

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
City of Germantown
April 18, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Heidi Grant, Tom Winning, Mark Heistand, 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; Kelli Novak, Clerk of Courts; Mike Roseberry, Property Maintenance Officer

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am

Approval of minutes

The March 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

Progress report for March/April – Update from Mary C

- Mary has visited 3 new businesses this past month as well as held follow-up visits with several others.
- A final flyer was made for the Historical Society Open House in May.
- Mention was briefly made of the list of downtown businesses that was completed in recent years, as well as the maps the Kathleen Norris helped to create.
- The Ohio Arts Council grant has been submitted. Sarah Shirk has been added to the mural committee, she is a local artist.
- There was a slight complication with getting the window wraps put up on Market Street, but it is still a work in progress. The artwork is ready.
 - Bryce shared that he has a connection to a very good local carpenter/handyman that may be helpful with this situation.
- Mary went to the Heritage Ohio Council revitalization event. Reagan Lemke, owner of Sweet Rivers, attended with her. There was a panel with all-women business owners that Mary found impactful. They also heard from a person with the State of Ohio who shared that the state has made additions to the ways and means it has of supporting small businesses. One other item discussed at this event was vacant property ordinances.

Property Maintenance Update

Pat H introduced Mike Roseberry to the group. Roseberry's role is to help keep people in the process of getting their properties repaired/up to code.

Roseberry touched briefly on a current issue with a property in town. He also made mention of another, similar situation, and how it was resolved.

Roseberry then explained his role in relation to NIC and that he works with them, not separately. He also explained that the main problem for most people who have repeatedly allowed their property to be out of compliance is apathy.

Bryce put forth the idea that VVHS students could partner with the City of Germantown to volunteer and clean up properties that need it. Judy chimed in with her thoughts on this notion, which in her experience would come with a lot of complications, such as, but not limited to, insurance.

Judy further stressed that property maintenance cases are looked at on an individual basis, especially in regard to who is able to cover costs.

Possible Grant Opportunities

It was explained that the City has been fortunate to receive CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds in the past from Montgomery County, funds that have been used for projects such as the walk/bike path at Kercher Park. Pat H then shared the list of potential project types that CDBG funds can go towards. The definition of "micro-enterprises", as listed on this sheet, was briefly explained.

The USDA has money available for farmer's market promotion, which could be used to hire a part-time manager for the Germantown farmers market.

As previously mentioned, the Ohio Arts Council grant was submitted, and the Culture Works grant is in progress. These latter funds would go towards murals in Downtown Germantown. The possibility of funding for audible crosswalk signals is also being explored. This last topic led the group to briefly discussing the transitioning of the local schools to their new locations next year.

Small Business Assistance for Current Storefronts

The Montgomery County Business Assistance Center was recently contacted, they will have a representative come to visit Germantown in the near future. This representative will look to speak with local businesses.

Rural development funds have not been applied for as of yet, but will be once the CIC is structured. Citywide was also met with as they are offering SBA loans throughout Montgomery County. However, they are not currently ready to add Germantown to their load.

On the topic of the CIC, 2 different law firms are being considered to aid in its creation. Judy would like a few representatives from the EDC to sit in on the interviews.

Other Business

Discussion moved to the current work on the property at 53 W Market and the process by which it was sold.

Mark inquired as to whether the City had applied for grant funds with the Ohio senate, and Judy confirmed that the City had, and that these funds would be used to assist with the Covered Bridge project.

Meeting adjourned at 10:36 am