

Wednesday, April 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee – Corporate Development Workgroup

EDC Workgroup Members Present: Paul White, Donald Brown, and Edward Morell

EDC Workgroup Members Absent: none

Staff Present: David Bergmark, Patrick Reidy

Guests: Commissioner Gray

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David Bergmark called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Bergmark said he had completed changes to the ‘Potential Development Zone’ map. He said the purpose of this map was to highlight areas with greater development potential to share with Carolantic Realty. Mr. Bergmark said the parcels chosen were primarily large acreage parcels with good access to water and sewer infrastructure. He said the map identified the acreage and the ownership for each parcel. He said a chart on the bottom of the map listed the names and mailing addresses for all property owners within the identified area. Mr. Bergmark said he had used major roads or the stream to divide the area into three sections. He said the middle section as central to obtaining 500 acres, which Carolantic had indicated it would need to potentially spark the interest of an investor.

Mr. White said Cedric Todd had left his property to Jim Bailey. He said Mr. Todd had conveyed the desire that the property not be developed.

Mr. White said he had set up a meeting with Carolantic Realty in May to discuss the map. He said this meeting was meant to be a preliminary meeting to gauge the interest of Mr. Stroud and to determine what other materials or individuals would be needed at the actual meeting. Mr. Bergmark said other EDC members were welcome to join them if they were interested. Don Brown said he did not know that it was necessary for other members to attend at this point. Mr. White said he thought it would be good if Commissioner Gray attended, to show there was interest and support by the Town Board of exploring this option.

Don Brown said he thought planning staff should notify Newland Communities of their intentions. He said he did not want Newland Communities to think that the Town was trying to create competition without them knowing. Mr. Reidy said the Town would be more than happy for Newland Communities to buy some of this property as well. He said Newland was probably more interested in filling some of the gaps in the Wendell Falls site. Mr. Bergmark said planning staff was meeting with Newland communities later that day and that he would share the map with them.

Mr. Reidy asked if the EDC members present were aware of any other business uses which were currently not allowed that the committee would like to see as permitted uses. Mr. White said he was working with planning staff to get fitness center use moved into one of his buildings. He said he had not realized that it required a special use permit. Mr. White said he would have started the process earlier if he had realized a special use was required. Mr. Brown asked if batting cages were allowed as a permitted use. Mr. Bergmark said he would classify indoor batting cages as a type of indoor recreation.

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Mr. Brown asked if indoor shooting ranges could not also be classified as indoor recreation. Mr. Bergmark said he did not think he was comfortable lumping firing ranges in with gymnasiums and other indoor recreation types.

Mr. Bergmark said he had included a flyer in the agenda packet which advertised an upcoming seminar offered by the North Carolina American Planning Association. He said the seminar was entitled “Attracting the Talent that Drives Economic Success”. Mr. Bergmark said the seminar would look at how to attract millennials. He said he planned on registering and could register other EDC members if they were interested. He said the seminar would be held in Research Triangle Park on April 30th. Mr. Brown said he had already registered for the event and did not need the town to register for him. Commissioner Gray asked Mr. Bergmark to send her the flyer. She said she might register herself as well.

Mr. White said he had asked Mr. Reidy to look into Raleigh’s outdoor dining regulations. He said this was a topic that needed to be discussed by the downtown work group. He said having outdoor dining and outdoor consumption of alcohol showed that there was activity and was necessary to liven up the downtown. Mr. White said the ABC board only required that the area be separated by some type of barrier. He said it could be a simple post with a chain or hanging rope attached to it. Mr. White said he thought Wendell needed to change its regulations so that consumption of alcohol on the sidewalk could be approved by staff. Mr. Bergmark said he thought it would help to have staff look at different options for barriers. He said the Town Board could approve a number of options for the barriers or outdoor dining furniture that staff could then present to interested business owners. Mr. White said whatever was chosen needed to not be too expensive.

