

Wednesday, May 25, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee – Joint Workgroup Meeting

EDC Members Present: Ed Morrell, Sheree Hedrick, Paul White, Dr. Connie Jones,

EDC Members Absent: Lesia McKensie, Don Brown, Barry Perry

Staff Present: Allison Rice, David Bergmark, Patrick Reidy

Guests: Brad Rhinehalt, Mayor Gina Gray

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The meeting was held in the Conference Room at Town Hall, 15 E. Fourth Street.

Mr. Bergmark discussed economic development initiatives related to the 250 + acre potential industrial site that was discussed at the last meeting. He said one owner was holding off for an unrealistic price, which put the entire project on hold. The committee agreed that all the landowners should be brought together in the same room so that an agreement for certified sites could be formed.

Mr. Bergmark said that he and Mr. Morrell had met and developed a list of 41 businesses to send recruitment letters to. He said he would write the letters and send them before the next meeting.

Mr. Bergmark said that Zaxby's had reached out via the Town website. He said they were looking for restaurant locations and office space in the Clayton and Wendell areas. Mr. Bergmark said he met with their representative and showed him potential sites around town. He said they also met with Newland about potential sites in Wendell Falls. He said the representative asked about the land catty-corner from Food Lion, as well as the former Kannon's site. Ms. Hedrick noted that Zaxby's is traditionally a civic-minded company.

Mr. Rhinehalt gave the EDC an update about Wendell Falls. He said in the past year they had sold 106 houses and already have 50-60 residents moved in. He said that they are working on the next phases – they had submitted the preliminary designs of the age-qualified section but they were still selecting a builder. Mr. White asked how many rooftops would need to go up before a grocery store would go in. Mr. Rhinehalt said they were working on it, and there had been some interest expressed for stores of various sizes, but said Newland was waiting for more developer interest to be generated before they sign with someone. Mr. Rhinehalt said they had submitted plans to the Town for commercial units on Taylor Road, which included the EMS station. He said the age qualified housing would be along the rest of the Taylor Road extension.

Mr. Bergmark said he and Newland had met with GoTriangle about putting a park and ride stop in Wendell Falls. Mr. Rhinehalt said they had started drawing a master plan scenario for a townhome development leading into the marketplace from SF-3, which Newland would be submitting soon. He said the units would be in the \$170-\$200,000 range. He said bus access to Raleigh would really appeal to those residents.

Ms. Hedrick said she was driving through Henderson and saw a storefront called Mainstreet Marketplace. She said it was the type store that many imagined going into Kannon's, with several

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vendors and roughly the same square-footage. She said she stopped to take pictures to show the rest of the EDC. Mr. Reidy said the owner of Kannon's was looking to sell the building but nobody knows how serious they were in their search.

Mr. Bergmark handed out citizen board applications so that members could reapply to serve on the EDC,

Mr. Bergmark asked if there was any interest in doing a walking meeting to visit businesses and get their concerns before meeting for dinner. Everyone agreed it was a good idea. Mr. Rhinehalt offered to let the EDC meet at the Farmhouse for free. Mr. Reidy pointed out that some businesses might be closed after 5 and suggested going out earlier. Dr. Connie said she hear a lot of negative comments about the Chamber from 20 years ago and agreed the EDC should do something to encourage public participation and feedback.

Ms. Hedrick suggested that the EDC host a reception where they encourage businesses to come and air out concerns, and to explain what the EDC is now. Ms. Rice said that business owners should be invited face-to-face. Mr. Rhinehalt suggested that the Chamber and the EDC meet to coordinate for the year, but said that the EDC should host the reception on its own to avoid confusion. Ms. Hedrick suggested that the reception be scheduled for September, and Mr. White suggested Wine 101 as a location.

Mr. White asked how the reception would be funded. He said he would donate \$50. Mr. Rhinehalt and Mr. Morrell said they would also contribute. Dr. Connie suggested we ask Food Lion and other businesses to donate food and supplies. Mr. Rhinehalt noted that Bravos donated pizzas to the Chamber's Golf Tournament. Ms. Hedrick said that donated food would be a good way for businesses to display their products. Mr. White and Ms. Hedrick suggested they give people 1-2 free drink tickets when they RSVP by the deadline. Dr. Connie suggested the EDC ask Wine 101 to contribute by selling the alcohol for the drink tickets at cost.

The EDC agreed to host the event from 6-9 pm on September 22nd, and to advertise it as a networking event. It was suggested that visitors be asked to fill out survey and give their feedback about what the EDC can do for them. Mr. Rhinehalt suggested they advertise in Wendell Magazine. Mr. Bergmark said he had a list of things the EDC had accomplished that could be used. Mr. Rhinehalt suggested that they invited a representative from Wake County Economic Development.

Mr. Reidy described the events for Independence Day. He said an Italian gentleman had contacted the town, saying that he had found the dogtags of a Wendell resident from WWII. Mr. Reidy said he had found the owner of the dogtags, and the Italian gentleman would visit North Carolina for a week. The town would host a ceremony for both for Fourth of July, which was being heavily advertised. Mr. Reidy asked for the EDC's help in hosting the Italian visitor. Mr. Rhinehalt said he would see if the visitor could use a house he had access to in Raleigh. Ms. Hedrick suggested the Women's Club host a reception for him.

The meeting was adjourned.