

TOWN OF GRIFFITH
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JULY 1ST, 2015

Commission President Rich Leber called the July 1st, 2015 meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. at Griffith Franklin Center, 201 N. Broad Street, Griffith, Indiana.

ROLL CALL

Robert Kurtz, present
Rich Leber, present
Rich Miller, present
Susan Schaub, absent
Don Wiltfong, present

ALSO ATTENDING

Dave Austgen, Austgen Kuiper & Jasaitis
George Jerome, Clerk Treasurer
Gus Parianos, Economic Development Commission
Gerry Potacki, Griffith School Board
Rick Ryfa, Town Council
Mike Shaver, Wabash Scientific
Rex Sherrard, Austgen, Kuiper & Jasaitis

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commission Member Rich Miller motioned to approve the claims from the June 3rd, 2015 meeting, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Commission member Don Wiltfong motioned to approve one claim payable to Austgen, Kuiper & Jasaitis in the amount of \$3,904.50, seconded by Robert Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Commission member Robert Kurtz motioned to approve one claim payable to Green & Kuchel in the amount of \$376.90. There was no second for the motion. After further discussion, Mr. Kurtz withdrew his motion and no action was taken.

RESOLUTIONS

Attorney Dave Austgen presented Resolution 2015-18, which reads A Resolution of the Griffith Redevelopment Commission Concerning the 2016 Budget Year Determination for TIF Revenues for the Downtown Griffith Redevelopment District, and All Matters Related Thereto. Commission member Don

Wiltfong made a motion to approve Resolution 2015-18, seconded by Robert Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Attorney Dave Austgen presented Resolution 2015-19, which reads A Resolution of the Griffith Redevelopment Commission Concerning the 2016 Budget Year Determination for TIF Revenues for the Griffith Mall Redevelopment Area and its Expansion Areas #1 and #2, Also Known As, And Inclusive of, the Griffith Golf Course Redevelopment Area, and all Matters Related Thereto. Commission member Rich Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 2015-19, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

Attorney Dave Austgen submitted letter notices to all taxing units and requests return receipts. Mr. Jerome assured Mr. Austgen that he will make certain of delivery.

OLD BUSINESS

Rich Leber informed the Commission that Mr. Ryfa had signed a 5 year digital plan agreement for the new sign being installed at Ridge Road and Broad Street. Mr. Leber said the sign will be installed at the end of July or beginning of August. Mr. Leber asked that a meeting be held to determine who will be responsible for the signage. Mr. Ryfa asked that it be turned over to the Town Council and it will be possibly assigned to someone on staff. Mr. Leber will keep open communication regarding the installation.

At this time there is no update on the Pactiv building. Mr. Leber would like to welcome the new tenants and inform them of deficiencies that need to be taken care of.

Mr. Leber questioned Mr. Jerome if there had been any inquiries on the corner of Broad Street and Lake Street. Mr. Jerome responded that as of today, there have been no inquiries.

Mr. Leber asked Mr. Miller about the status of the Fagen Miller façade program. Mr. Miller stated that there had been \$17,000.00 in improvement by Stash Construction, however, there were no proposals from Stash Construction in their file. The landscaping is to be completed soon. Mr. Miller asked to revisit this topic next month.

Mr. Leber reported that the mural on the Gunsmith is near completion. Larry Fisher, the landlord for the Gunsmith is not interested in signing the covenant, therefore, Mr. Austgen suggested stopping the work immediately. Because they are so closed to completing the work, Mr. Ryfa would like them to finish the project. G&G Hobbies will be having their building tuck pointed before the mural is painted on their building.

Brent Torrenga is waiting for the presidents of the softball and soccer leagues to submit the land lease agreements. Once he receives them, he will have them filed.

Rich Leber has yet to meet with the Lake County Economic Alliance. Rich Ryfa stated that the LCEA will help with the development of our economic development marketing material. The town has not yet made payment to the LCEA. Mike Shaver suggested contacting the Economic Development Corporation, which

helps with marketing in northwest Indiana for free. Mr. Shaver feels it would be worth meeting with the Economic Development Corporation to see if it would benefit the town. Attorney Austgen said it would be worth exploring at no cost.

Rex Sherrard informed the commission that the Title Commitment for Andy's Body Shop is complete. There are two owners, Russell and Joyce Anderson. There is one outstanding judgement and the taxes are up to date. The appraisers are trying to get access inside, however, they will do what they can from the outside. The appraisals should be available next month. Rick Ryfa questioned the environmental issues. Mr. Sherrard explained that any environmental issues would dramatically impact the appraisals. Mr. Ryfa will contact Dan Lehnerer from Oberphalz Brewery to see if he has copies of the studies.

Rex Sherrard reported that the mapping is complete and the parcel identification is near completion. The final version should be available by the August meeting.

Mr. Shaver questioned if Pactiv is still in the Economic Development Area and stated according to the county it is. Mr. Shaver is concerned because the property was appraised at 1.6 million, but sold for \$500,000.00.

Mr. Shaver also questioned why the Griffith Golf Course was designated as a Redevelopment Area. He explained that in a Redevelopment Area, the Redevelopment Commission has the ability to acquire property by eminent domain. George Jerome explained at the time of the Golf Course was designated as a Redevelopment Area, the town did not have the intention of purchasing the property.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Shaver distributed material for the Economic Development Plan for the TIF Area. It's a basic outline showing marketing demographics. Mr. Shaver explained that Illinois has the second highest tax burden in terms of taxes and labor costs in the country. Northwest Indiana is competing with Chicago. Mr. Shaver will be pulling comparable sites in terms of size and assessed value in order to give us a sense of what other markets are getting. This will help give the Redevelopment Commission have a clearer understanding of what exactly what happens in other parts of the state.

Attorney Austgen asked the Redevelopment Commission if any thought has been given to courting a developer. Rick Ryfa has been approached by several developers regarding a public partnership. Mr. Shaver would like for the Redevelopment Commission to come to Indianapolis and meet with several different developers, many of which mix retail, office and hotel. This would allow the town to get ideas from different developers as to what they would do at the Griffith Golf Course property. Mr. Jerome expressed his interested in going nationwide, which would work to the town's benefit. Mr. Ryfa is concerned because of our market demographic analysis, which is the reason Griffith is not able to get the big box stores. Mr. Ryfa's goal is for the Economic Development Commission to have content to develop marketing material by the next meeting. Attorney Austgen explained that the end development may not be what the commission envisions.

Rex Sherrard asked if the town has a Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ryfa said that he hopes to have a Comprehensive Plan completed by the end of next year.

Rich Leber announced that the August 5th meeting will be Tricia Kistler's last meeting as recording secretary for the Redevelopment Commission.

FOLLOW UP

Rick Ryfa will contact Dan Lehnerer regarding the environmental studies for Andy's Body Shop.

Rick Ryfa asked that the Economic Development Commission to have content for marketing material for the August meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Rich Leber, President

Don Wiltfong, Secretary

Tricia Kistler, Recording Secretary