

CITY OF UNION
Economic Development Committee
June 19, 2019

Members in attendance:

Jeremy Ramage, Chair (via phone)

Steve Harper

James Collett

John Cole

Larry Solomon, Mayor

Bryan Miller, Commissioner

Melissa Hinkle, Communications and Operations Director

Kevin Costello, Boone County Planning Commission

David Whitehouse, Boone County Parks

Jared Kaelin, Gresham Smith (via phone)

John Henney, Gresham Smith (via phone)

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Commissioner Jeremy Ramage via telephone.

Gresham Smith Phase 2 Report: Commissioner Ramage presented the group with draft of Phase 2 and Jared Kaelin and Jon Henney from Gresham Smith reviewed the findings. Discussion of the various parcels and the methodology used to evaluate the parcels was held. Each parcel was discussed in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of each. Mr. Costello asked if the parcel grades on the Collett property were evaluated utilizing the final grade documents from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. The GSP Team was not sure, but Mr. Costello will follow up with more topographical data from the GIS System and with drawings of the final grades from KYTC on the Collett and Barlow properties. Mayor Solomon questioned if further opportunity for growth had factored into the parcels, while Commissioner Miller wondered if the parcels which ranked higher in the evaluation process were big enough to create a town center. GSP and Director Hinkle reminded the group that the study was designed to identify the 3-5 acre area best suited for city investment into a city "center", with a public use amenity, such as an amphitheater or shelter, designed to bring people into the city for events and activities, and not to identify the overall parcels based on total development potential. The scope of this study had been limited to this area due primarily to costs and for time constraint considerations. Commissioner Ramage asked that the group take additional time and that GSP review the comments from the call and work on a second draft of the document to present to the commission for review at a future meeting.

Old Business: Commissioner Ramage asked that Director Hinkle chair the remainder of the meeting and review the items on the agenda due to his travel. He exited the conference call. Director Hinkle updated that Panera was due to open around the middle of the month, and that Chipolte had completed their liquor license requirements and would be opening in short order as well at the Kroger Outlots. She reminded the group that there would be a City Ribbon Cutting for Orange Theory Fitness on July 11 at 4 p.m.

Hinkle also gave a brief update on Mt. Zion, noting that the extremely wet spring had again delayed significant progress on the construction to date, but that the cabinet was hopeful that summer weather would allow for prompt completion of the newer portions of the road and allow for traffic diversion to the new highway.

Boone County Planning Update: Mr. Costello noted that work on the Comprehensive Plan has been completed and approved, and that work on updating the Zoning Codes will be next. A thorough review of the sign ordinances and review of the codes regarding Short-Term Rentals (such as Air-BNB and VRBO) in Boone County.

Costello updated on the Amazon development in Burlington, noting that they are rapidly building on the site, but have also had issues with the wet spring. He noted that they are looking to meet an early fall deadline to have a concrete slab established in time for a massive delivery of structural steel for the main buildings. He also noted that Boone County will have more than 15 road projects in the next 18-24 months, with more than 5,000 barrels to be in place in the next six months. The projects include major work on the Mt. Zion and Richwood interchanges, Weaver Road, Hopeful Church intersection and the completion of the Mt. Zion road project.

He also noted that BWPC representatives would be meeting the Boone County School District to look at future building needs and new school planning. Two projects they will be looking at are a new elementary school in the Steeplechase area, and the completion of the new Ignite High School and further development of that property.

Business Owner Mixer: Ms. Hinkle and Members Cole and Collette reported on the Union Business Owners mixer at Union 42 Bourbon and Brew will be held on May 20. The event was well attended with more than 25 businesses in the area represented. The three members who attended felt the gathering was very beneficial, allowing the EDC to gain valuable insight as to the challenges facing our local businesses and their growth and development. A second mixer is set for August 12 at Union 42 Bourbon and Brew, and a fall mixer to have a representative from the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development would like to attend that event and provide information on new programs available from the cabinet for small business owners.

Wednesday, July 17 at 6 p.m. was set for the next meeting date at the Union City Building. The public is invited to attend.

The Meeting was formally adjourned at 7:40 pm by Director Hinkle.