

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
City of Germantown
September 21, 2023
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Heidi Grant, Tom Winning, Mark Heistand, Mike Kuhn

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

The meeting was called to order by Tom W at 9:08 am

Approval of the minutes

Tom W made a motion to approve the August 2023 meeting minutes; this was approved unanimously.

Review of draft press release from Urban Fast Forward/CUDA/Small Nation

The ED committee discussed some minor tweaks they would like to see made before the release is sent out. The plan will be to hold off on sending the release for a little while. First, more work and meetings will be held with downtown businesses and stakeholders.

Trip to visit Bellefontaine

It would cost \$5000 for a day of meeting with businesses and stakeholders. Judy G explained briefly what the ED Committee would do while there. The committee was undecided as to whether this was something that funds should be put toward at this time.

Rollout of Downtown Plan

City Council will most likely accept the plan via resolution at an upcoming meeting. Before this, there will be a soft rollout with downtown stakeholders. The document will be emailed out and then a meeting will be scheduled. Mike K has agreed to speak at this event. The new Downtown Coordinator will be introduced at this meeting.

The consulting team will be contacted to see if some of their existing slides can be used. The ED Committee will also create their own elevator pitch for the plan. Judy G shared that she felt it was important to have this meeting with the business owners prior to being accepted by Council so that it is known that the plan is approved of by the business community.

Mike K shared that he found it important to share some of the initiatives that have already begun, which is why the Downtown Coordinator will be present. Pat H added that the committee should also lean on the MVRPC to help with the rollout. This meeting will be planned within the next month.

Pat H and Will P will work to make sure that all relevant stakeholders will have a copy of the plan prior to the meeting, especially those who took the time to meet with the consultants.

Discussion of Implementation Matrix and Priorities

Pat H will be driving this. There still needs to be a mechanism created to accept donated funds.

The “shameless promoter” role outlined in the plan will be filled by the new Downtown Coordinator. The consultants will also still play roles during the implementation, though it has yet to be decided what their duties will precisely entail. The “Sherpa” role will be some sort of combination of Jeff, Kathleen, Aaron, and Keith (with some input from Mary, the downtown coordinator/manager as well).

Matching funds for consulting and downtown projects

Whatever funds can be gleaned from the city budget will be put out to the community for match funds. It will be imperative not to spend all available funds too quickly. These would largely be used to pay consulting fees (especially at the beginning). The City will need to decide soon what sort of mechanism it will make use of to collect funds (e.g. CIC) as it could take upwards of 6 months to get it created. The goals and objectives of this mechanism need to be set up as well. One aspect that will be included is that those who contribute their private funds should get to have a place on the board.

Mural committee

Mike K recently met with the Alleyway Cafe crew. There was some slight miscommunication in terms of the process of getting the mural there going. This has been addressed and will continue to be refined in the future.

A board will need to be officially created. A permit has been drafted by Judy G. Will will talk with Heidi about getting this on the website. Heidi G shared she had currently recruited 3 individuals to be on the board.

Mike K has found a special type of paint that is made for brick, so as to not damage it, called “Elasto-Dynamic”

Streeterly Update

The City will offer \$1000 reimbursable grants for businesses to purchase tables, chairs, and other supplies directly linked to setting up a streeterly. Aside from Alleyway Cafe, other downtown businesses will be contacted to gauge interest.

Self.e Alley

Will P shared a memo on Self.e Alley, a public art initiative done in Evansville, Indiana which was shared as a case study in the Downtown Redevelopment Plan. This initiative seems to create a lot of positive buzz for Evansville and would be fairly easily to emulate in Germantown.

CIC Update

Pat and Lynette looked at other CICs that are currently doing what we would want ours to do. Pat has also been communicating with nearby cities and received lots of good information. Many are currently small and dormant as they were too reliant on city funds.

The group discussed opening a fund at the bank as a 501c3 rather than a traditional CIC. It was decided that the legal framework would need to be determined and then what exactly the projects and objectives towards which the money would be put would be. It was also decided that brainstorming should be done on potential board members. Pat H will reconvene with Lynette on framework and will bring a recommendation to the next meeting.

Downtown Manager

The City recently interviewed a woman for the position of downtown manager. She was extremely qualified and excited; staff is eager to get her on board. This will be a part-time role.

Christmas Lights

Will P shared videos of past lights done by Brian Kienlen, the contractor doing the synchronized lights at Veterans Memorial Park. Mark shared that there will be carriage rides offered again this year in December.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 am