



RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Norman Jackson	Damon Jeter	Julie-Ann Dixon (Chair)	Bill Malinowski	Seth Rose
District 11	District 3	District 9	District 1	District 5

**APRIL 28, 2015
5:00 PM**

2020 Hampton Street

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Regular Session: March 24, 2015 [PAGES 3 - 8]

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

ITEMS FOR ACTION

2. Solid Waste Service Charge for Vacant Dwelling Units [PAGES 9 - 16]
3. Conservation Department: Endorsement of Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor [PAGES 17 - 23]
4. Hosting the 2017 Neighborhoods USA Conference [PAGES 24 - 29]

5. Removal of Lien off of Property [PAGES 30 - 36]

ITEMS PENDING ANALYSIS: NO ACTION REQUIRED

6. Fund and/or seek a partnership with SCE&G to plant indigenous flowers and plants along transmission line corridors in Richland County [PAGE 37]
7. Comprehensive Youth Program [PAGE 38]

ADJOURNMENT



Special Accommodations and Interpreter Services

Citizens may be present during any of the County's meetings. If requested, the agenda and backup materials will be made available in alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), as amended and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof.

Any person who requires a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in the public meeting may request such modification, accommodation, aid or service by contacting the Clerk of Council's office either in person at 2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC, by telephone at (803) 576-2061, or TDD at 803-576-2045 no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject

Regular Session: March 24, 2015 [PAGES 3 - 8]

Reviews

RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

SOUTH CAROLINA

DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

February 24, 2015
5:00 PM
Council Chambers

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, persons requesting notification, and was posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Dixon called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 24, 2015 – Mr. Malinowski requested the recording be reviewed to ascertain the vote was properly reflected in the minutes.

Mr. McDonald stated the item was forwarded to Council with a recommendation of denial.

Mr. Malinowski requested the first paragraph under “Intergovernmental Service Agreement with the City of Forest Acres” be reworded to reflect the inquiry was regarding the magistrate’s retirement.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Jeter, to approve the minutes as amended. The vote in favor was unanimous.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to adopt the agenda as published. The vote in favor was unanimous.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Ordinance Amendments Regarding the Removal of the Requirements Placing a Lien on Property

Mr. McDonald stated there were two parts to the motion. One pertains to overgrown lots and the other part is in reference to sewer billing. The portion related to the overgrown lots has been resolved. Staff’s recommendation is to approve the ordinance amendment to remove the requirements placing a lien on property if owners do not pay their sewer bill.



Committee Members Present

Julie-Ann Dixon, Chair
District Nine

Norman Jackson
District Eleven

Damon Jeter
District Three

Bill Malinowski
District One

Seth Rose
District Five

Others Present:

Torrey Rush
Greg Pearce
Jim Manning
Tony McDonald
Sparty Hammett
Warren Harley
Brandon Madden
Larry Smith
Monique Walters
Michelle Onley
Monique McDaniels
Amelia Linder
Tracy Hegler
Ismail Ozbek
Rudy Curtis

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RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

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Mr. Washington inquired if there were any instances of the County taking property due to a lien.

Mr. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Jeter, to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the ordinance amendment to remove the requirements placing a lien on property if owners do not pay their sewer bill and in lieu to pursue collections through GEAR/Set-Off Debit. The vote was in favor.

Dog Park Program - Mr. Manning requested this item be tabled.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to table this item in committee. The vote in favor was unanimous.

2014 Dust Suppression Contract Increase

Mr. McDonald stated this is an amendment to a current contract Public Works Department has for dust suppression on dirt roads.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the request for a contract increase from the Public Works Roads & Drainage Budget in the amount of \$13,431.93 for the 2014 Dust Suppression Project. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Solid Waste Service Charge for Vacant Dwelling Units

Mr. McDonald stated this item was initiated by Councilman Jackson's motion at the February 14, 2015 Council meeting.

Mr. Curtis stated under the current ordinance if it is a dwelling unit a service fee must be paid even if the service is not utilized.

Mr. Washington inquired if the solid waste fee was included in the tax bill.

Mr. Curtis stated the Solid Waste millage of 3.1 mills is included in the tax bill, but the service fee of \$249.00 is a separate service charge.

Mr. McDonald stated there are some concerns as to how this would be administered: (1) How would the determination be made as to which houses are vacant? (2) If citizens are allowed to opt out, where would they dispose of their garbage and debris?

Mr. Washington inquired as to how much revenue is collected from the service fee.

Mr. Curtis stated it is approximately \$22 Million per year.

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SOUTH CAROLINA



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Mr. Curtis stated one of the concerns of the Solid Waste Department is the policing of vacant dwellings.

Mr. Malinowski inquired as to how the policing of vacant dwellings can be achieved or is it possible to control?

Mr. Curtis stated if the electricity has been turned off to the dwelling then the Solid Waste Department could deem the house not habitable and the service would be terminated at that time.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to defer this item until the April Committee meeting. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Intergovernmental Agreement between Richland County and the City of Columbia for the proposed Olympia Neighborhood Master Plan

Mr. McDonald stated appropriating \$75,000 for the Olympia Master Plan was approved by County Council approximately a year ago. The City of Columbia and the County are now ready to retain a consultant. The City of Columbia will be responsible for soliciting the consultant. In order to account for who is responsible for what portion of the Master Plan, an IGA with the City of Columbia is being recommended for approval.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about the funding source.

Mr. McDonald stated the funding is coming from the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if each entity could sign contracts related to their respective areas. This would insure that each entity was liable only for their respective area.

Ms. Hegler stated instead of having two paths of procurement, it was decided after consultation with the Procurement Director, to defer the process of retaining a consultation to the City of Columbia.

Mr. Smith stated the City Attorney had not had an opportunity to review the proposed IGA and there was an opportunity to amend the IGA to address Mr. Malinowski's concerns.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if each entity would be responsible for financing their respective areas.

Ms. Hegler stated the intent was for each entity to be responsible for their implementation of the Master Plan.

