delegation and reviewing further the legality of a financing plan for the proposed acquisition.

City Manager Russell Allen and City Attorney Thomas McCormick presented the action plan at the council meeting.

An advisory services panel from the Urban Land Institute (ULI) is recommending the City of Raleigh acquire the 300-acre Dix property for redevelopment and preservation. A state committee studying future uses of the hospital campus hired ULI, a non-profit research and education organization, to do a report on future redevelopment of the site. ULI unveiled its recommendations to the state committee last month and to the City Council on Nov. 7.

Under the plan, the City of Raleigh would set up a nonprofit development corporation to buy the Dorothea Dix property for an estimated \$40 million and turn it into a major urban park. Funds to acquire the campus would come from City bonds and private donations. The development corporation would manage the park. A special taxing district would be established to generate additional revenue for the development corporation, under the plan. Both the North Carolina General Assembly and the Raleigh City Council would have to approve the City's acquisition of the Dix property.

Among the other recommendations, or guiding principles, in ULI's report on possible future uses of the Dix property:

- Create a 200-acre park with a man-made pond;
- Create a memorial to Dorothea Dix, founder of the hospital;
- Create a residential neighborhood around the proposed park;
- Create a retail center around the State Farmer's Market area;
- Create a mixed-use neighborhood on property that is now the Farmer's Market and on land that is part of N.C. State University's Centennial Campus;

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- Accommodate a campus for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services;
- Preserve existing oak trees;
- Accommodate passive recreation, amphitheater and possibly botanical gardens;
- Create new greenway links and maximize access to adjacent surrounding neighborhoods; and,
- Accommodate congregate housing for the mentally ill on the Dix site.

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## COUNCIL TO CONSIDER EXEMPTIONS FOR DOWNTOWN OVERLAY DISTRICT DEC. 5

At its Nov. 21 meeting, the Raleigh City Council received information on a series of amendments to the Raleigh City Code with the intention of encouraging high-density residential development in the downtown area.

A report presented by the City of Raleigh Planning Department concluded that the combination of stormwater, tree conservation, parking and open space requirements coupled with the expense of construction in an urban environment resulted in significant challenges in producing affordable housing downtown.

The council will consider downtown exemptions for stormwater, tree preservation, parking, and open space issues after reviewing the report. The Council agreed to hold the proposal until the Dec. 5 meeting for consideration.

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## RALEIGH RECEIVES GRANT TO JOIN STATEWIDE VIPER RADIO SYSTEM

On Nov. 21, the Raleigh City Council approved a grant award of more than \$3.5 million from the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety to join the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER)-800 MHZ trunked Radio System.

The Council also authorized the City Manager to begin negotiations for an interlocal agreement between the City of Raleigh and Wake County for the use and support of the Wake County 800 MHZ trunked radio system. (Continued on page 4)

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City Council also directed administration to pursue possible infrastructure funding from Wake County and other sources.

The VIPER radio system is an interoperable communications systems that allows public safety officials throughout the state to communicate directly with other agencies without having to relay the message through a communications center.

Wake County agencies have been using the 800 MHz since October 2004. In January 2006, the Raleigh Fire Department converted from a VHF radio system to the 800 MHz trunked system to allow Raleigh units to communicate with County emergency responders during an emergency.

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### **CITY ISSUES CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE ON NEIGHBORHOOD EXCHANGE COMMITTEE, NEIGHBORHOODS MONTH COMMITTEE**

The quality of life in Raleigh depends on the quality of our neighborhoods. The City of Raleigh has been on the cutting edge of encouraging neighborhood involvement in the governance process, through its Citizen Advisory Councils (CACs), in order to improve the quality of neighborhoods and the general quality of life in the Capital City. In the past few years, the City has added another component for participation --- Neighborhood Associations through a Neighborhood Association Registry.

The importance of the city's neighborhoods and participation of citizens have been further underscored by celebrating our neighborhoods during the month of September. Annually, the mayor issues a proclamation designating September as "Neighborhoods Month". The City took the leadership in instituting an annual Neighborhood Exchange. This exchange consists of a Friday evening banquet with a motivational speaker. In the future, neighborhoods will be recognized for involvement and accomplishments. The exchange also includes breakout sessions on topics of interest, and culminates with a luncheon and a speaker who issues a charge to our neighborhoods for the ensuing year. The Neighborhood Exchange in 2007 will occur Sept. 14-15 at the Sheraton Raleigh Capitol Center Hotel, 421 South Salisbury St.

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In addition, the City would like to have outdoor activities on a separate weekend celebrating individual neighborhoods. These outdoor activities could consist of a parade, tours of neighborhoods and a closing picnic or the hosting of a picnic in individual neighborhoods for those touring that particular neighborhood.

The City is urging Neighborhood Association leaders and members, CAC leaders and participants, garden clubs, homeowners associations, businesses and other civic-minded citizens and institutional representatives to volunteer to serve on either the Neighborhood Exchange Committee or the Neighborhoods Month Committee. These committees will begin meeting in January to map out strategies for celebrating Neighborhoods Month.

For more information, contact Charlene Willard at 831-6100 or email [charlene.willard@ci.raleigh.nc.us](mailto:charlene.willard@ci.raleigh.nc.us).

#### DOWNTOWN EVENTS CALENDER

|               |  |                        |
|---------------|--|------------------------|
| 11/24 - 11/26 | Holiday Pops - North Carolina Symphony                   | Meymandi Concert Hall  |
| 11/24 - 11/26 | Nutcracker - Carolina Ballet                             | Memorial Auditorium    |
| 11/27         | A Christmas Carol - Theatre IV                           | Fletcher Opera Theater |
| 11/28         | Best Christmas Pageant Ever - Classic Productions        | Meymandi Concert Hall  |
| 11/28 - 12/3  | The Rat Pack - Live at the Sands - Broadway Series South | Memorial Auditorium    |
| 12/1          | RAQS CARNIVALE - Bellydance Superstar, Inc.              | Fletcher Opera Theater |
| 12/2          | Lamp Lighter Community Awards Ceremony                   | Fletcher Opera Theater |
| 12/2          | Songs of the Season with General Assembly Chorus         | Meymandi Concert Hall  |
| 12/3          | First Baptist Church                                     | Meymandi Concert Hall  |
| 12/5 - 12/13  | A Christmas Carol - Theatre In The Park                  | Memorial Auditorium    |
| 12/7 - 12/17  | Cinderella - Raleigh Little Theatre                      | Fletcher Opera Theater |
| 12/8          | Cherryholmes with the Lovell Sisters - PINECONE          | Meymandi Concert Hall  |



|               |  |                       |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|
| 12/9          | Joy of Season - NC Master Chorale                | Meymandi Concert Hall |
| 12/15 - 12/23 | Nutcracker - Carolina Ballet                     | Memorial Auditorium   |
| 12/16 - 12/17 | Raleigh Ringers Holiday Concert                  | Meymandi Concert Hall |
| 12/18         | Triangle Brass Band                              | Meymandi Concert Hall |
| 12/20         | NCSU Department of Computer Science Graduation   | Meymandi Concert Hall |
| 12/26 - 12/31 | Cirque Dreams                                    | Memorial Auditorium   |
| 12/31         | New Year's Eve Concert - North Carolina Symphony | Meymandi Concert Hall |
| 12/31         | First Night                                      | Kennedy Theater       |

