



## Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation

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**The Block Gazette** is a publication of the Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation (EMSDC).



### Mission

EMSDC's mission is to bring community, economic and social empowerment to the minority community. EMSDC focuses on property development, minority-owned and operated businesses and corporate formation, and partnerships that deliver a continuum of economic development and human services.

### Vision

Located on The Block, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation acts in partnership with local, regional and national entities both public and private. EMSDC develops people, property and businesses, and envisions economic and social justice for all.

# the BLOCK g a z e t t e

## Development Update

**Prior to the May 22, 2007 Asheville City Council Meeting, City Development Consultant Matt Taylor, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Real Estate Research Consultants of Orlando, FL provided the following information to Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation.**

Real Estate Research (RER) prepared a presentation to the City of Asheville (COA) Council on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 to speak about the process the firm is undertaking to create a transparent and participatory avenue for development of City-owned and EMSDC-owned property. The presentation included:

1. The one-year process as experienced in other cities, with three case examples;
2. Steps in the process to obtain the development goals, and benchmarks to measure progress; and
3. Overview of four sites recommended for development request for qualifications

Initially COA presented RER with 20 properties for market analysis to rank for development. Of these 20, seven were found to have merit, and only four of these were market supportable. They are:

1. Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation properties on Eagle and South Market (corner)
2. Site (Flying Frog and Parking Lot) across from Civic Center on Haywood Street
3. Parks and Recreation Maintenance Compound adjacent to Mountain Housing Opportunities
4. Economic Development Office on Haywood Street

**The following development recommendations presently exist for these sites:**

1. EMSDC: Market rate, live-work multi-family residences with office condos
2. Haywood Street site across from Civic Center: Hotel
3. Parks and Recreation: Workforce Housing
4. Haywood Street Economic Development Offices: Workforce Housing

The process will continue in the following manner:

\* An RFQ will be prepared to determine nationwide which developers are interested in these projects in the Asheville area; six weeks are provided for developer responses. From this pool of respondents, all interested developers will be prescreened in order to determine who to invite to submit bid proposals (RFP).

The goal is to find multiple developers, with a final selection of four, one for each project. An Evaluation Committee, including representation from the Downtown Development Committee, will review the qualifications. In the process the developers will be rated as to financial stability and expertise to carry out such projects. The developer responses are due July 17, 2007.

\* On August 14, the COA Council will review the RFP candidates with the consultants.

\* The next step will be to draft the Request for Proposal (RFP) to which invited developers will be asked to respond. At this point, input on the outcomes desired for specific properties will be gathered

*continued on page 14*

### History of the Block

For over 100 years, African-Americans have congregated on The Block. All manner of businesses and institutions once thrived there. Peg Leg Bates, Duke Ellington and Ray Charles stayed at The Savoy Hotel. Count Basie played at the Tobacco Warehouse. Willie Stargell lived above the Ritz Café on Market. Life was celebrated.

But in the early 1960s, social change was upon the land. Because of desegregation, The Block was no longer the center of African-American activity. Slowly, it was devoured by parking lots, urban renewal and federal programs. Many residents were moved to the Projects, and some landmarks were torn down.

EMSDC is dedicated to restoring The Block to its former prominence. It believes that "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" is the birthright of all Americans. It is EMSDC's goal to revitalize The Block, once again making it a gathering place of people fully alive and in possession of their own destiny.

**June 2007**  
**Serving the City Within...  
A People Without**



**From My Desk  
to Yours....**

*from Elizabeth Russell,  
EMSDC Executive Director*

### Important News For Everyone

The Urban News is sponsoring a **Career Fair** at the YMI Cultural Center on June 20, 2007. In preparation for this event, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation has agreed to host several corresponding events on June 16, 2007 to help individuals and families seeking employment get ready for the Career Fair.

**Several topics that will be covered include:**

1. The Business of Finding and Securing Employment — Jobs Online and Other Strategies
2. Writing the Right Resume (Campus of Learners)
3. Paper Work to Go to Work!