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Mr. Rose moved, seconded by Mr. Jeter, to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve the intergovernmental agreement with the City of Columbia for the preparation of the proposed Olympia Neighborhood Master Plan. Once approved, preparation of the master plan and selection of a consultant can move forward. The contract will be brought back to Council for approval.

Interstate Interchange Lighting Project

Mr. McDonald stated the committee requested staff to research alternative funding sources or the interchange lighting project. Staff researched grant funding and other alternative funding sources and concluded there are no funding sources available at this time. Staff will continue to pursue any funding sources that may become available.

Mr. Jeter stated Clemson Road has been widened and a brick wall been put up in the last three years, which would have been an ideal time for the County to approach SCDOT regarding the proposed lighting projects.

Mr. Jeter stated the County should identify funding for at least one of the lighting projects.

Mr. Malinowski recommended Mr. Jackson research any SCDOT funding and to speak with other counties/cities that have undertaken interchange enhancement projects to discuss their funding sources.

Mr. Washington suggested reviewing the ranking criteria for the gateways to the County and forming a subcommittee to work with staff to pursue funding sources.

Mr. Jackson stated to qualify for the "Beautification Grants" organizations must demonstrate they are able to maintain the project they are applying for.

Mr. Rose moved, seconded by Mr. Jeter, to forward to Council with a recommendation to direct staff to proceed with Interstate Interchange Lighting project and provide direction as to which interchanges receive priority, as well as, a funding source.

Mr. McDonald stated the County has pursued "Beautification Grants" in the past and have discussed with SCDOT the possibility of assistance with the interchange lighting projects, but SCDOT stated they do not have funding for the lighting at this time.

Mr. Jeter inquired if it had been determined if Hospitality and/or Accommodations Tax can be utilized for the lighting project.

Mr. McDonald stated Hospitality Tax had been considered as a funding source for the projects.

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The vote in favor was unanimous to forward to Council for approval.

ITEMS PENDING ANALYSIS

Noise Ordinance – This item is presently be taken up by the Ordinance Review Ad Hoc Committee.

Comprehensive Youth Program – Held in committee.

Fund and/or seek a partnership with SCE&G to plant indigenous flowers and plants along transmission line corridors in Richland County – Held in committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject

Solid Waste Service Charge for Vacant Dwelling Units **[PAGES 9 - 16]**

Reviews




RICHLAND COUNTY
Solid Waste & Recycling Department
1070 Caughman Road North
Columbia, South Carolina 29203
Voice: (803) 576-2440 Facsimile (803) 576-2495



DATE: April 17, 2015

To: County Council
CC: Tony McDonald, County Administrator
Warren Harley, Assistant County Administrator

From: Rudy Curtis, Interim Solid Waste & Recycling Director 

Subject: Proposed Solid Waste Service Charge for Vacant Dwelling Units

Pursuant to Committee request for a possible method for removing the solid waste service charge from property with a vacant dwelling unit located on it, staff offers the following protocol

The criteria for securing approval from the Solid Waste & Recycling Department for removal of the solid waste service charge for a vacant dwelling unit is as follow.

1. The owner of the parcel on which the dwelling unit is located must submit an application to the Solid Waste & Recycling Department requesting removal of the solid waste service charge.
2. The owner of the parcel must certify that:
 - a. The dwelling unit has been vacant for more than ninety (90) days.
 - b. The electricity to the dwelling unit has been turned off and the meter has been removed by the electric utility
 - c. The owner of the parcel will notify the Solid Waste & Recycling Department with five (5) business days of such time as the electricity is ever turned on again.
 - d. The owner of the parcel will immediately notify the Solid Waste & Recycling Department as such time as anyone moves into the house even if the electricity is not turned on.
3. Provide a yard maintenance plan explaining how the yard will remain compliant with county code and how any waste generated from such maintenance will be managed without curbside collection.

For consistency and record keeping staff can create a simple application containing the conditions stated above with space for a notarized signature.

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject: Solid Waste Service Charge for Vacant Dwelling Units

A. Purpose

Council is requested to not charge property owners for a service they do not use or receive.

B. Background / Discussion

At the February 17, 2015 Council meeting, Mr. Jackson brought forth the following motion:

“Property owners should not be charged for a service they do not use or receive. Garbage services, except for commercial services, rental, etc. If there is proof of non-use then that property owner should not be charged.”

Residents of Richland County have curbside collection of household trash, recyclables, yard waste and bulk items. Each dwelling unit is currently assessed a solid waste service charge of \$249 on their annual real property tax notice to fund the countywide curbside collection program. The service charge was by design to be paid in advance of initiation of collections. From the time the program was authorized by County Council in 1984, all dwelling units were assessed the service charge. Once the solid waste service charge was collected, service was initiated at the dwelling unit. The charge was only removed at such time as the house was deemed not habitable by the county. The typical standard has been that the electricity had to be turned off for the house to be deemed not habitable.

Curbside collection contracts were/are structured such that the county pays the hauler a set monthly fee based on the number of household trash carts assigned to dwelling units. Curbside service is provided to all owners of dwelling units pursuant to the ordinance. Most owners use the service every week while others use the service as needed.

When a house is deemed not habitable by the county, a number of actions are triggered.

1. The Solid Waste & Recycling staff removes the house from the hauler list and the hauler is no longer paid to make that stop.
2. All roll carts are picked up by Solid Waste & Recycling staff.
3. The Solid Waste & Recycling staff recommends to the Auditor that the balance of the solid waste fee be refunded to the owner of the parcel where the house is located.
4. The Auditor typically requests that the Treasurer issue the refund check.
5. The Solid Waste & Recycling staff sends a recommendation to the Auditor that the solid waste charge be removed from the next scheduled annual real property tax notice.

When a house is deemed habitable whether by Certificate of Occupancy for new homes or by Solid Waste & Recycling for houses returning to habitable status, the following actions are triggered.

1. The Solid Waste & Recycling staff invoices the parcel owner for the solid waste set-up fee and the prorated solid waste service charge.

2. Once they have been paid, carts are delivered to the location and the hauler is notified to add the location to their routine service list.
3. Solid Waste staff notifies the Auditor that the house is a dwelling unit and recommends that the solid waste fee be added to the next scheduled annual tax notice.

