

# Council packs plenty into meeting

Development financing OK'd,  
buses and buildings sold

BY WESLEY YOUNG  
Winston-Salem Journal

The Winston-Salem City Council on Monday approved financing for a Southeast Ward development, sold a couple of unused trolley buses and set in motion the sale of a building near Smith Reynolds Airport to a company that provides human tissue for biological research.

The council also approved an agreement with the Airport Commission of Forsyth County that provides for a boost in city funds for airport improvements.

The council approved \$1.325 million in financing for additional development in the Ridgewood Place subdivision in Southeast Ward by S.G. Atkins Community Development Corp. The money will go toward the construction of an additional 10 houses in the development, on top of five houses previously approved.

Five of the houses will be sold to people who make no more than 80 percent of the area median income, while the remaining five houses are not under that restriction.

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## NEWS

## Council

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The subdivision was begun by Partners for Homeownership before that group went out of business in 2010 and deeded the unsold lots to the city in lieu of foreclosure. The Partners group had built and sold 72 houses, leaving the city with 58 undeveloped lots.

Council Member James Taylor called attention to the project as a positive development for the Southeast Ward, which he represents, and said it also works toward the city's goal of providing more affordable housing.



Taylor

"All the units in the project will be sold to owner-occupants," Taylor said, adding that having owners in the neighborhood will avoid problems that can arise when there are too many renters in a neighborhood.

The financing, in the form of a zero-interest loan, will be repaid to the city as the properties sell.

Meanwhile, with no discussion the board approved the sale of two buses designed to resemble old-fashioned trolleys to Triad ECO Adventures, a local company that provides Segway tours and stand-up paddleboarding.

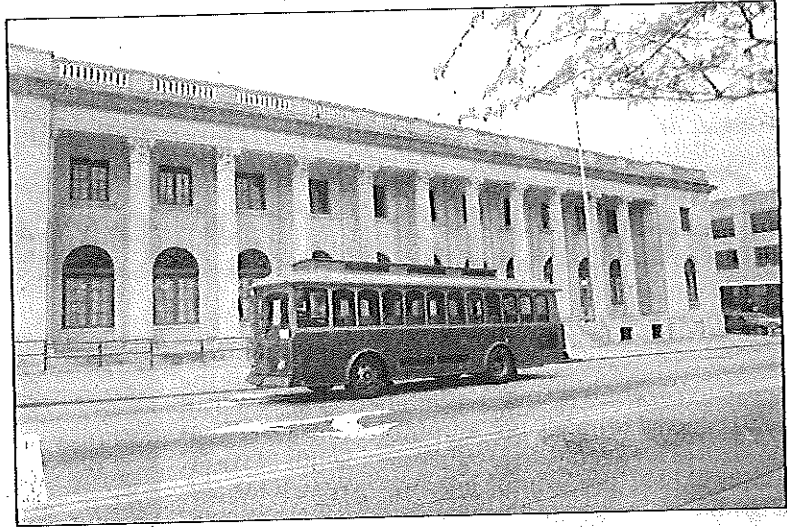
Triad Eco Adventures is buying both buses for a total of \$10,100, and plans to use them for staging tours of downtown and other parts of the city.

The buses formerly plied downtown, but were mothballed in 2014 because ridership was so low that it cost the city much more to operate the buses than the city received in revenue.

Two other companies bid on the buses, but city officials said the Triad ECO Adventures offer was the best of the offers in terms of company experience running tours.

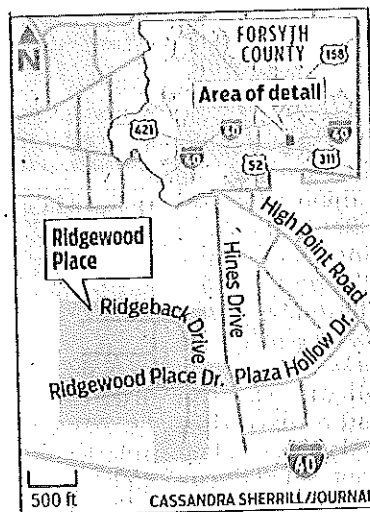
The two city actions affecting the airport area were passed unanimously by the city.

The council approved the sale of a building at 630 Brookwood Business Park Drive to Dr. Cullen



LAUREN CARROLL/JOURNAL

The Winston-Salem City Council approved the sale of two trolley buses to Triad ECO Adventures.



CASSANDRA SHERRILL/JOURNAL

A. Taylor for \$525,000. Taylor is the managing member of Carolina Tissue Collaborative LLC, which does business as GLAS.

According to city officials, GLAS wants to become the largest repository in the world of biological samples used for research. According to the city, most of the samples are used for cancer research. Taylor has an office in the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter.

The building is on 4 acres the city owns in Brookwood Business Park, and is near the Winston-Salem Joint Firearms Training Facility.

Brookwood Business Park is near Smith Reynolds Airport and is being developed in hopes of attracting business to that area.

The 7,500-square-foot building

that Taylor wants to acquire was finished in the fall of 2014, and was constructed as a speculative building near the airport.

Brookwood Business Park, formerly known as Airport Business Park, consists of about 45 acres divided into nine tracts.

Because the transaction involves public property, the city is selling the tract and building under an upset bid procedure. After notice of the sale is published, others can submit upset bids of at least \$551,300, but they would have to agree with the other requirements of the purchase.

Those requirements include making an investment of at least \$150,000 in improving the property, and using the property for health purposes for at least three years.

The other airport action was passage of an agreement that will provide \$150,000 a year from the city for eight years for improvements at Smith Reynolds Airport.

The action was the culmination of negotiations between the city and Forsyth County over how to make the airport more competitive. At one point, county commissioners had contemplated asking the general assembly to de-annex the airport as a way of reducing the tax burden for airplane owners.

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