These events will be held at South Pack Square Community Center, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation staff and volunteers will be on hand to discuss these topics, designed to help you put your best foot forward during the June 20 Career Fair.

On June 16, there will also be several other special events going on simultaneously. Closest to the shopping district will be *Flavors of African Cuisine*, held in the EMSDC parking lot next to The Ritz. Beginning at 4 p.m. there will be music and food, indoor and outdoor dining, until 9 p.m.

*Just Folks* will host their third Saturday concert starting at 5 p.m. until 10 p.m. This program has gained considerable momentum with its informal, family-friendly atmosphere, food and entertainment.

### JOIN IN!

Thanks again for all of your interest in bringing back The Block! It's up to us!

**Eagle Market Streets  
Development Corporation**  
gratefully acknowledges the  
generous support of its business  
incubation project, **BIZ INC PRO**,  
by the **Asheville Merchants Fund**  
of the **Western North Carolina  
Community Foundation**.



Mt Zion Church Property

Mount Zion Community Development, Inc. and The Landmark Group of Winston-Salem have announced plans for 58 loft condominiums and retail space on the property owned by Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church just west of the church in downtown Asheville.

The \$20 million development calls for renovating three historic buildings and building three others on a hillcrest site that would give residents of the New York-style lofts magnificent views, particularly of Beaucatcher Mountain and the downtown skyline.

Property owners in the Eagle Market Streets Redevelopment Area were invited to a meeting on June 7 at which the development team unveiled its preliminary plans for the former foundry site. Neighbors and residents are invited to a meeting 6:30-8:30 p.m. June 21 in the sanctuary of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church to hear about the plans.

Preliminary plans call for 41 one-bedroom and 17 two-bedroom

## Historic Rehab and New Construction in The Block

**\$20 million project planned for historic rehab and new construction in The Block. Project would include retail space and New York-style lofts with 'magnificent views'.**

condos starting in the \$180,000 range, plus four retail/commercial spaces. Three of the buildings would feature interior parking, with additional exterior parking in the courtyard and along former South Spruce Street.

"We think this is a good plan," said the Rev. John H. Grant, pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church. "It's time for us to act and make something happen."

Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church ([www.mtzionsasville.org](http://www.mtzionsasville.org)) has served the Asheville community for 127 years and has owned the property since the 1990s. The Landmark Group ([www.land](http://www.land)-



35 Eagle St. – the Rumley Nelson/Boozer Building.



Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church.



42 Spruce Street – Grimes Building.



51 South Market St. – Mayfair and Tallman Building.

[markdevelopment.biz](http://markdevelopment.biz) has won national awards for historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects. It has worked closely with community interests in developing more than \$350 million in projects in seven states.

unanimously approved for the RFQ which was released on May 30, 2007.

The City of Asheville, North Carolina, is requesting statements of qualifications from development teams for the acquisition and redevelopment of one or more of four strategic downtown sites. The Request for Qualifications document can be obtained from [www.ashevillenc.gov/rfq.html](http://www.ashevillenc.gov/rfq.html). Qualifications submittals are due by 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 17, 2007.

As this RFQ process begins, Mt. Zion Community Development, Inc. is preparing for a June 21, 2007 Public Meeting at the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church Sanctuary to announce its development plans. Please plan to attend.

### June 7

**Property Owners Meeting** on Mount Zion Development, 7 p.m.

### June 21

**Public Meeting for Development Plans**, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church.



## SUMMER Concert-in-the-Park Series

Now through September 1, 2007 the musicians and ministerial voices you already know and love are coming to Triangle Park! The concerts will be devoted to your enjoyment of music, summertime-in-the-park cookouts, good times with good folks, and gospel gatherings.