The same process would be necessary if we made adjustments based on occupancy.

In January 1984, pursuant to action of County Council, Richland County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 12: Garbage, Trash and Refuse, became effective.

Among other matters, the ordinance established a curbside collection program for household trash throughout the unincorporated area of Richland County. Sec. 12-14 (a) states that “The entire unincorporated area of the county shall be designated as a roll cart service area . . .”

The ordinance further stated in Sec. 12-23 (a) states that “Owners of residential property in the unincorporated area of the county . . . shall be assessed a service charge for the purpose of financing the collection of solid waste.”

Additionally, Sec. 12-12 defines Residential Property as “Property which contains residential dwelling units . . .” It further defines a Dwelling Unit as “one or more habitable rooms which are intended to be occupied by one (1) family with facilities for living, sleeping, cooking and eating and from which the county would collect refuse . . .”

To summarize the ordinance:

- Residential property owners shall be assessed the charge
- Residential property is property that contains a dwelling unit
- A dwelling unit is by definition habitable.

On April 27, 1984, following questions by the Richland County Auditor about pro-rating solid waste fees based on whether a dwelling unit was occupied, Council issued a written response to the Auditor under signature of Tom Elliot and Billy E. Taylor which in its summary stated “Each residence is to be charged for the type of service received. Therefore, if a home or mobile home is habitable, it is immaterial as to whether it is occupied. The ordinance was never intended as a record-keeping device for occupancy of homes.” See Attachment A.

C. Legislative / Chronological History

2/17/15 – Mr. Jackson brought forth the following motion: “Property owners should not be charged for a service they do not use or receive. Garbage services, except for commercial services, rental, etc. If there is proof of non-use then that property owner should not be charged.”

D. Financial Impact

The actual financial impact of accounting for vacant houses is impossible to predict. Staff does not know the true number of homes that would be vacant at any one time nor for how long. In the latest roll out of recycle carts we mailed 46,000 information packets to the citizens. About 2,000 of those were returned by the USPS due to the house being determined vacant by USPS criterion. If one assumed that to be a representative number, it would extrapolate to about 3,500

houses countywide. Tracking, managing and adjusting service charges for that many homes on average would have substantial adverse impact on solid waste fee collections and also a substantial impact based from having to hire staff to monitor vacancies, determine when and how much of a refund to issue and the cost to re-establish service. The number and locations of vacant houses would be a moving target for which staff would have minimal ability to track. It would require several staff just to pick up and deliver carts alone. If the carts are not picked up a new occupant could resume service simply by placing the cart back at curbside.

E. Alternatives

1. Approve the motion to not charge property owners for a service they do not use or receive. If this alternative is selected, Council should note that this would likely require redevelopment of critical sections of the abovementioned ordinance. It is understood that when the house becomes occupied, the owner of the property shall (1) be responsible for notifying the county that the house is no longer vacant; (2) pay the solid waste set-up fee; and, (3) pay the prorated solid waste service charge to re-establish service.
2. Do not approve the motion to not charge property owners for a service they do not use or receive.

F. Recommendation

This is a policy decision of Council.

Recommended by: Norman Jackson

Department: County Council

Date: February 17, 2015

G. Reviews

(Please replace the appropriate box with a ✓ and then support your recommendation in the Comments section before routing on. Thank you!)

Please be specific in your recommendation. While “Council Discretion” may be appropriate at times, it is recommended that Staff provide Council with a professional recommendation of approval or denial, and justification for that recommendation, as often as possible.

Finance

Reviewed by: Daniel Driggers

Date: 3/9/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation:

As stated in the recommendation, this is a policy decision for Council. Currently there is not an “opt-out” option for the service and to my knowledge there has not been a complete analysis to determine the cost impact of the alternative. It could be accomplished but would recommended that the County understand the cost of implementation and the method of how to accomplish prior to approval.

Approval of alternative one would require several changes such as:

- An amendment to the ordinance

- Change in the County operational processes for multiple departments (potentially Auditor, Treasurer, Solid Waste, and Finance) that would allow for tracking, monitoring and billing adjustments.
 - o This should include a documented process of how service level will be determined, approved and controlled?
 - o How adjustments/errors will be handled? By which department?
- Determine impact on fee structure based on change both short term and long term
- Determine if the change will impact the payment of hauler contracts inclusive of how billing/payments will be reconciled if service is provided to ineligible

Solid Waste

Reviewed by: Rudy Curtis

Date: 3/9/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation:

Comments regarding recommendation:

It is recommended that Council choose Alternative 2 based on the following.

- As written, the ordinance provides no pathway to remove charges from any property with a dwelling unit located on it. The ordinance would necessarily have to be redeveloped to allow for such.
- The tracking of which house is vacant and not vacant would be impractical which was the apparent conclusion of Council in 1984 when there were far fewer dwellings to monitor.
- The financial bookkeeping would be problematic and time consuming for Solid Waste & Recycling, the Auditor, the Treasurer and Finance.
- If a distinction were made between a vacant dwelling and a vacant rental dwelling, staff would have to engage in deciding if the property is truly a rental property or not. That decision is problematic itself. Any house can be rented at any time without any declaration of being a rental property. Rental property owners could declare that they have a vacant dwelling and not a vacant rental property to avoid the solid waste service charge. Staff would be left with the difficult task of making the final decision with insufficient information.
- We have no practical means to control service to a dwelling unit based on whether the unit is vacant or not with current staff and technology. Every time a dwelling is vacated, service would be stopped and each and every time someone moves in service would have to be restarted. It would be necessary for staff to pick up the carts when vacated and returned them when service is reinstated. There is no practical way for the current staff to monitor such and we would not have sufficient staff to manage the work.
- The proposed concept tends toward making curbside collection an optional service. Richland County currently manages the only mandatory countywide curbside collection program in the state and as such arguably provides the best service in the state. Much of the reason it is the best program is based on the fact

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that the program is mandatory and by being mandatory, funding is always relatively clear. Several counties including Lexington County provide countywide curbside collections through franchise agreements with private haulers but the service is optional – month-to-month. In discussing franchise service with the haulers for a number of years, most have indicated that optional service for residential service is problematic because the customer base fluctuates monthly and cash flow does likewise.

