

City Council remarks 7/9/13

I believe the City should influence and nurture redevelopment of the DMH's Bull Street property, and Hughes Development is experienced and seems capable, even if noncommittal to an adaptive reuse of the historic asylum campus and civil war camp.

If Council will not refrain from voting today, agree to identify the funding mechanism for its \$70 million pledge, and then allow some time for citizen input, I am disappointed, but need to support and protect my City.

To instill public confidence in the City's role in Bull Street, I call upon this Council to appoint a 5 member commission to advise Council on the City's various upcoming roles under the Development Agreement and PUD, including funding, benchmarks and development activities. The Commission would be chaired by a Council appointee, and comprised of a Columbia Chamber of Commerce appointee, a SC Small Business Chamber of Commerce appointee, a Coalition of Downtown Neighborhoods appointee, and a Historic Columbia appointee, all appointments approved by Council and the appointees duly sworn to advise the City on the discharge of its responsibilities and the developer's fulfillment of its responsibilities. The Bull Street Commission would meet at least every other month and report to Council at least twice a year.

I believe that, with this mechanism in place, and then moving forward together in a spirit of cooperation and respect, the best result for the City can be reasonably assured and that is why we are all here today. Can I count on you to do this when you give 2 reading approval today, Mr. Mayor and members of Council?