Mr. Bergmark said he wanted to cancel the April 23rd joint meeting unless there was something the EDC members wanted to discuss. He said he did not have any speakers lined up for the April 23rd meeting. Mr. White said he thought that was fine, especially since we had already scheduled a meeting with Carolantic on May 6th.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

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Economic Development Committee – Downtown/Branding Workgroup

EDC Workgroup Members Present: Barry Perry, Lesia McKenzie, Steven Kyle Williams

EDC Workgroup Members Absent: Joe Ann Wright

Staff Present: David Bergmark, Patrick Reidy

Guests: Commissioner Gray, Paul White

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David Bergmark called the meeting to order at 1:05

Mr. Bergmark said planning staff had been working with Nelson Hernandez closely on the ‘Wendell Taproom’ permit. He said Nelson had run into some issues with the health department which planning staff was trying to help resolve. He said planning staff had met with Nelson and the building inspector earlier that week and that they had called the health department while they met in order to address any potential issues.

Lesia McKenzie said Nelson had brought up the subject of mail service downtown. She said Nelson had told her the mail should either be delivered on foot or cluster boxes should be used. Mr. White said that issue had been looked at in the past. Mr. Reidy said he would look into what the Town’s options were for mail service on Main Street.

Mr. Reidy asked if the EDC members had thought of any other businesses uses which were not allowed by the zoning code that they thought should be allowed, other than indoor firing ranges. Barry Perry said he thought outdoor firing ranges should also be included. Lesia McKenzie said she just wanted the Town to be open to new businesses uses if they came up.

Paul White said he had asked Patrick to review Raleigh’s outdoor dining regulations and simplify the ordinance to a one page document. Mr. Reidy said he would try, but it might be two pages.

Mr. Bergmark said he had included a flyer for an upcoming APA seminar that the EDC members might be interested in. He said the seminar focused on attracting the talent that drives economic success. Mr. Bergmark said the seminar would look at how to attract millennials. He said the seminar cost \$30, but the Town could cover the cost of registration for a small number of people. Mr. Bergmark said Don Brown had already registered and he planned on going as well.

Barry Perry said he had been contacted recently by a representative of Duke Energy who was offering energy upgrades for small businesses in the Wendell area. He said the gentleman’s name was Grant Warner and he was an Energy Advisor. Mr. Perry said Duke Power would pay for 90 percent of the cost of the project and was willing to work nights and weekends. He said he was so impressed by the presentation that he signed the contract on the spot. Mr. Bergmark asked how they defined small business. Mr. Perry said he was not sure. Mr. Bergmark said he wondered if Town Hall could qualify.

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Mr. Perry said he thought more downtown business owners needed to be made aware of how Wi-Fi could be used to address cell service in the downtown.

Mr. White asked Mr. Bergmark to tell the downtown workgroup about the map he had created to share with Carolantic. Mr. Bergmark showed the EDC members present the map. Mr. White said Carolantic had previously told the EDC that if we could assemble 500 acres they might have an investor willing to develop the area. He said he was hoping Carolantic could help Wendell like Parrish Realty helped Zebulon. Mr. Bergmark said he and Paul had set up a preliminary meeting with Carolantic Realty on May 6th. He said other EDC members were welcome to come if they wanted to.

Mr. White said the Inside-Out Design building was posted for auction on April 26th. Mr. White said he had looked at buying that building in the past, but the proposed business operator did not come through. Mrs. McKenzie said the EDC needed to investigate this further. Mr. White said the outcome of the inside-out building could potentially make or break the downtown. Mr. Perry said he knew someone who might be interested in buying the property. He said his contact was involved in the restaurant industry. Mr. Bergmark said the Town had paid for a building inspection of this site in the past four years. He said he could share this report with Mr. Perry.

Mr. Reidy asked if there was any better meeting time than 1:00 for this group. Mr. Williams said anytime between 10:00 and 2:00 worked for him. He said earlier in the morning would be difficult for him.

Mr. Bergmark said unless there was other business the EDC members wanted to discuss at the next meeting, he was going to cancel the April 23rd joint EDC meeting. Nobody voiced any objections to canceling the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.