

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
City of Germantown
March 21, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Heidi Grant, Tom Winning, Mark Heistand, Ken Tudor, Lauren Dillon, Bryce Henson, Mike Kuhn

Also Present: Will Parsons, Community Relations Manager; Pat Higgins, Economic Development and City Grant Writer; Keith Brane, Planning Consultant; Judy Gilleland, City Manager; Mary Crockett, Downtown Manager

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am

Approval of minutes

Mark H shared to instances where the previous month's meeting minutes needed altered:

- The traffic study focuses on Market and Main, not Market and Cherry
- SR 725 was mistyped as 729

The committee voted to approve the minutes, pending these alterations.

Update on Downtown Activities

Mary C went through the monthly update page with the committee, which is attached to the end of these minutes.

- Mary is continuing to meet with businesses and local organizations, this past month she met with 8.
- Will P is helping with the rollout an increased usage of the new downtown Facebook page. Using this page, residents will be encouraged to vote for the Florentine to receive a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Pat is looking into the best options for establishing a revolving loan fund with the Dept. of Agriculture Rural Development. This would be a low-interest program.
- Jeff Raser had an architectural consulting session with the Florentine.
- Mary is completing a welcome packet for new businesses. This would serve to assist both those interested in opening up a store in Germantown as well as those who have already begun the process. Will is also working on a similar packet for residents. These packets will be available on the city website as well as in physical form.
- Mary met with a potential new business owner that was interested in a location on Center St.
- Pat and Mary met with Heidi about the street market and murals. They are going to meet with the OSU extension branch of Montgomery County to get recommendations for the street market. The Downtown Dayton partnership will help provide recommendations on mural grants. Heidi is finishing up the form needed for closing down the street for the market. The market will begin the first weekend in June and run through mid-October.
- Food truck Fridays are coming back in June.

- City Council voted to expand the existing CRA. Will is working on finalizing this process. Waiting on documentation from the newspaper that needs to be sent to the state.
- Will is speaking to the Chamber of Commerce next month to discuss the DORA and its potential benefits for local businesses. He also met with Lisa Kasperski of the Historical Society about their making use of the DORA for their Founder's Day event.
- Continuing to share out local awards and recognition online; City Beautiful Commission should have some beautification awards in the coming months that will be advertised on Facebook.
- Pat has been working on a culture works grant for murals/public art as well as the Montgomery County Solid Waste District beautification grant for flower pots and plants.
- Will shared that the City will be hosting 3 movie nights in Veterans Park this summer on 1 Wednesday a month during June, July, and August. He also shared that sponsorships for the event are still being sought. Mark H suggested that there may be an opportunity for a beer garden, run by the Lions or Historical Society.
- Mike K met with Hedy Riegle about the market in the old hardware store. There are currently 5 merchants interested in joining. Mike briefly explained the concept of this market, which would be similar to the 2nd Street Market. Mark mentioned that there could be an opportunity to work with 5 Rivers MetroParks on this initiative.
- Will shared that there have been changes made to the outdoor dining/streeterly form based on recommendations from the city's lawyer and insurance company. It was suggested that the form should be altered so that non-restaurants can still apply.
- Mike shared that work is being done to flatten out the bricks on the courtyard off Center St.
- Mary spoke with a representative from "Edible Ohio Valley" who shared that their publication is interested in expanding their presence in Germantown, which could help with the advertising of our local eateries.

Update on Comprehensive Downtown Traffic Study

City Council has approved the comprehensive traffic study. The timeline for completion will most likely be a few months. The resurfacing by ODOT is scheduled for 2027, so we needed to get this in early as ODOT usually has a 2 year lead time.

Mike has met with Chip to start planning on potential changes and safety measures. Judy suggested a first step could be putting some of the downtown flowerpots out as bump outs.

A road diet would need to be completed before the project in 2027.

Update on Window Screens for Vacant Market St Properties

2 of the building owners that Mary has spoken with have agreed to allow the city to put up the window screens. The designs for these screens are currently being completed and should be finished soon.

Miscellaneous

Bryce shared about the Knoxville Entrepreneur Center, which could be a paradigm emulated in Germantown. They have lots of information on their website. Similar organizations nearby could be helpful, such as the SBC in Dayton.

The group discussed restaurants and venues that would be exciting to see emulated in Germantown. The group then discussed the Pretzel Festival and ways that events and happenings in the downtown could be tied-in to this big event.

The upcoming Fire Dept. levy and its implications was briefly discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 am

