

June 5, 2013 @ 10:00 A.M.
Economic Development Committee:
Corporate Development Workgroup Meeting

The meeting of the Corporate Development/Shovel Ready Sites Workgroup was held on Wednesday, June 5, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in the Wendell Community Center. Present were Edward Morrell; Don Brown; Planning Director Zunilda Rodriguez; Manager Teresa Piner; Planner Patrick Reidy and Commissioner Sam Laughery.

Planning Director Zunilda Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

The group had a discussion about nominating a Chair, but no decision was made. The group agreed to maintain Paul White as Vice Chair for the Economic Development Committee.

Ms. Rodriguez stated she sent maps out to member to discuss Shovel Ready Sites. The boundary area goes to Mortex on the east side and west to Knott Square.

(1) look at where parcels that could be enhanced

(2) see what properties are available for sale or lease. There were not many for sale or lease on the information the group was given as many were located near the downtown area.

(3) what properties if not for sale are adjacent to water/sewer and roads. There were a few, but not many. These parcels are larger. Members asked which properties have common ownership?

Mr. Morrell commented on the fact is that if a company wants to locate in Wendell, we have nothing to offer regarding available properties with characteristics these groups are seeking.

Mr. Brown commented that if the right company was interested in buying land to locate in Wendell, the parcels closer to the interchange would be better for industrial development.

Mr. Morrell commented that the obvious properties are from Leith to the high school and back to the downtown area. He said industry wants to be on the highway. He stated David Perry's land is a good alternative for a smaller business, but no one wants to come in and put a nice facility next to garbage trucks.

Ms. Rodriguez commented given the past road blocks occurring on the property across from Leith, should we look at other area options.

Mr. Morrell stated the only thing we can do is contact property owners at a stated price. Also look at options for a reasonable period.

Mr. Morrell commented it is incumbent upon the Town to identify property owners that are willing to sell. He said before we can go to market the town should we ask "are you as a property owner willing to commit for the process?" He said, for example, Micro Measurements wanted larger tracks, easier access, and water/sewer.

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Mr. Morrell stated that he thought the group should be looking at 10 acres and up regarding size with utilities located within 1,000 feet and road access.

Commissioner Laughery comment that the goal is to come up with identifying properties with criteria for advertising for sell.

Incentive Policy

Zunilda stated that edits had been made to the Incentive Policy since the last meeting.

Mr. Morrell commented the policy needs to be adequate and competitive to bring businesses to the Town. He shared his thoughts about having Wake County Economic Development review the policy.

Mr. Brown had a question on the downtown façade grant program. He commented that if all the resources were free, free needed to be removed from one of the bullets.

Mr. Brown suggested talking with the Chamber of Commerce to see if they would waive the first year of chamber dues for new businesses as an added incentive.

Business Education Connections

Mr. Brown said we don't need to forget local resources such as Johnston and Nash Community Colleges. Wake Tech will assemble training for individual businesses to meet their needs for instance. The connections need to be made however.

Zunilda stated that local high school will work with businesses to provide interns and this can serve as a great opportunity to leverage local educational resources with existing businesses.

Mr. Morrell stated that outreach should be done to request Siemens and Kioti to provide the committee with a list of suppliers that they would like to see locating close by to better serve their business needs. He said that he could the industries see a benefit of having a supplier close by. He stated that Vishey needed to be added to the list as well as Leith. Mr. Morrell asked if could Johnston/Wake Tech develop training at the high school. He said we need to know what businesses we would like to see in our downtown area and we need to look at what Knightdale, Wake Forest and Zebulon have as such businesses in their downtown core to see of any would be interested in opening second locations nearby. For the next meeting, the workgroup would like to see a draft letter to potential shovel ready site properties of interest as well as expanded property listing and map of properties for potential shovel ready sites exploration.

With no further comments or business the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

June 5, 2013 @ 1:00 PM
Wendell Economic Development Committee
Downtown / Town Branding Workshop

The Wendell Economic Development Committee Downtown/Town Branding Workshop was held on Wednesday, June 5, 2013 at the Wendell Community Center. Present were Planning Director Zunilda Rodriguez; Paul White; Leisa McKenzie; Town Manager Teresa Piner and Commissioner Sam Laughery. Absent were Joanne Wright; Barry Perry; Kyle Williams and Latisa Vereen.

Planning Director Zunilda Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Small Business Incentive Policy

- Reduction in open space and parking requirements
- Fee reduction for particular areas
- Reduction in Privilege License Fee
- More accelerated review process
- Do we want to move forward with a small business grant due to lack of funds
- Need to have Wake County review small business grant.

Mr. White asked - "do we need to go through Wake County?" We don't want too much red tape with the process.

Zunilda commented that Planner Patrick Reidy would walk businesses through the permitting process and help them with contacts and access resources needed.

Mr. White replied when businesses come into the Planning Department we need a title that indicates a positive atmosphere. We don't need to get too much into regulations. Businesses need to know they are welcome in Wendell. We need some tax base. We need to do something about the limited amount of parking in front of businesses.

Downtown Façade Grant Program

- Zunilda commented that the group needed to look at existing applications
- Streamline application process to make it more attractive for people to pursue

Mr. White replied that we need to give Zunilda money and let her spend it. Give her more authority.

Zunilda stated that the Appearance Committee has some of the same concerns. They think the process is too long as well. It appears there is a lot of agreement from both the EDC and Appearance Commission to make modifications to the program.

Mr. White asked what the purpose of the Downtown Façade Grant Program was for the town. Is it to make businesses in the downtown look better?

Leisa stated that the time period is too long.

Zunilda stated that we have discussed the time frame and approval process changes. She stated that can be incorporated for final review version presented to the EDC.

Leisa stated \$1,000 for downtown improvement is not enough.

Mr. White stated we are off the highway and we need a sign to know where the businesses are. We need to pick the ones you want and let's go raise the money to purchase them.

Downtown Wendell Business Guide

- Wendell Assets
- Location
- Downtown commercial links will need to be updated
- Walkable / location advantages
- Demographics / Snap shot of Wendell
- Education – look at private and charter schools
- Recreation – Wendell Park

Leisa commented that Ritchie's Depot and Vardy's HPC needed to be added to the guide. Zunilda noted that information will be updated. Paul White recommended adding private schools within the education segment of the guide to better attract those looking at this characteristics when deciding where to relocate. Zunilda noted the change can be made. The workgroup thought the guide was in good order to date and did not have major modifications requested.

Commissioner Laughery stated we need to make one thing happen. If it is acceptable then we need a to identify information needed for installation of one sign – let's make that one sign installed. What are the costs? What location can it be in? What involvement if any would NCDOT have on this effort?

Mr. White stated he would like to see us get a group of 100 to raise money and be able to buy and option property.

Signs

- Explore locating it in the median of Wendell Boulevard
- Talk to Broach Custom Signs for design
- Talk to NC DOT regarding location
- Raise Money for placement of sign if needed

Business & Education

Lesia McKenzie stated we need to figure out how to bridge business and education. Zunilda recommended that Lesia and Latisa serve as EDC liaisons on this effort. Lesia noted she would conduct outreach to elementary and middle schools in the area if Latisa can conduct outreach to East Wake High School and local community colleges. The workgroup agreed on this strategy.

Zunilda noted how this workgroup can encourage a partnership between business and education. Maybe we can plug into East Wake Business Partnership she suggested.

With no further business or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.