- **Jazz-in-the-Park, 5-10:00 p.m.**
- **Gospel-in-the-Park, 3-7:00 p.m.**

Concerts will be held in Triangle Park, 56 South Market Street (right across from the Jolly Taxi Cabstand and Parking Lot), in Asheville. Co-sponsored by Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation and City of Asheville Parks and Recreation

This concert series is in its second year and gaining momentum with each new featured presentation. The leadership is seasoned in the music arena, Jay McDowell, who is well recognized within the African American community as a musician in his own right, and although in retirement for some years, well-qualified to put together and host a professional, family-oriented day-in-the-park event.

His supporters in the Just Folks organization have a real grassroots sense of what native Asheville residents are seeking when they want to relax as well as what appeals to Asheville's many visitors on a summer evening stroll in the downtown area.

In this concert series, featured artists/DJs include: Chuck Beattie, Ivie Drummer, West Sound, DJ Brian Sanchez, and Rev. Inez Ray (May 27). Pastor Luella Whitmire (Living Waters Ministries, June 24) will lead worship from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact Jay McDowell, President, Ceretha Griffin, Treasurer, or Elizabeth Russell, (828) 281-1227

JustFolks.org began in 2005 to revive the healthy spirit of The Block. Their idea is to leave no one without hope and a way to participate in the robust revitalization of the historically African American area of Downtown Asheville.

## Development Update, continued from page 11

by the consultant for inclusion in the RFP.

- \* In September there will be an open house conducted for interested developers and the public.
- \* In October 2007, COA will release the RFP for the four projects, allowing 16 weeks for developer responses in January 2008.
- \* By January 2008 the proposals will be received by COA and consultants, a second Evaluation Committee (that includes city legal council, the city manager, the city economic development director, and planning as well as public works personnel) will review and rank the developer proposals for final recommendations to City Council. The evaluations will be ongoing during February and March 2008.
- \* RER anticipates that the COA Council will approve selections in third week of March 2008.

COA is seeking to utilize the property equity in completing its

capital projects, as is EMSDC. In a conversation with Darryl Hart and Elizabeth Russell, Matt Taylor said that he thoroughly understood why EMSDC would want to move ahead in the interim to make their properties revenue producing. It is in the interest of developing, fostering, sustaining, and not thwarting business development in the area, and it creates a revenue stream for the "good works" of the CDC.

On another note, Matt Taylor informed EMSDC that property owners of The Ritz, Mssrs. Ellison and McGlohon, had asked to include this property in the RFQ/P process. After the developer qualifications have been received and reviewed, the Request for Proposal process will afford additional input on how the owners wish the properties to be developed.

At the May 22, City Council meeting following the consultant presentation, as Council debated the relative merits of some of the recommendations for site development on the four parcels, Mayor Bellamy asked Council to vote first on the Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation-owned property. It was

