

**MINUTES**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013 - 7:00 AM**  
**JORDAN ROOM, MATTHEWS TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Paul Jamison; Vice Chairman Tim Jones; Members Mark Harrison, Greg Klein, Roger Martin, Bev Martin, Steve Thomson, Chamber Executive Director Tina Whitley (ex-officio); Assistant Town Manager Jamie Justice; Town Clerk Lori Canapinno

**ABSENT:** Members Paul Babinski, Jerry McGuire, Crystal Provance, Commissioner John Urban (appointed member)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Jamison called the meeting to order at 7:05 am.

**INVOCATION**

Mr. Martin rendered an invocation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Vice Chairman Jones to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2013 regular meeting and August 22, 2013 special meeting. Seconded by Mr. Martin and unanimously approved.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION UPDATE**

Mr. Justice explained the subcommittee has been meeting on this and has agreed on a preliminary approach, which is to recommend a hybrid Main Street Program model. The Town would not formally apply to become a Main Street Program community but would use the program's model of a four point approach of organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring and eight guiding principles as best practices and the base of its own program's design. It would allow the organization to be truly local with decisions made specifically for the benefit of Matthews. This would not preclude the organization from seeking Main Street Program status in the future.

The intent is to start as a Town-organized steering group and work toward the creation of a separate non-profit organization in one to three years. The Town would provide financial and staff support while the group gathers momentum and develops a workable plan. One of the first objectives is to gather all interested parties and determine actionable items for the four points as listed above. This would build the structure of the organization.

The conceptual operating budget is as follows: the hybrid model would combine Town appropriations and other funding sources, with funding increasing over the first three years. The intent is to request appropriations from the Town in the amount of \$20,000 the first year and \$30,000 each for the second and third years. This could be used for operational expenses, marketing, special projects and other items to be determined by the group. Long-term

funding sources could include options such as membership fees, grants, a special tax district, advertising, sponsorships, etc. These could be in addition to or in lieu of Town funding. The feasibility of the funding sources would need to be explored along with input from all stakeholders.

The next steps are a site visit to Davidson and a meeting with interested parties – residents, downtown merchants, business owners and people outside the downtown but with a vested interest in the area – to discuss what's going on and get input. After that a recommendation will be made by EDAC and then brought to the Town Board.

There was some discussion of the expanded downtown boundary. The zoning category (HUC – Historic Urban Core) and Downtown Overlay remain the same but the general downtown boundary was expanded earlier this year to include more parcels. Ms. Martin said it is important to make people aware that downtown covers more than just the historic core – this needs to be marketed extensively. Mr. Justice agreed and added that it needs to be made clear that stakeholders don't have to be downtown business or property owners. It needs to be conveyed that this is a larger group. Ms. Whitley suggested requiring the organization's board members to be property or business owners. Mr. Justice said that is a choice the group can make. There was a discussion of formal connections with EDAC, the Chamber and other groups. The bylaws can address representation of these groups.

Chairman Jamison questioned the future of EDAC and the downtown organization since each will be working on similar goals. Mr. Justice said the downtown group's efforts will be focused specifically on downtown. EDAC's efforts can branch out into more town-wide efforts like business recruitment and retention and similar efforts.

The goal is to bring details to the Town Board for discussion at their Planning Conference in February 2014.

## **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AWARDS**

Ms. Martin discussed the example award programs. In the City of Lincolnton, NC a loose group nominates and selects recipients. It's more of a beautification award than anything else – there are some aspects of historic preservation and interior aesthetics as well. Kent, OH has a citizen-based nomination program with public voting.

There was some discussion of the viability of a similar program in Matthews. The intent would be to give public praise for good work on the part of businesses. This could be in the form of a certificate or plaque, which could be awarded at the business, at a Town Board meeting or during one of the business summits. EDAC could write criteria that allow the public to nominate businesses that have made improvements.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Martin volunteered to draft some language and bring it back for discussion at the next meeting. Input from others is welcome.

