

TOWN OF GRIFFITH  
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

Commission President Rich Leber called the May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting to order 6:30 p.m. at Griffith Franklin Center, 201 N. Broad St., Griffith, Indiana.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**ALSO ATTENDING**

Dave Austgen, Austgen Kuiper & Jasaitis  
Jeff Bridges, Economic Development Commission  
Larry Gradak, G & G Hobbies  
George Jerome, Clerk Treasurer  
Lee Olsen, Resident  
Gus Parianos, Economic Development Commission  
Rick Ryfa, Town Council  
Rex Sherrard, Austgen Kuiper & Jasaitis  
Tom Wichlinski, Economic Development Commission

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commission Member Don Wiltfong motioned to approve the claims from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, seconded by Susan Schaub. All in favor, motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

Commission Member Don Wiltfong motioned to approve the following claims; Christopher Burke Engineering in the amount of \$68.50, Barnes & Thornburg in the amount of \$928.00, Austgen, Kuiper & Jasaitis in the amount of \$3,165.50 and Wabash Scientific in the amount of \$13,110.00. Bob Kurtz seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Rich Leber reported the following:

Wildrose Brewery received their final payment of \$15,000.00.

New Supplies of 211 W. Main Street submitted all necessary paperwork for their reimbursement in the amount of \$2,938.20. Because of a discrepancy in the amount approved for New Supplies and the total amount of receipts, George Jerome suggested in the future to reimburse based on actual costs and not lock into a specific amount. Susan Schaub motioned to approve reimbursement in the amount of \$2,938.20, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

Fagen Miller is the last outstanding businesses approved for the Commercial Revitalization Project and is currently working on their project.

Susan Schaub has no update on Moses Eye Care

Mr. Leber is currently waiting for the electronic information for the sign at Broad & Ridge.

The Golf Course tree cutting has been complete and paid in full.

George Jerome has no update on the Welcome Wagon.

Rich Leber informed the Commission members that the bids for the property located at Broad and Lake were due today, however, there were no submissions. Mr. Wiltfong asked Mr. Austgen what the process would be if a prospective buyer contacted the Commission. Mr. Austgen explained that the Commission could accept sealed bids, put it up for auction or list it with a realtor. Mr. Austgen suggested placing a sign on the property to notify the public that it is available. George Jerome stated he would recommend a commercial realtor and possibly include the vacant property on south Broad Street. Mr. Jerome suggested that the Redevelopment Commission confer with the Town Council. In the meantime, Susan Schaub offered to investigate signage for the property.

Susan Schaub reported that E-Lion has begun prep work at the Gunsmith on south Broad Street. There was additional grinding and tuck pointing the needed to be completed and Rich Leber offered his services. Attorney Dave Austgen provided a draft mural contract and a restrictive covenant with property owners for parties involved with the murals. Don Wiltfong motioned to approve the draft contracts submitted by Mr. Austgen, seconded by Bob Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried. Mrs. Schaub will meet with the property owners and the contractor to sign the agreements.

Larry Gradak of G & G Hobbies approached the Commission regarding additional tuck pointing needed on his building as well as an additional mural for the south wall. Mr. Leber explained that at this time the Commercial Revitalization Program is not available to help defray the additional costs. Mr. Wiltfong stated that the back side of buildings do not qualify for the Commercial Revitalization Program. Mr. Gradak also asked for permission to have G & G Hobbies painted in block letters at the top of the mural. Mr. Austgen suggested parameters be set before allowing Mr. Gradak to paint his business logo on the mural.

Rich Leber questioned Mr. Jerome on the status of the Lake County Economic Alliance. Mr. Jerome said there has been no additional discussion regarding the alliance. Rich Leber will contact them in order to formalize a commitment from the town. Mr. Austgen asked Mr. Leber to make them aware that the town has specific needs in the marketing of the golf course.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Austgen submitted quotes for appraisals on Andy's Body Shop. George Jerome said that the Town Council will take the lead on condemnation. Don Wiltfong motioned allow Attorney Austgen to proceed with the appraisals, seconded by Bob Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Rex Sherrard distributed a memo regarding document inventory for the TIF and Economic Development Areas. There are approximately fifteen documents that are still missing. These documents track the initial establishment and the expansions of TIF districts. Mr. Austgen mentioned the importance of obtaining the files from Carol Green-Fraley and recommends that either George Jerome or Rich Leber send a letter to Carol Green-Fraley asking for all documents to be returned to the Clerk Treasurer's office. George Jerome stated that he believes some of these files are available at the Griffith Town Hall, however, he is resisting because work that is the responsibility of others is consistently being delegating up to him and his deputy clerk. Mr. Jerome does not have time in his day to do work of a file clerk. Susan Schaub offered to help Mr. Jerome research documentation. Mr. Austgen will draft a letter for Mr. Leber to send to Carol Green-Fraley. Susan Schaub is concerned the work that Mike Shaver is being duplicated by Mr. Austgen. Mr. Jerome said that Mike Shaver was hired to review and revise the ordinances for the downtown area.

Rex Sherrard presented the proposed comprehensive plan for the TIF Districts. This plan is to complete connectivity of the areas and properly correct the expansion. He also included some vacant areas that would make sense to include. Susan Schaub questioned the addition of the 45<sup>th</sup> corridor. Mr. Sherrard will add 45<sup>th</sup> to the map. As for the industrial areas, for example the location where Enbridge built their new storage tank, there are surrounding properties available for additional storage tanks, which have been included. There is still research needed to determine if any TIF monies could be captured from their transmission overhaul project. The commission also suggested adding Colfax south of Main Street to the plan. Mr. Austgen stated that some of the records have a misuse of phrases, such as, an economic development plan, which is needed for justification, is referenced as a redevelopment plan. Economic Revitalization Areas are not applicable to TIF areas, but are applicable to tax abatement and doesn't yield a penny of increment. Mr. Austgen asked who the commission will be using as financial advisor for this project. George Jerome said that the Town Council will weigh in on this decision and will probably use Umbaugh & Associates.

Rich Leber said on April 6<sup>th</sup>, he received information on an optional Cities & Town TIF map review initiative. Mr. Austgen explained that this is a joint project with a few state agencies. These agencies are offering to host the mapping. The parcel list must be submitted to them and they will get the GIS mapping from the Lake County Surveyor. Every year the Redevelopment Commission will be able to view the updates. Mr. Austgen suggested waiting until the parcel list is organized and the commission is better prepared.

Rich Leber reported that Bridges Scoreboard is interested in having a sports themed mural painted on both the north and south sides of their building. Jeff Bridges said the south side of his building is clearly visible from Main Street. Susan Schaub would like to have further discussion regarding this matter. Don Wiltfong suggested that a policy needs to be in place stating guidelines and parameters before any future murals are approved. Dave Austgen recommended using our Commercial Revitalization Program as an outline when developing a policy for the mural program.

#### **FOLLOW UP**

Susan Schaub will research in getting a sign for the property located at Broad Street & Lake Street.

Susan Schaub will meet with E-Lion and the property owners of the Gunsmith and G&G Hobbies to have all the contracts signed.

Rich Leber will contact the Lake County Economic Alliance regarding membership.

Susan Schaub will contact George Jerome regarding document research.

Dave Austgen will forward a letter to Rich Leber requesting the delivery of all documentation from Carol Green-Fraley.

Rex Sherrard will update the proposed plan to include the 45<sup>th</sup> corridor and Colfax Avenue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Rich Leber, President

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Don Wiltfong, Secretary

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Tricia Kistler, Recording Secretary