# BUSINESS ON THE BLOCK

Photos by Renato Rotolo



46 S. Market Street, EMSDC business incubator. Home to Shea Tree, The Kutt and Fresh Produce, the Boutique.



Soce's African Hairbraiding  
3 Eagle Street  
(828) 258-1116



Center for Massage and  
Natural Health, 2 Eagle Street  
(828) 252-0058



Skinny Beats  
4 Eagle Street  
(828) 768-2826



Mamadou's The Spot,  
(828) 582-4712 and  
Out of Africa, 7 Eagle Street



Eagle's Market  
10 Eagle Street  
(828) 232-2815



My Addiction Shoes  
12 Eagle Street  
(828) 225-5006



Limone's  
13 Eagle Street  
(828) 252-2327



WNC Medical Staffing, Inc.  
14 Eagle Street  
(828) 255-0915



Ophelia's  
15 Eagle Street  
(828) 255-8154



Stefanie's Hair & Beauty Design  
Studio, 39 S. Market Street  
(828) 255-0681



Al Kimble, The Block Retail  
Clothing, 39 S. Market Street  
(828) 582-5337



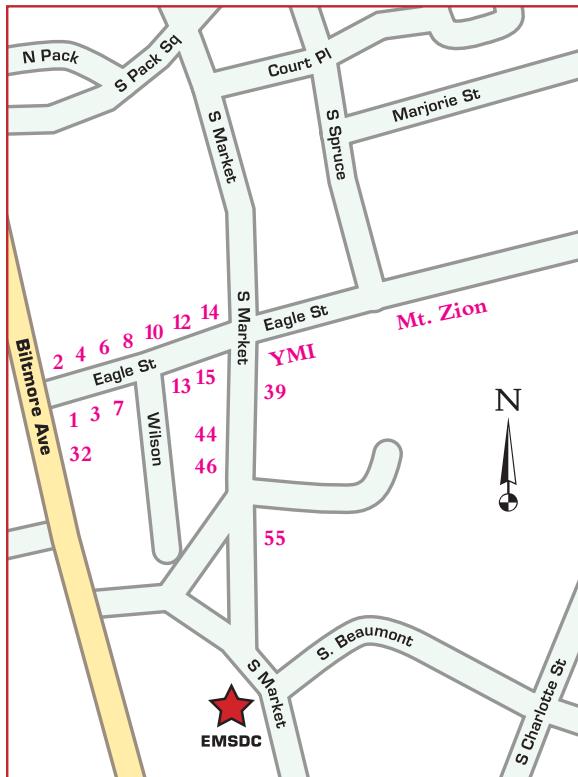
The Ritz  
44 S. Market Street  
(828) 225-3031



Vance Hamilton's The Kutt  
46 S. Market Street  
(828) 255-7791



Shea Tree  
46 S. Market Street  
(828) 216-2639



Proud Sponsor of Business on the Block 2007

## Other Businesses You Should Know About:

JR's Barbershop  
1 Eagle Street,  
(828) 251-2200

The New Ebony  
Bar & Grill Catering  
(828) 281-1227

Smooth's Barber Shop  
8 Eagle Street,  
(828) 285-0557

Rebecca Manning  
Light Design  
13 1/2 Eagle Street  
(828) 232-1885  
www.rmlightdesign.com

The Urban News  
13 1/2 Eagle Street,  
(828) 253-5585



Jolly Taxi Service & Parking  
55 S. Market Street  
(828) 768-8881



BoGa "Vive La Vie"  
32 Biltmore Avenue  
(828) 253-2642

## Mark Your Calendars

### June 9

**Group Activity – Hiking at Craggy.** Meet at PACE office, 70 S. Market Street. Bring lunch.

### June 9-11

**Living Waters Ministries Anniversary,** South Pack Square Community Center.

### June 13

**Volunteer Info Session** at PACE, 70 S. Market St., Suite A.

### June 16

**Career Day on The Block.** EMSDC tips for searching for a job, resume writing, mock interviews, and getting paperwork in order. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 70 South Market Street.

**Flavors of Africa** – The Ritz Restaurant 4 to 9 p.m.

**Just Folks** – Concert in The Park, 5 to 10 p.m.

### June 20

**Job Fair** – YMI Cultural Center.

## Community Health Ambassador Training

June 15 & 22, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. June 16 & 23, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at AB Tech College, Enka Campus, Hanes Building, Room 228.

## Parking Spaces AVAILABLE

### 40 South Market Street

If you are interested in renting a surface parking space on South Market Street for \$45/month, please call (828) 281-1227 and ask to speak with Elizabeth Russell. There are a limited number of spaces available, so please call today!

### Need a Postal Box?



#### >> 24 Hour Access <<

Convenient Pull-in Parking for Pick Up Drop Off Monday Through Friday, 10am to 4pm

### 70 South Market Street

Right next to South Pack Square Community Center and Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement (ABIPA)

Call 281-1227 for more information

# From Around the Block to Around the World

May 22, 2007

Dear Friends:

One of the biggest honors of my professional life happened this past week at the 2007 Association for Enterprise Opportunity Conference. As I rotated out of being the board chair of this national small business development trade association, I had the immense privilege of introducing our keynote speaker: Mohammad Yunus, the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Winner and grandfather of microcredit. Below are excerpts from my remarks.