- Revenue will necessarily be reduced by this action, the consequence may result in either a decline in level of service eventually or the solid waste fee may have to be increased.
- Our curbside program funds our recycling efforts and those efforts are critical to the long-term sustainability goals of the county. Making curbside service optional to any degree could have a significant impact on the recycling program.

Owners of vacant dwellings are required by ordinance to maintain the property to certain aesthetic standards which necessarily means that yard waste will be generated which will be put out for collection.

Legal

Reviewed by: Elizabeth McLean

Date: 3/19/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: See legal comments under separate cover.

Administration

Reviewed by: Warren Harley

Date: 3/20/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: Richland County is charged with protecting the life, health, safety and welfare of our citizens. Part of that charge requires us to pursue policies that allow us to carry out that responsibility. In this case an ordinance that requires all households participate in our curbside garbage program enables us to pursue and achieve this objective in the most cost effective manner. This ordinance allows Richland County to provide for the protection of life, health and safety of citizens and allocate the cost of this policy to citizens such that the burden of providing the service is shared among those who benefit. The argument could be made that those who benefit include those who live and work in Richland County and not just those who use the service. Protecting life health and safety is at the center of why we provide this service. Therefore there is a clear public benefit. To allow the proposed opt out provision would necessarily require Richland County to change the level of service provided to prevent the cost of the service from being a burden on those participates who decide to keep the service. It could also hinder our efforts to provide for the welfare of our citizens.

JUN 11 1984 11:30AM RICH. CNTY. PUB. WORKS
JIMMY C. GILES
JAMES R. BARBER, III
THOMAS E. DORSEY



LILLIE S. HERRINGTON P. 1
W. R. ROGERS
BILLY E. TAYLOR
GANDY Y. WAILES

ATTACHMENT A

THE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR RICHLAND COUNTY

1701 Main Street Post Office Box 192 Columbia, South Carolina 29202

April 27, 1984

Mrs. Patricia T. Anshley
Richland County Auditor
2020 Hampton Street
Columbia, SC 29204

Dear Pat:

In response to your memorandum of April 19th, enclosed are Council minutes of December 20, 1983, and January 3, 1984, concerning the policy established for billing and collection of solid waste.

We believe the problems you listed have been addressed and resolved by the Council, since there would be only three reasons the amount charged for service would be other than \$69.00. The first would be if the resident received greenbox service. The second would be if the property had no buildings at all or none worthy of occupancy. Finally, if a building or mobile home was not ready for occupancy January 1, 1984, it would be necessary to pro-rate the amount for the number of months it was habitable.

We have been constantly assured by all departments that such a system was in place. Therefore, anyone who was charged \$69.00 and did not get a corrected bill or did not insist on delivery of their roll cart cannot have their bill pro-rated now.

Each residence is to be charged for the type of service received. Therefore, if a home or mobile home is habitable, it is immaterial as to whether it is occupied. The ordinance was never intended as a record-keeping device for occupancy of homes.

We hope this answers your questions. Sometimes we fear that we in government want to complicate things that really should be kept simple.

Sincerely,

Tom Elliott
Tom Elliott

Billy E. Taylor
Billy E. Taylor

TD:RET:RF:maw

Enclosure

Joe - FKI
RL

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject

Conservation Department: Endorsement of Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor [**PAGES 17 - 23**]

Reviews

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject: Conservation Department: Endorsement of Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor

A. Purpose

County Council is requested to endorse the creation of the Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor.

B. Background / Discussion

Richland County Council's purchase of the Hopkins property in 2014 protects almost two and a half miles along Cabin Branch, most of that on both sides of the creek. Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) holds two easements (Haynes and Neal) on Cabin Branch immediately south of Cabin Creek Road. These three properties form the nexus of phase one of the Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor which would run from the county-owned property near Garners Ferry Road to Clarkson Road.

A conservation corridor would protect land on either side of Cabin Branch through voluntary conservation easements with landowners. The goal is to maintain a vegetated buffer of at least 300 feet from each stream bank. With this size buffer, water quality is protected by reducing runoff, erosion, and pollutants. A recent US Geological Survey report indicated harmful levels of chemicals, bacteria, and medicine have been found in Congaree National Park's waterways.

Other benefits of a conservation corridor include providing wildlife habitat, protecting bottomland forests, and protecting the ecological systems in the Myers Creek/Cabin Branch Watershed by maintaining or restoring proper hydrological function. The potential exists for developing a greenway or hiking trails along the approximate 4 miles in this section of Cabin Branch.

RCCC designation of Cabin Branch as a conservation corridor allows properties within the boundaries to receive priority for use of RCCC's resources. It also helps establish a justification for favorable tax treatment of donated easements. Purchase of development rights through conservation easements would be the primary means for protecting the creek. The wetlands along Cabin Branch are extensive and often undevelopable, thus severely limiting landowners' use of the property. Twenty-four landowners hold property within the phase one boundaries. Each easement will come back to Council for approval. Depending on the responsiveness of landowners, phase two would involve the remainder of Cabin Branch that leads to Myers Creek at Bluff Road.

Council approved staff development of a Preservation Land Management Plan on November 18, 2014. Two of the goals outlined for the program are to 1) sustain the county's diverse ecosystems and 2) engage under-represented groups in land use dialogue and in the value of land stewardship. The Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor would be one component of the Preservation Land Management Plan to meet these goals and would establish a pilot program that could be used elsewhere in the county. The Lower Richland Master Plan charges RCCC with preserving areas with high priority conservation lands. Cabin Branch flows into Myers Creek which joins Cedar Creek at the northwestern corner of Congaree National Park to become the main waterway through the park and the only Outstanding National Resource Water in the state. RCCC considers Cabin Branch, as a major tributary to Cedar Creek, one of the critical natural assets in Richland County worthy of a protection plan.

