

CITY OF UNION
Economic Development Committee
April 15, 2020 (via Zoom Videoconferencing)

Members in attendance:

Jeremy Ramage, Commissioner

Jeff Bowman

John Cole

James Collett

Steve Harper, BCPC Union Representative

David Plummer, City Administrator

Melissa Hinkle, Communications and Operations Director

Bob Jonas, Boone County Planning Commission

Donald Warner, Calfee, Halter & Griswold, LLP

Mayor Larry Solomon

Meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Commissioner Jeremy Ramage.

Transportation Update: Administrator Plummer reported that the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is moving forward with construction on Mt. Zion Road, despite the pandemic. The lack of traffic volume, particularly at peak times has allowed for more progress. Director Hinkle shared an update from BC Commissioner Jesse Brewer that indicates the road may be completed in July, with paving work set for June.

Boone County Planning Update: Mr. Jonas updated on the Urban Forestry Commission Request for Proposals (RFP) regarding the beautification of the Mt. Zion corridor. They met last week on a virtual meeting with NKSK and county, city, and urban forestry committee members, along with a representative from the Public Works Committee (Barry Burke). They are looking to meet next week with a representative from KYTC, and Administrator Plummer is arranging for Anthony Griggs to get in touch with Jonas to arrange this meeting. NKSK would like to review the final plans, grading plans and other information from KYTC before moving forward with initial design drawings. Mr. Jonas asked Administrator Plummer to share the NKSK Powerpoint with the group, as it had some valuable information on their plan and scope. He wanted the EDC to know that work is moving forward, despite the pandemic restrictions.

Confirm Goals and Objectives: Commissioner Ramage reviewed the goal and objectives for the EDC for 2020-2021 proposed at the last meeting. There was no objection to any of the items, and the group accepted them as guidance for the upcoming year.

New Business: Administrator Plummer introduced Mr. Donald Warner, an expert on economic development and development economic incentives with the firm of

Calfee, Halter and Griswold, LLP. Mr. Warner has extensive experience and has an expertise in local government, having spent several years with the City of Covington. He most recently has advised the City of Florence on their Main Street Development plan.

Mr. Warner reviewed the Union Town Plan and commended the plan on the application of a Mixed Use guideline to encourage the necessary density for business and retail development, and that a number of incentives are available to Union to encourage development. Both TIF and IRB's are available to the city, and he recommended showing collaboration with the other area Taxing Authorities, including the Schools, Special Districts and County. He strongly recommends having PILOT agreements in place before moving forward with any incentives, and show a clear vision for the project through drawings and detailed recommendations. He also recommended being able to show the gaps on the project from the development side where incentives can help close these gaps to allow construction to move forward. He also feels that the current public health crisis (pandemic) will be a different economic situation than the banking crisis of 2008, as money is still available for projects and that interest rates are at an all time low. He believes these may be ideal times for projects that can show a commitment to development and a clear vision for that development to proceed forward.

Wednesday, May 20 at 6 p.m. was set for the next meeting date. This meeting will be held by Zoom Videoconferencing, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, but may be moved to a face-to-face meeting if restrictions are lifted by then. The public is invited to attend and can request a link to join the meeting.

The Meeting was formally adjourned at 6:45 pm by Commissioner Ramage.