... Besides the remarkable achievements of winning the Nobel Peace Prize and serving millions of poor "unbankable" women with business credit in Bangladesh, I want to share this personal story about Dr. Yunus.

In 1994 I was working in my first microenterprise job in inner-city, Washington, DC. Somehow my employer Jubilee Jobs, had secured Dr. Yunus to come speak at our function for our newly created microenterprise program. My assignment was to drive him back and forth from his hotel to the site of his talk in my slightly embarrassing, beat-up Honda. He got in the car without pretension and immediately began engaging me.

We had one of the most inspiring half hours of my life — and then we



*Dr. Mohammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize recipient and pioneer of Microcredit programs beginning in Bangladesh with Greg Walker Wilson, CEO, Mountain Biz Works at the 2007 Association for Enterprise Opportunity Conference.*

repeated it on the way home too! He could have slept or worked on his remarks, but he wanted to share with me his irrepressible hope and to listen to me about how this microcredit concept was working in the US.

What I remember now is not the specific words he said, but his clear vision, amazing optimism, and his true respect for me — this twenty-something, wet-behind-the-ears, eager, nervous, and desperately curious person he would never see again. That deep value of respect of others that he showed to me is surely at the root of his success of serving those millions of poor Muslim women who society would rank as "less than."

It is that one hour of "car time" with Dr. Yunus that cemented for me the fact that this economic empowerment work is what I feel called to do and is a key reason why I am standing before you today at this podium as the chair of the microenterprise field. Without further ado, I present to you, Dr. Mohammad Yunus.

I never had the opportunity to meet Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King, Jesus, or Gandhi and we live in a day when there are few apparent heroes, but the photo printed here shows

me with one person I'd put into that same category.

You can learn more about Yunus at: [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/)

*Grateful and still in a daze, Greg*

Greg Walker Wilson has been a long-time friend and supporter of the Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation Business Development Programs. He is the CEO of Mountain Biz Works, and immediate past Chairman of the national Association for Enterprise Opportunity.

## Get African/ Caribbean Flavors

Summer is here and the next *Flavors of African Cuisine* dinner will be held on Saturday, June 16 beginning at 4:00 p.m. at The Ritz Restaurant, 42 S. Market Street in Asheville. Many thanks to Gene Ellison of the Ritz for hosting this dinner.

Chef Nick Cardillo has joined our staff this season and we will be offering exciting new menu items as well as the old favorites. New this season will be Jamaican dishes such as curried goat and chicken. Also from the Congo, Mosaka chicken with Congolese mango salsa and a delicious new salad featuring papaya, orange, coconut and walnuts.

### From West Africa, Live Drumming

Our entertainment can't be beat! We have the best in soul stirring rhythm, and to start this season off in great style we will be featuring, from Guinea, *Billy Skinny Beats Drums*. You don't want to miss this great per-

former. He has recently performed with Master Drummer, Bolokada Conde.

### The Best Entertainment From Our Own Asheville

In addition, for your listening pleasure, we are very fortunate to have appearing at this same dinner, *West Sound, Motown Music*. Many of you are familiar with this group from their performances at last season's dinners and already know what great entertainers they are. Don't miss this one.

### New This Season

A chance to become a part of the African rhythm. Sponsored by *Flavors of African Cuisine* and *Skinny Beats Drums*. You could have a chance to win a Djembe drum and 4 drumm-



ing lessons, a \$300 value. Get a free ticket with the purchase of each meal at any of the dinners that will be held on June 16, July 21, or August 18.

The drawing will be held at the August 18th dinner and you must be present to win. So, the more you dine with us, the more tickets you get and the better your chances of winning will be. GOOD LUCK!

Contact *Flavors of African Cuisine* at (828) 278-2026 or *The Ritz Restaurant* located at 42 S. Market St., in Asheville, phone (828) 225-3031. La Cuisine de L'Afrique, PO Box 7111, Asheville, NC.