C. Legislative / Chronological History

This is a staff driven initiative and was approved by RCCC at its February 23, 2015 meeting.

D. Financial Impact

Costs to purchase development rights through conservation easements would be allocated within the RCCC budget for easement acquisition. Funds available would dictate how many acres could be protected in any given fiscal year.

E. Alternatives

1. Approve the request to endorse the creation of a Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor to provide for an organized effort to acquire easements along the creek.
2. Do not approve endorsing Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor.

F. Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the request to endorse the creation of a Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor.

Recommended by: Quinton Epps

Department: Conservation

Date: April 7, 2015

G. Reviews

(Please replace the appropriate box with a ✓ and then support your recommendation in the Comments section before routing on. Thank you!)

Please be specific in your recommendation. While “Council Discretion” may be appropriate at times, it is recommended that Staff provide Council with a professional recommendation of approval or denial, and justification for that recommendation, as often as possible.

Finance

Reviewed by: Daniel Driggers

Date: 4/12/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation:

Request is a policy decision for Council discretion.

Based on the ROA financial section, program would be limited based on the available funding within the Conservation budget. Therefore it may be beneficial for Council to consider applying a value to the potential easements within the program and restricting an amount of current cash on hand to sustain the program. This would not reduce the accessible funding for the Conservation projects but simply reduce the risk of the County overcommitting available dollars for new projects without maintain sustainable funding for existing projects.

Planning

Reviewed by: Tracy Hegler

Date: 4/14/14

✓ Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation:

The Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor is consistent with the objectives of protecting the County’s rural heritage, maintaining water quality and protecting our water resources found in both the Lower Richland Master Plan, adopted by County Council in 2013, and the Updated Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2015. Further, as stated in the background section, this designation would serve as a major first step in implementation of the evolving Preservation Land Management Plan.

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Legal

Reviewed by: Elizabeth McLean

Date: 4/21/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: Policy decision left to Council's discretion.

Administration

Reviewed by: Sparty Hammett

Date: 4/21/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: Recommend Council approval using funding allocated to the Conservation Commission.

Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor

Lower Richland is an area rich in natural resources – prime agricultural soils, Carolina Bays, wetlands, numerous creeks, and the floodplains of the Congaree and Wateree Rivers. As development marches eastward from Columbia, the pressure on these natural resources grows. Both the Master Plan for Lower Richland and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update recognize the need to protect rural lands and waterways and the environmental/ecological services they provide.

One means of meeting those goals is to create conservation corridors along water resources. The Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor is a plan to protect Cabin Branch from south of Garners Ferry Road to Bluff Road. The creek flows east of Lower Richland Blvd. almost eight miles to meet Myers Creek at Bluff Road. Myers Creek and Cedar Creek join at the northwestern corner of Congaree National Park to become Cedar Creek, the main waterway through the park and the only Outstanding National Resource Water in South Carolina. A recent US Geological Survey report indicated harmful levels of chemicals, bacteria, and medicine have been found in the park's waterways.

Important benefits for the Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor include:

- Improved water quality by providing a buffer to help prevent runoff, erosion and reduce pollutants
- Protected wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors
- Potential for recreational trails/greenway connecting the Lower Richland community to Congaree National Park
- Protected bottomland forests
- Protected ecological systems in the Myers Creek/Cabin Branch Watershed by maintaining or restoring proper hydrological function
- Protected and improved existing green space by providing incentives to keep or restore native vegetation and reduce land clearing and disturbance
- Preserved historic and archeological features associated with Lower Richland

Richland County Council's purchase of the Hopkins property in 2014 protects approximately two and a half miles along Cabin Branch, most of that on both sides of the creek. Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) holds two easements (Haynes and Neal) on Cabin Branch immediately south of Cabin Creek Road. These three properties form the nexus of phase one of the Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor.

RCCC designation of Cabin Branch as a Conservation Corridor allows properties within the boundaries to receive priority for use of RCCC's resources. It also helps establish a justification for favorable tax treatment of donated easements. Purchase of development rights through conservation easements would be the primary means for protecting the creek. The wetlands along Cabin Branch are extensive and often undevelopable, thus severely limiting landowners' use of the property. Easements would be sought to provide a vegetated buffer of 300 feet on either side of the creek, wide enough to protect water quality from runoff, while providing wildlife habitat and shelter. This will be a VOLUNTARY program.

Phase one involves contacting landowners to assess their interest in permanently protecting the creek portion of their property with an easement.

- Eight parcels lie between the county-owned property and the RCCC easements.
- There are six parcels on the east side of the creek adjacent to the Haynes easement.
- Ten parcels lie between the railroad line and Clarkson Road.

