

Wednesday, October 28, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee – Joint Workgroup Meeting

EDC Members Present: Ed Morrell, Sheree Hedrick, Paul White, Lesia McKensie, Berry Perry, Connie Jones, Don Brown, Keisha King

EDC Members Absent: None

Staff Present: David Bergmark, Allison Rice, Patrick Reidy

Guests: Commissioner Virginia Gray

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The Meeting was called to order at 5:43.

Berry Perry made a motion to accept both the August 26th and the September 23rd minutes. Sheree Hedrick seconded the motion. The motion passed.

David Bergmark went over what was learned on the visit to Apex. He said one thing that was brought up in Apex was that the Town of Apex facilitated economic development by burying the power lines, which Wendell did several decades ago, and bought land for downtown parking lots. He said Wendell should probably start thinking about how they'll manage parking as the town develops. Mr. Perry suggested a long term lease, and Ms. Hedrick suggested signage to direct drivers to parking, even if it wasn't town-owned.

The EDC went through pictures that were taken of Apex. Dr. Connie said she noticed that only 1/3 of businesses were open on a Sunday recently. Mr. Perry said Wendell Public Works keeps downtown a lot cleaner than Apex. Mr. Bergmark said he noticed there wasn't a lot of residential uses downtown.

Ms. Hedrick suggested Wendell have a 1st Friday Art Walk. She suggested they try out the idea by encouraging businesses to stay open and host an open house on December 4th, the night of the Evening with Santa. She said it would be a time for the businesses to host an artist, have products on display, and to show some hospitality. She said there could even be a map at the square and at the church of all the participants. Ms. McKensie suggested that they have a punch card. Everyone that got the card punched could enter a drawing. Mr. Perry said that he would donate a Yeti cooler for the prize. The EDC agreed to talk to businesses in the next 24 hours, and to talk to the Chamber of Commerce to make sure they approved of the plans. Ms. Hedrick and Ms. McKensie said they would talk to the businesses and hand out flyers for the Evening with Santa and the Decorate Your Storefront Competition. Ms. Rice suggested they speak to the Appearance Committee. Mr. Reidy said the Appearance Committee had talked about an artist competition; Holly Springs did it and it was successful.

Mr. Bergmark said Ginny Porter had moved and has resigned from the Chamber of Commerce and the EDC. He said the Chamber of Commerce would be recommending another representative to the EDC.

The EDC discussed the meeting schedule for November and December. The EDC agreed to meet on November 18th and to skip the meeting in December. They agreed to have the meeting at Agave so that they could support the local business.

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The EDC voted to approve the 2016 schedule as outlined.

Mr. Bergmark updated the EDC on the status of the Transportation Plan. He asked for an EDC member to volunteer to be on the Transportation Plan Committee. He said there would be some involvement, in the form of about 4 workshops, meetings, etc. lasting an estimated 4 months. Mr. Perry volunteered for the position. Mr. White asked that the group involve all property owners that would be affected by the plan.

Mr. Reidy gave an update on several businesses that had expressed interest in moving to Downtown Wendell, including someone who wanted to start a take-out BBQ stand. Mr. White's building next to the gunsmith, Strickland's building next to the square, and the building on Wendell Falls Pkwy near the railroad were all suggested.

Mr. Bergmark said he scheduled the Capital Area Workforce to speak to the EDC in January. He said the Greater Raleigh Business Bureau would be speaking to the EDC in February. He said there would be an ad promoting the Evening with Santa on tv.

Ms. Hedrick said Southern Glimpse would open soon downtown. She said that was important because it was a home-based business moving to a more permanent location. Mr. Bergmark said he would send a story about Southern Glimpse to the Wake County Chamber of Commerce once she opened.

Mr. White encouraged everyone to come to the Jason Dorsey workshop about millennials on November 11th.

The meeting was adjourned.