

CITY OF UNION
Economic Development Committee
August 21, 2019

Members in attendance:

Jeremy Ramage, Chair

Jeff Bowman

Denny Mathis

Steve Harper

John Cole

Larry Solomon, Mayor

Melissa Hinkle, Communications and Operations Director

Bob Jonas, Boone County Planning Commission

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Jeremy Ramage

Old Business: Administrator Plummer gave a brief update on the new openings at the Kroger Outlots, including Pet People, Dominoes Pizza and announced that Buffalo Wings and Rings site plan has been approved by the Boone County Planning Commission. This restaurant will be located to the North of the Marketplace, adjacent to the Boone County Library. Administrator Plummer informed the group that the city had negotiated with the Library to construct a sidewalk which will link their property to the new development at Kroger, and that this project will link to the sidewalk construction planned by BWRT in the spring.

Transportation Update: Commissioner Ramage noted that traffic is on the new pavement on the East side of 42, from Gunpowder to just west of the Littlest Angels Day Care at the Harmony Roundabout. Administrator Plummer noted that the KYTC Cabinet has said they hope to have traffic shifted to the new road by the end of the year, but we are looking at a 2020 completion date for the roadwork, and that all work may be finalized as late as October or November of next year.

Administrator Plummer updated the group on planned work to the East portion of Mt. Zion, to the East of I71/75 by Duke Energy. Duke will be installing new infrastructure, including the capacity for increased demand, with new cables and transformers in the area. This work will cause some traffic delays, but there are no service interruptions planned to customers in the area, as alternative service will be installed before the work is completed, so customers will notice no change in service.

The Jughandle intersection at Hopeful Church and US42 has opened, and Director Hinkle reported that despite initial concerns, most citizens are reporting very favorable opinions of the construction on social media. The installation appears to have

improved traffic flow significantly, and many members who have driven in the intersection in peak hours have reported the traffic flow is quick and has improved commutes significantly.

Boone County Planning Update: Mr. Jonas noted that the Common property has been improved for Initial suburban development. This property is outside of the city. Administrator Plummer also reported that Dr. Wright is in very preliminary talks for a potential bank property on his parcel at US42 and Frogtown, but cautioned that the talks are very preliminary. Mayor Solomon also noted the construction of the new Starbucks on US42, just outside of the Union City Limits, is nearly complete. A friend of the mayor will be serving as manager of this new location. Mr. Jonas also noted that the Boone County Parks Plan is under review and a consultant has been contracted to assist with this planning. Mayor Solomon requested that this planning include discussions with Union City representatives to discuss the future of the Union Park development. With the success of the summer food truck series, Solomon feels strongly that further investment in Union Park is warranted and needed by the county.

Business Owner Mixer: Ms. Hinkle reported that the attendance at the second business mixer was extremely poor, and she sent a survey to those people registered to see why they did not attend, and if they would be interested in other days or times for a mixer, particularly a breakfast mixer. Reaction to these suggestions remained mixed, and city staff will continue to evaluate to see if further action is needed. Staff would still like 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.

Gresham Smith Phase 2 Report: Commissioner Ramage noted that the GSP report is being reviewed and he and city staff, along with other members of the committee, have made several suggestions and changes. Those are being incorporated into the report by GSP staff and they hope to present the Phase 2 final report at the next meeting.

Mayor Solomon requested that an evaluation of the Church Property to the north of Union Fire Protection District be conducted as a separate line item to this report. Administrator Plummer will send this feedback to GSP for their review.

Wednesday, September 18 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 6:47 pm by Commissioner Ramage.