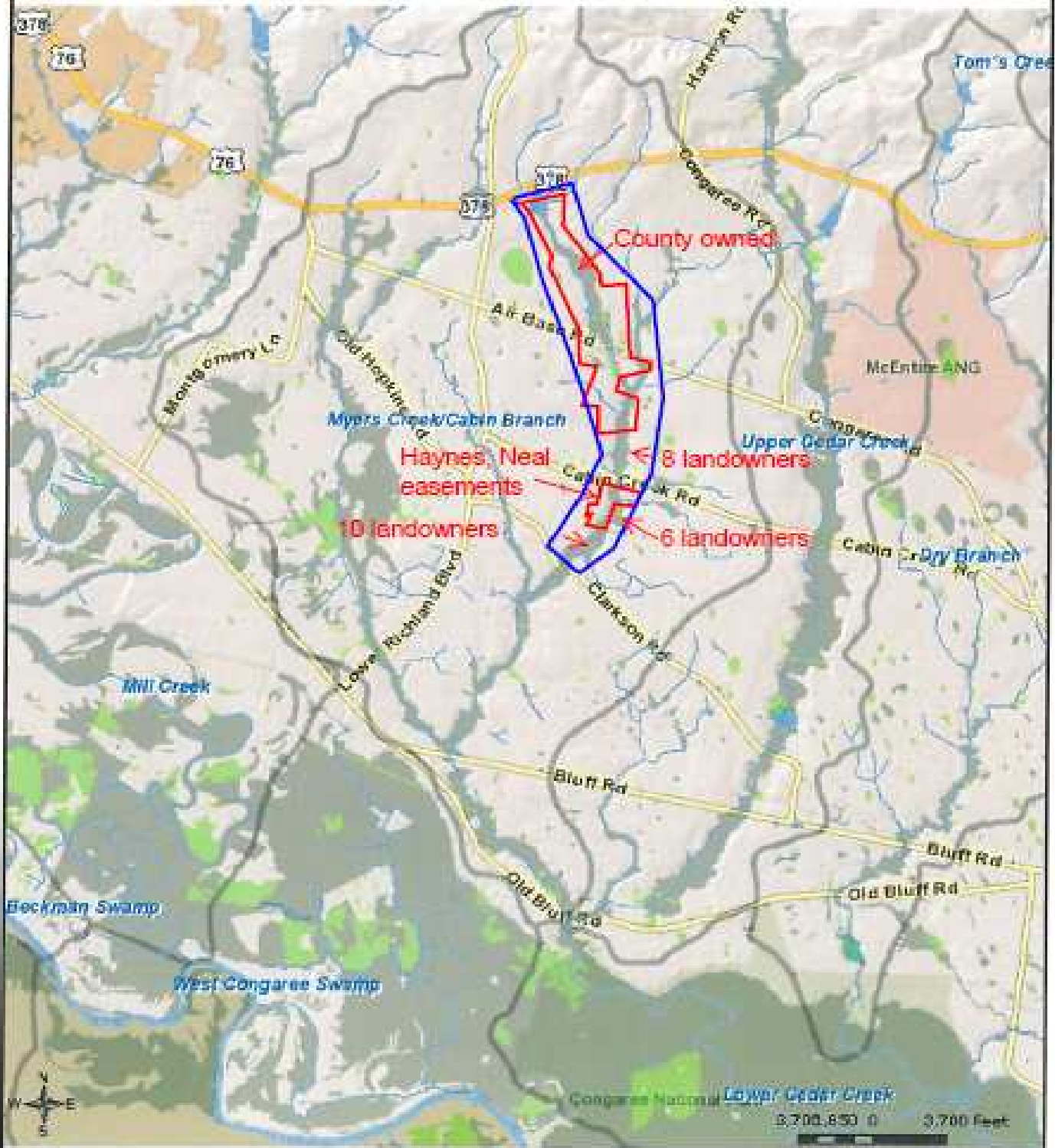
Easement considerations:

- Desired 300 ft. of buffer – wetlands and or high ground
- No timbering; trees may be removed to control insects and disease or to prevent personal injury and property damage

- Higher compensation for landowners willing to allow public access for trails
- No structures other than footbridges and boardwalks

Phase 2 would involve the 35 landowners from Clarkson Road to Bluff Road.

Cabin Branch Conservation Corridor Phase 1



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Item# 3

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject

Hosting the 2017 Neighborhoods USA Conference [**PAGES 24 - 29**]

Reviews

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject: Request to seek Council's desire to partner with the City of Columbia in an application to potentially host the 2017 Neighborhoods USA Conference

A. Purpose

The City of Columbia has requested that the County, through the Planning and Development Services Department, partner with the City of Columbia to co-host the 2017 Neighborhoods USA Conference. This Request of Action seeks County Council direction regarding that request.

B. Background/Discussion

Neighborhoods, USA (NUSA) is a national non-profit organization that puts out for bid their annual conference to a host site. Since 1975, NUSA was created to build and strengthen neighborhood organizations through networking, information-sharing, and collaborations with the government and the private sector. City of Columbia is preparing an application to compete as a finalist in May 2015 for the 2017 year event, usually held Memorial Day weekend. The City of Columbia's Community Development Department is leading the application process and has extended an invitation to Richland County to partner as the conference's co-host, if the City is awarded as the host site. The national conference is usually held on Memorial Day weekend. The Conference lasts several days and would attract nearly 700 people to the area, requiring a significant time and funding commitment to assist in organizing the event.

The national conference would be a large undertaking and would require a highly significant allocation of County staff time, potential funding and fund-raising efforts.

Overall, hosting the conference is estimated to require one full-time and thirteen part-time staff members and an additional 100 volunteers to handle the planning and logistics. As a result of the magnitude of this event and the potential recognition attributed thereof, Richland County staff would have to contribute at some capacity on this level. The City of Columbia would invite volunteers from unincorporated Richland County and the area's community leaders to assist and participate.

The conference is estimated to cost approximately \$231,692.00 with various potential funding sources: City of Columbia, Richland County, exhibitor fees, and registration fees.

Richland County's Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) staff has been members of NUSA for several years and has attended previous NUSA conferences at multiple past host sites. Several of the conference's tasks includes fundraising, conference logistics, marketing, volunteer recruitment, neighborhood pride tours and a mayor's reception.

C. Legislative / Chronological History

This is a staff-initiated request. Therefore, there is no legislative history.

D. Financial Impact

At this time there is no financial impact for receiving direction from County Council on how they would like the County to be involved in this effort.

It is expected, however, that Richland County would be asked to contribute to the conference budget, under a separate request. This amount might potentially be an equivalent match to the contribution from the City of Columbia (\$30,000), if they were awarded as the host site.

E. Alternatives

1. Approve the partnership with the City of Columbia, and provide details on how much time Council would like staff to commit, to co-host the 2017 Neighborhood USA conference.
2. Do not approve the request to partner with the City of Columbia to co-host the 2017 Neighborhoods USA conference.

F. Recommendation

This action is at Council discretion.

Prepared by: Tracy Hegler, AICP
 Department: Planning and Development Services
 Date: April 7, 2015

G. Reviews

(Please replace the appropriate box with a ✓ and then support your recommendation in the Comments section before routing on. Thank you!)

Please be specific in your recommendation. While “Council Discretion” may be appropriate at times, it is recommended that Staff provide Council with a professional recommendation of approval or denial, and justification for that recommendation, as often as possible.

