

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
City of Germantown
November 17, 2022
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Gehr, Heidi Grant, Mark Heistand, and Tom Winning

ALSO PRESENT: Judy Gilleland, City Manager; Will Parsons, Communications Coordinator; Pat Higgins, Economic Development and City Grant Writer; Keith Brane, Planning Consultant

The Meeting was Called to Order by Tom W at 9:00 am

Approval of the Minutes

Mark H motioned to approve the previous meetings minutes. The motion was passed.

Review of DORA

Will P gave an update on the current state of the proposed DORA. He informed the Committee of Council's opinions stated at the October Meeting. Their preferences were for the larger area within the downtown while being cognizant of more heavily residential areas. They also preferred to have the hours be uniform. The Council did not express strong feelings on whether cups or labels be used as long as they are also uniform. The Council also did not express a real opinion on the method of communicating with the downtown residents and business owners.

Will P then notified the Committee that he had been in contact with the DORA Creation Committee to get their approval on the letter which will be sent to the downtown residents and businesses. The addresses will be compiled in the coming days and then the letters will be sent out.

Holiday Lighting

Judy G gave an update on the holiday lighting in Downtown Germantown. The Covered Bridge has been decorated thanks to the Dupps Company. Veterans Park will be finished being decorated within the next few days, all with blue lights. The money for this project has come out of the ARPA funds rather than the Parks fund. The Service Department is finishing putting up the banners and lights on Market and Main Streets. City Hall will also have its lights installed today.

Will P will be getting the word out to the local communities about all of the events happening in the downtown this holiday season.

Heidi G brought up the Christmas events held in Waynesville and Springboro and would like to see a similar, concerted effort in Germantown. Judy G agreed this would be good, but stated that who would head this initiative would need to be worked out.

Mark H informed the group that the Historical Society would be having driving light tours during December. The Society will also be sponsoring the Festival of Choirs in Veterans Park after Christmas.

New Businesses

Pat H gave an update on new businesses in the downtown. Dominique, owner of the New View Nutrition shop on Plum St said that the shop is “good to go”. Pat also said word has been getting out about the shop.

Pat also said she had visited the Holiday Shop on Center St. KJ’s Restaurant also has a new owner, the Stiver family. Heidi G informed the Committee that the Chamber of Commerce has been gaining new members, including owners of the new businesses.

Downtown Tours – Historical Society Partnership

Mark H informed the Committee that there will be 1 more downtown tour, probably held on the same day as Christmas in the Park. It will be a horse-drawn wagon tour. Because of this, the price will go up and those interested will have to reserve a spot in advance. The Society is thinking of doing a similar tour later in December for the Christmas light tour.

Unfortunately the haunted tour for October was cancelled, but Mark expressed that it is a learning process and thus far everything has been a positive experience.

Will P will be joining the Historical Society on Monday at their meeting to train them on JotForm, which the Society may use for online registration and payments for tours.

Community Reinvestment Area Update

Judy G informed those present that the progress on the CRA had been going well. Valley View Schools had recently been informed of the City’s intention of CRA creation. Judy does not see any issues in the future. The necessary items are currently being compiled to be sent off to the State. The CRA should be ready to go early 2023.

Judy informed the Committee that the City will send notices to property owners encouraging them to apply. To do so, individuals will need to fill out a form that will list the details on the improvements/additions being made to the property. After this, a committee will approve or deny the application. Judy assured everyone that it is a fairly easy process, but it still needs to be ironed out.

Germantown RFP for the Downtown Redevelopment Plan

Pat H informed the Committee that Requests for Proposal went out to 13 consultants the week prior. The RFP was also submitted to the American Planning Association Website. A group from Colorado has already responded. A deadline to respond has been set as January 19, 2023. Pat will be sending out the final draft of the RFP for all of the Committee members to look over.

Market Street and Five Points Pedestrian Signs

Pat H informed the Committee that the City had received a grant for solar powered, pedestrian signage. Chip Wirrig has been working with Kleem Inc. to purchase the signs as well as with the City’s traffic engineer on finalizing where they will be installed.

The current plan is to install them on the East side of the Market St and Main St intersection. The intersection at Five Points is currently being examined to see if this will be a viable spot for similar signage.

Meeting with Downtown Business/Property Owners Regarding Programs/Projects

Pat H informed the Committee of her intention to schedule a meeting in the near future to inform the downtown business and property owners of the City's plans regarding the DORA, CRA, and RFP. The last time such a meeting has been held was pre-covid. She believes it is important that the information be provided directly from the City and that this should help us garner the community's support.

Heidi G asked if there was a flier or information sheet currently made detailing the CRA. After being told there was not, she stated that once one is completed, it can be made available at the First National Bank of Germantown.

Upon further discussion, Judy G stated that the meeting should probably be held in February after the City has the certifications on the CRA and has information ready to distribute. This will also give time for the responses to come in for the RFP and for the City to process these.

Other Business

Will P is working on setting up a time for a short interview with the new business owners in the downtown area which will go in the Newsletter and on the City's Facebook page.

Heidi informed the group that she had heard there may be a new business opening on Cherry St, though this was not something the whole group had heard. It is currently uncertain whether this is the case.

Pat notified the Committee that the Florentine restaurant had recently won some awards from "Best of Dayton 2022".

Tom W called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was approved at 9:46 am