

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

7:30 a.m.

June 2, 2017

Committee Chair, Mayor Genshaw brought the meeting to order with the following committee members present: Trisha Newcomer, Dan Henderson, Dolores Slatcher and Charles Anderson.

Trisha Newcomer presented Agenda Item #1, Recap and review of City of Seaford Conceptual Vision Plan (CVP) with Consultant Ben Muldrow of Arnett Muldrow and Associates.

Mrs. Newcomer stated that the purpose of this meeting was to revisit the City's Conceptual Vision Plan, see what has been accomplished and to see where things can go from here. She then turned the meeting over to Mr. Ben Muldrow.

Mr. Muldrow stated it is good to look back at the plan to make sure it is still viable and that it is not restraining. He also shared that in the next few months, through the Downtown Delaware organization, there is an opportunity to do some training and share some tactics. He added it has been mentioned to be structured to do collective training with other communities and then some one-on-one training as well. He feels that this will occur in the August or September time frame.

Mr. Muldrow asked if the committee would share some items that have been accomplished and have been successful. Mrs. Newcomer stated that the façade program has been created through Seaford Tomorrow and about 5 to 6 grants have been awarded, with some currently in the works. She added the majority of hanging store front signage has the same look and feel of a downtown. The Seaford Tomorrow website is up and they are currently working to keep it current. The branded street banners were completed as well. First Saturday recently underwent some changes, from being a mid-day event to an evening event, the second event of the year will be held this Saturday. Mr. Muldrow asked if any businesses were taking advantage of the event and staying open later? Mrs. Newcomer stated that the recently opened Puppertia is open and Hard to Handle recently extended their hours until 7:00 p.m... Mrs. Newcomer added Seaford Tomorrow is surveying the attendees at First Saturday for feedback and to build a contact database. They have been getting a gift certificate from a downtown business as a door prize for those who complete the survey.

Mr. Muldrow added that when he and Randy come back to discuss the plan, it would be a good opportunity to realign the various groups to better understand the roles. When you have an active downtown group, it needs to be clarified as to what is the City's responsibility and the organizations responsibility.

Mrs. Newcomer stated that the hospital took advantage of the façade grant, as well as Downtown Development District funding for the Miller building renovation. They also purchased Dr. Khan's old building and took it down for additional parking.

As for infill housing, the Residents at Riverplace are now occupied, the Bennett property has three new apartments and 117 High Street has six apartments.

The background research is currently underway for the street painting at Gateway Park and it will need to be a budgeted item. Mr. Muldrow added that from his standpoint, the street paving enhancement may have been a little aggressive to be in a phase one for completion. He added it was in phase one not to be accomplished in phase one but to start to the process of working toward it in phase one. Mrs. Slatcher asked what the life span of the painting could be expected. Mr. Muldrow stated that it depends on the surfacing; he added the paint would not last too long, but it would hopefully last 3-5 years. Mr. Muldrow added what the goal is to do, is reallocation of traffic resources and he added that pedestrian crosswalks need to be highlighted. Mr. Muldrow stated if it comes down to budget items; he feels that the textural crosswalk would be more viable, because as the vehicles pass over the textural crosswalk it would send a signal to slow down and the painting would just give a visual. He added that the long term goal would be to put down pavers in that street; however he suggested not to do it until development is adjacent so you see the growth in the tax base. Mayor Genshaw stated our downtown is currently not pedestrian friendly at all and something needs to be done to make that happen.

Mrs. Newcomer stated the up lighting at Gateway Park has been completed with LED lighting. The lights are programmable with 30,000 plus color changing options. The parklet has also been constructed and it has been used a few times already by downtown businesses. The 501c3 designation has been obtained by Seaford Tomorrow; she also added that Seaford Tomorrow has had some transitions with its membership.

Mr. Muldrow asked the committee if there was anything, not part of the plan that is worth mentioning. Mrs. Newcomer stated that foot traffic downtown has increased, as well as more interest from businesses wanting to come downtown.

Mr. Muldrow asked about relationship with the City and the County with regard to the corridor coming into downtown. City Manager Slatcher stated there is a change coming due to an annexation recently completed on the corner of Route 13 and Middleford Road. Mayor Genshaw stated he feels that most people were scared of change; losing the Nylon Capital of the World symbol. With downtown, people are seeing possibilities and if it is redone people will be more creative providing a different turnout. City Manager Slatcher added that the Royal Farms downtown will soon have a new building and they will be demolishing two houses to do their renovation. It was also added, they plan to do an accessible park behind their building on King and Front Street. They are looking into DDD funding and LEED Certification grants for the project also.

Mrs. Newcomer stated that Habitat for Humanity recently did their second Rock the Block event here in Seaford. She added it was good to see the willingness of the community to get out to help other community members clean up their properties. She added there has been a noticeable change of people that have come into Seaford that are from outside that have been willing to help.

Mr. Muldrow asked if there were any opportunities or projects that have come up that the committee was unsure about because they did not fit in the plan. Mayor Genshaw stated that we do not choose the businesses that come here; they choose to come to us. He added we need to assist and guide them to be successful; he feels that it has not been limited. Mrs. Newcomer added that the brand revision has allowed that as well. The new brand has been slowly integrated onto vehicles and email signatures.

Mr. Muldrow asked if over the past two years, if the community has seen a proven track record with the citizens and recognize some of the wins? Mayor Genshaw stated there are always going to be negative people, however, there are outside people investing here in Seaford. He added City staff is not good at telling our story and celebrating the successes we have done. Mrs. Newcomer added there has been

some new things that have been done, such as video components that are allowing the citizens to better connect. She stated that the videos and pictures tend to get more comments and shares than just words. Councilman Henderson added he feels it depends on where you live in the community. If you live near Nylon Shopping Center or you ride by that every day you don't see any progress. City Manager Slatcher added the other two shopping centers are full and renovating. Mr. Muldrow stated it is something of what was here in Seaford all the way down to its name.

Mrs. Newcomer stated she hopes with the budget the website will be redesigned with the new brand and a Seaford app that allows information to be sent out.

Mayor Genshaw shared that he feels the missing link to this is the school system; we need to find a way to get them engaged. He added an internship has been added and the pickleball court project was just completed jointly with the School System. Mr. Muldrow agreed and he added he feels there is an opportunity for partnerships with City governments and school districts.

It was agreed to put the overview of accomplishments on the next Council agenda to give an update to the Mayor and City Council.

With no other business or questions, Mayor Genshaw adjourned the meeting at 8:25 a.m.

Tracy Torbert, Secretary