Finance

Reviewed by: Daniel Driggers Date: 4/10/15
 Recommend Council approval Recommend Council denial
 Comments regarding recommendation:

As stated in the ROA, the request is at Council discretion.

Planning

Reviewed by: Tracy Hegler Date: 4/13/15
 Recommend Council approval Recommend Council denial
 Comments regarding recommendation:

As stated in the ROA, the request is at Council discretion. While this is a great opportunity for the region, please note that the Neighborhood Improvement Program has two full time Neighborhood Planners who oversee the implementation of nine (9) master plans; review and make recommendations for annual Neighborhood Matching grants; staff RCNC; plan bi-monthly leadership trainings for County citizens; attend multiple neighborhood meetings a month; and plan/carry out an annual Planning Conference. Committing to assist with the planning of the NUSA Conference would be a substantial additional time commitment for this staff. Also, as a point of information, I am not aware that many of the unincorporated neighborhoods are members of NUSA, so I cannot predict to what levels they would be willing to volunteer.

Legal

Reviewed by: Elizabeth McLean

Date: 4/21/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: At this point, as no specific agreement is being presented, this is a policy decision left to Council's discretion.

Administration

Reviewed by: Sparty Hammett

Date: 4/22/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: This is a policy decision for Council. If Council decides to participate with the City of Columbia, and the City is selected to host the event, this would require a significant amount of Neighborhood Improvement staff time and reduce the amount of time available for County neighborhood projects.

Columbia to compete to be host site for 2017 Neighborhoods USA conference

March 18, 2015 By [Kelly Petty](#)

[ColaDaily.com is your source for free news and information in Columbia and the Midlands.](#)

Columbia City Council members reluctantly approved the Community Development Department's request to bring a national neighborhood conference to the city with the promise that planning for it would not interfere with daily work.

"This is a citywide obligation not just community development," said Community Development Director Deborah Livingston. "It would be a significant undertaking."

The city will compete to host the 2017 [Neighborhoods USA Conference](#). The event brings together nearly 700 people from across the country to discuss issues affecting neighborhoods like improving neighbor relations, zoning issues or getting potholes fixed a community.

"It definitely promotes collaboration," said Neighborhoods USA President Tige Watts. "I think it's a great idea."

Watts has been the president of the national non-profit neighborhood organization since 2010, and he [recently announced his intention to run](#) for Columbia City Council.

This is the second time Columbia officials have tried to bring the event to the city. The city lost a bid in 2013 for the 2015 conference to Houston. The 2016 NUSA conference will be held in Memphis, Tennessee.

Columbia would be the first city on the east coast in seven years to host the conference, according to a Community Development Department memo.

Livingston said hosting the event would take a significant time commitment from her staff and the whole city. The conference would need 100 volunteers in addition to 1 full-time and 13 part-time staffers to handle planning and logistics for the event estimated to bring 500 visitors to downtown.

The conference is usually held Memorial Day weekend, which also would mean volunteers and staff could not take that time for vacations. Livingston said she would seek support from Richland County by tapping into the county's 200 neighborhoods for help from community leaders.

"We are asking Richland County to participate so it's not just a city of Columbia event," she said.

If the city hosts the event, staff would be tasked with fundraising, conference logistics, marketing, volunteer recruitment, neighborhood pride tours and special events like a mayor's reception, luncheons and breakfast.

The city also would have to provide shuttle transportation and coordinate with the Columbia Convention Center, which will host 13 different concurrent conference sessions at one time.

The city plans to commit \$30,000 in hospitality and accommodation tax funds for the conference. Livingston will seek a match from Richland County. She also is relying on \$3,000 in exhibitor fees and more than \$125,000 in registration fees to cover most of the budget.

The conference still comes with big ticket expenses including over \$76,000 in food costs, \$20,000 for transportation, \$20,000 for audiovisual equipment, \$10,000 for entertainment and \$32,500 in Neighborhood USA fees. The total cost for the conference comes out to \$231,692. Livingston said her department would seek sponsorships to cover the \$40,000 needed to cover some expenses.

City officials will submit the bid application by May 2 and will attend the Neighborhoods USA conference in Houston to make a formal presentation to be a host site.

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject

Removal of Lien off of Property [**PAGES 30 - 36**]

Reviews

Richland County Council Request of Action

Subject: Removal of Lien off of Property Contingent on the Property Owner Donating the Land to a Community Organization

A. Purpose

Council is requested to approve removing the lien off of the property located at 2045 Smith St., (Parcel # R13516-03-21) contingent on the property owner donating the land to the Atlas Road Community Organization.

B. Background / Discussion

At the April 7, 2015 Council meeting, Mr. Washington brought forth the following motion:

“To have Richland County remove the lien off of the property located at 2045 Smith St., (Parcel # R13516-03-21) contingent on the property owner donating the land to the Atlas Road Community Organization”

The property located at 2045 Smith St. – see attached map – is owned by Jerome E. Smith. There are two (2) County liens on that property for mitigating the unsafe condition of the property – see attached. There was an unsafe structure located on the property that was demolished by the County through the County’s unsafe housing program on June 26, 2008.

The lien dated June 30, 2008, in the amount of \$4,250, is the assessment fee for the County demolishing the structure that was located on the property.

The lien dated March 6, 2008, in the amount of \$155, is the assessment fee for the County performing the title search for the property.

Currently, there are no structures located on the property.

This is a policy decision for Council.

C. Legislative / Chronological History

- April 7, 2015 – motion brought forth by Mr. Washington

D. Financial Impact

The financial impact of this request to the County would be the potential loss of the total amount of the liens is \$4,405.

E. Alternatives

1. Approve to have Richland County remove the lien off of the property located at 2045 Smith St., (Parcel # R13516-03-21) contingent on the property owner donating the land to the Atlas Road Community Organization.
2. Do not approve to have Richland County remove the lien off of the property located at 2045 Smith St., (Parcel # R13516-03-21) contingent on the property owner donating the land to the Atlas Road Community Organization.

F. Recommendation

This is a policy decision of Council.