## **FAÇADE GRANT – 157 NORTH TRADE STREET**

Mr. Justice explained this application for a grant in the amount of \$2,500 was recently approved by the Board for what was then a \$7,900 project. The scope of work has changed and the project has decreased to \$5,900. The applicant would like to retain the entire \$2,500 rather than decreasing the grant by a similar percentage. He was honest about the decrease and has already agreed to work on the issues suggested by the Board regarding the sign and rope lights on the building's front façade. These were not conditions of the grant but merely suggestions.

Consensus was to continue the good will engendered by the award and not decrease it. Motion by Mr. Thomson to recommend no change and approve the grant in the amount of \$2,500. Seconded by Ms. Martin and unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**EDAC EXPIRING TERMS**

Mr. Justice noted the terms of Chairman Jamison, Mr. McGuire, Ms. Martin and Mr. Thomson will expire at the end of the year. Mr. McGuire has indicated he will not ask to be reappointed. Current Chamber President Crystal Provance will roll off and be replaced by incoming President Tim Chevront. The Town Board will approve a Board member (currently John Urban) in December.

Chairman Jamison, Ms. Martin and Mr. Thomson all requested reappointment.

**BUSINESS SUMMIT**

The summit is scheduled for October 18. NC Department of Transportation Secretary Tata will attend. The Department of Commerce Secretary was invited but is unable to attend on this date – we'll try again for the next spring summit. The intent is to have a high-level discussion of transportation issues. The Division Engineer will also attend to discuss region-specific issues. Novant Health has agreed to sponsor the summit.

By consensus it was determined that area mayors and town managers should be specifically invited. Chairman Jamison suggested sending invitations to other groups like the Kiwanis, Rotary and Transportation Advisory Committee.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Business Development:* Vice Chairman Jones noted the next Mayor's Breakfast has been postponed from fall 2013 to spring 2014 due to many other events scheduled for the fall season.

*Development Process/Planning Advisory:* Mr. Justice noted there will be a public hearing for the Unified Development Ordinance on October 14. The draft document is available on the Planning section on the Town's website. The goal is to have it approved by the current Board.

**STAFF REPORT/ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

*Four Town Alliance:* Mr. Justice said the Boards of each town need to talk about the process and decide whether or not they'd commit to the alliance. Mint Hill may elect to drop out so it may be that Matthews, Indian Trail and Stallings will work together in the future as a tri-part alliance.

*Real Estate Signs:* This was a request from the Realtor's Coffee for less regulation of real estate signs. Staff presented this information to the Town Board during UDO discussions and the Board elected to not make any

changes to the current language. The public hearing, which offers people the opportunity for comments, will take place on October 14

*Minicozzi Presentation 9/23/13:* Joe Minicozzi will present a summary of his final analysis to the Town Board. His work looks at development through a cost-benefit approach. The question is whether staff should make that analysis part of the standard rezoning process.

*Sister City Meeting:* There will be a meeting of interested parties at 7:00 pm on October 8 at the Community Center to discuss the sister city relationship with the town of Sainte-Maxime, France. The intent is to get people to create a local group to work on it and make this a real community-driven effort. The relationship between the two communities could allow for business connections to be made.

*Sportsplex:* The ribbon-cutting ceremony for Phase I of the Mecklenburg County Sportsplex at Matthews will be held at 10 am on October 30. This is a \$30 million project and the Town has put in \$2 million. The County is now working on Phase II.

There was some discussion of EDAC's role in getting Matthews businesses plugged into the sportsplex and capturing visitor business. Ms. Whitley suggested printing brochures with pertinent information. Mr. Justice explained that since this is a County project, County staff will arrange for these things. He will get more information from the County and advise EDAC members as soon as possible.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

A political forum will be held at the Community Center on October 22. A candidate meet-and-greet session will be held from 5:30 to 6:00 and the forum will run from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Thomson. Seconded by Ms. Martin and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Canapinno  
Town Clerk