

CITY OF UNION
Economic Development Committee
July 22, 2020 (via Zoom Videoconferencing)

Members in attendance:

Jeremy Ramage, Commissioner

James Collett

Denny Mathis

Steve Harper, BCPC Union Representative

David Plummer, City Administrator

Melissa Hinkle, Communications and Operations Director

Bob Jonas, Boone County Planning Commission

Mayor Larry Solomon

Note: This meeting was rescheduled from July 15 due to lack of quorum.

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Commissioner Jeremy Ramage.

Transportation Update: Administrator Plummer advised that the Mt. Zion project will be delayed 2-3 more months due to the relocation of a water line on the North end of the project and a landslide on the Southern end near Hathaway. Mr. Collett noted that a planned survey of his adjoining property at the Mt. Zion/US 42 intersection was being delayed as well, as the monument markers needed to be in place for the survey were delayed by the construction. These markers are key points of the Mt. Zion project (such as medians) used as waypoints for the survey.

Boone County Planning Update: Mr. Jonas updated on the Urban Forestry Commission Request for Proposals (RFP) regarding the beautification of the Mt. Zion corridor. MKSK presented their revised draft last Friday to the key stakeholders group and the deadline for comments is tonight. MKSK will take those comments and tweak the proposal to present the Final Draft to the Urban Forestry Commission on Friday. He is hopeful to have a presentation of the plan proposal at the next EDC Meeting. He also noted that the proposals will include phased pricing so all entities can take advantage of spreading project costs over several fiscal budget years.

Mr. Harper also noted that Torres Mexican Steakhouse, located just outside of the city limits in Florence had a permit for a patio awning approved by BCPC at their last meeting.

New Business: Commissioner Ramage presented a review of the adopted City of Union Vision and Values statements, as a starting point for discussion of options for benches, trash receptacles, entry signs and banners along the new Mt. Zion corridor. Each type of option was presented and reviewed by the group, with Bench 270, trash can 381, a stone banner similar in style to one from Georgia and a simple two sided banner

selected as preferred options for further research and pricing quotes. The group also discussed a potential bench and banner funding program, with the idea of both an annual and one-time, ten-year purchase option discussed. Commissioner Ramage and Administrator Plummer will follow up with other municipalities and determine more details on other similar programs and return with a proposal for a bench/banner program for the City of Union at a future meeting.

Notes from an interview with Jim Schwartz, owner of Sugarfire BBQ and Administrator Plummer/Director Hinkle were shared with the group. It was noted that high rent costs, high food costs and declining business, in conjunction with the COVID pandemic helped contribute to the closure of the business.

Administrator Plummer presented a review of his proposed Small Business Grant Program to the group. As part of the CARES Act passed by the US Congress, Union has access to approximately \$460,000 of funding which can be used to aid in pandemic recovery. Plummer has drafted a program to help provide grant funding to Union businesses to aid in their recovery and keep these funds in the City of Union. The group made minor suggestions to the program and approved it for presentation at the August Commission meeting.

Wednesday, August 19 at 6 p.m. was set for the next meeting date. The location (either virtual or face-to-face) is to be determined. The public is invited to attend.

The Meeting was formally adjourned at 7:20 pm by Commissioner Ramage.