Recommended by: Kelvin Washington

Department: County Council

Date: April 7, 2015

G. Reviews

(Please replace the appropriate box with a ✓ and then support your recommendation in the Comments section before routing on. Thank you!)

Please be specific in your recommendation. While “Council Discretion” may be appropriate at times, it is recommended that Staff provide Council with a professional recommendation of approval or denial, and justification for that recommendation, as often as possible.

Finance

Reviewed by: Daniel Driggers

Date: 4/13/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation:

Request is a policy decision left to Council discretion.

Building Services

Reviewed by: Donny Phipps

Date: 4/14/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: decision left to Council discretion

Legal

Reviewed by: Elizabeth McLean

Date: 4/21/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: Policy decision left to Council’s discretion.

Administration

Reviewed by: Sparty Hammett

Date: 4/21/15

Recommend Council approval

Recommend Council denial

Comments regarding recommendation: This is a policy decision for Council.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

NOTICE OF LIEN

As provided by law, notice is hereby given that the party named in this lien is liable for the assessed fee for mitigating the unsafe condition located at

2045 Smith Street, TMS# R13516-03-21.

Along with any penalties and interest established by law for failure to correct the deficiencies and unsafe conditions made known to the party herein named by certified mail return receipt requested and posting of the subject properties. Therefore, there is a lien in favor of Richland County, South Carolina, on all property and rights belonging to this landowner for the amount of the mitigation fee, and penalties, interest and costs that may accrue as provided by law.

All of my interest (specifically my Life Estate) in and to all certain piece, parcel or lot of land with the improvements thereon, situate, lying and being in the County of Richland, State of South Carolina, near the City of Columbia, being designated as Lot 4 of Block H, being known as 2045 Smith Street , and bearing the Tax Map Number 13516-03-21; according to Richland County Tax Maps, measuring 150 feet, more or less, along the front and rear property lines and 125 feet, more or less, along the side property lines.


Name and Residence of Landowner: Jerome E. Smith
505 Antioch Place
Columbia, SC 29209

Nature of Assessment: Demolition of Structure

TOTAL: \$4250.00

Place of Filing: Register of Deeds
Richland County Judicial Center
1701 Main Street
Post Office Box 192
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

This Notice was prepared and signed at Columbia, South Carolina, on this 30th day of June 2008.

Signature


Book 1442-3699
2008052195 06/30/2008 15:40:37:193 Demo Unsafe Housing
Fee: \$0.00 County Tax: \$0.00 State Tax: \$0.00



2008052195 Richard W. Rodden Richland County ROD

Item# 5

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

NOTICE OF LIEN

As provided by law, notice is hereby given that the party named in this lien is liable for the assessed fee for mitigating an unsafe condition located at 2045 Smith Street **TMS# R13516-03-21.**

Along with any penalties and interest established by law for failure to correct the deficiencies and unsafe conditions made known to the party herein named by certified mail return receipt requested and posting of the subject properties. Therefore, there is a lien in favor of Richland County, South Carolina, on all property and rights belonging to this landowner for the amount of the mitigation fee, and penalties, interest and costs that may accrue as provided by law.

All of my interest (specifically my Life Estate) in and to all certain piece, parcel or lot of land with the improvements thereon, situate, lying and being in the County of Richland, State of South Carolina, near the City of Columbia, being designated as Lot 4 of Block H, being known as 2045 Smith Street ,and bearing the Tax Map Number 13516-03-21; according to Richland County Tax Maps, measuring 150 feet, more or less, along the front and rear property lines and 125 feet, more or less, along the side property lines.

Name and Residence of Landowner: Jerome E. Smith
505 Antioch Place
Columbia, SC 29209

Nature of Assessment Title Search Amount \$155.00

TOTAL \$ 155.00

Book 1408-2548
2008018021 03/06/2008 12:47:12:667
Fee: \$0.00 County Tax: \$0.00 State Tax: \$0.00
Demo Unsafe Housing
2008018021 Richard W. Rodden Richland County ROD

MAP ATTACHMENT

Item# 5

Attachment number 1
Page 5 of 6

Parcel Information:

[✉](mailto:info@richlandmaps.com)
[Gmail](#)
[Yahoo](#)
[CSV](#)
[Print](#)
[Share](#)

<http://www.richlandmaps.com/apps/gmap/?base=sat>

Parcel Number:	R13516-03-21
Situs Address:	2045 SMITH ST
Primary Zoning:	MH
Secondary Zoning:	
Tax District:	1LR
NBHD Code:	083.00
Assessed Value:	4,200
Building Value:	0
Land Value:	4,200
Acreage:	0
Owner Name:	SMITH JEROME E
Owner Address:	505 ANTIOCH PL
Owner Address:	
Owner City:	COLUMBIA
Owner State:	SC
Owner ZIP:	29209
Bedrooms:	3
Bathrooms:	1
Year Built:	1960
Heated Sq Feet:	1,171 ft ²
Last Sale Date:	March 4, 1997
Last Sale Price:	\$5

Item# 5

Attachment number 1
Page 6 of 6

Items Pending Analysis

Subject

Fund and/or seek a partnership with SCE&G to plant indigenous flowers and plants along transmission line corridors in Richland County [**PAGE 37**]

Reviews

Notes

At the February Committee meeting, the Committee directed staff to explore potential partnership opportunities with the Electricity Companies, explore potential grant funding opportunities, perform a cost analysis and identify the manner in which this request may impact farmers that traverse through transmission line corridors. Staff is working to complete the Committee's directives regarding this item. Staff will report this information back to the Committee for their consideration at a future Committee meeting.

Items Pending Analysis

Subject

Comprehensive Youth Program [**PAGE 38**]

Reviews

Notes

This item was held in Committee at the December D&S Committee meeting. The Committee directed Staff and the Clerk's Office to develop a plan of action for developing a comprehensive youth program for Richland County. Staff and the Clerk's Office are working in conjunction with the Sheriff's Department, Magistrate's Office, Solicitor's Office and the Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center to develop a plan of action regarding a comprehensive youth program. Once completed, Staff and the Clerk's Office will report this information back to the Committee for their review and action.