

**COMMON COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 5, 2019**

The City of Noblesville Economic Development Council Committee met pursuant to public notice on Tuesday, February 5, 2019. Wil Hampton, Greg O'Connor, Darren Peterson, and Megan Wiles were present.

Also present were Mayor John Ditslear, City Clerk Evelyn Lees, Economic Development Director Judi Johnson, Assistant Director Andrew Murray, Specialist Aaron Head, and Assistant Amy Smith.

Mr. Hampton called the meeting to order at 8:17 a.m.

Year in Review

Ms. Johnson presented a review of her department's work in 2018. She displayed a marketing brochure for the City her department will use this year. She stated in 2018 there was \$99 million of promised real property investment; \$18 million of promised personal property investment; approximately 1.292 million square feet of promised construction; 202 promised new jobs; and 52 new businesses in the City. She stated most of the promised investments were from SMC, the Campus Center project, Applied Intelligence Corporation, Metal Powder Products, and Rosa Vila Jewelry. She noted that Metal Powder Products and Rosa Vila Jewelry did not receive financial incentives from the City, but did receive her department's help in relocating and expanding.

Ms. Johnson reviewed highlighted projects from 2018: SMC, Campus Center, Applied Intelligence Corporation, and the Levinson. Mr. Murray noted the closing date for the Levinson has been pushed back to May 1st. Ms. Wiles asked if construction has also been delayed until after closing. Mr. Murray replied he assumes so, but he will confirm.

Ms. Johnson stated because Noblesville does not require a business license, there is no way to absolutely know when businesses come to or leave the City, but she and her staff try to stay informed. She reviewed a list of new businesses and grand openings. She reviewed the Stay Here. Grow Here initiative. She reviewed the arts consultancy for the City, including alley activation and the Heart the Art Tour.

Mr. Head reviewed the Façade Improvement Grant Program. He stated ten grants were awarded in 2018. He stated there is still strong interest in the program, and approximately ten applications are pending. He stated the current worker shortage has made it difficult for businesses to obtain quotes for the repairs. Mr. Hampton asked if Mr. Head solicits applications for the program. Mr. Head replied no, he does not; applicants seek out the program. He noted that many businesses have said they would not have done the work on their buildings if not for the program. He stated in the ten years the program has been in existence, the City has invested approximately \$748,000.00, and building owners have invested more than \$1.1 million. He noted the grants are

only for building facades; much more investment has been made on the interiors of the buildings at the expense of the businesses.

Mr. Head reviewed the Zagster bike share program. He explained the bikes are in storage through the winter, but in 2018 there were almost 500 users, most of which were one-time users. He stated they plan to promote annual memberships this year. He noted the City receives 95 percent of the fees. He stated the Midland Trace Trail Head at Hazel Dell Road was the most popular bike station.

Ms. Johnson reviewed partnerships, collaboration, and staff additions and accomplishments. She stated a business corridor analysis was instrumental in bringing the Campus Center project to the City. Ms. Johnson stated Assessed Value (AV) for the City has grown 134 percent from 2004 through 2018 and 15.8 percent from 2016 through 2018. Mr. O'Connor asked for separate information for residential and commercial AV growth.

Firestone Update

Mayor Ditslear provided an update on the Firestone property. He stated the latest testing has shown less contamination than was expected; the City is negotiating with Firestone to pay for any remaining cleanup and retain liability. He noted progress has been slow but is moving in the right direction.

Façade Grant Boundary Expansion

Mr. Head presented three options for expanding the boundaries of the Façade Improvement Grant program without expanding them to the entire TIF district. There was a discussion concerning the boundaries and funding from the TIF. Everyone agreed the program has been very successful. Mr. O'Connor suggested expanding the program to the entire City. Mr. Peterson agreed that the program should expand as much as possible. Mr. Head stated the ordinance establishing the program is specific to the Central Business District. Ms. Wiles suggested that applications for Downtown businesses could be given more weight. Ms. Johnson suggested a scoring system for applications. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Murray agreed that funding should probably come from another source; the process to change funding is not a complicated one. The committee recommended amending the ordinance to expand the program to the whole City while giving preference to Downtown properties. The program would still apply only to commercial properties, and eligibility requirements would still have to be met. Mr. Peterson expressed concern for the extra workload the expansion could cause for the review committee. Mr. Head replied the committee reviews one or two applications per month, and he did not anticipate any significant change. Ms. Johnson stated a draft ordinance would be prepared for the next meeting.

Communications Plan

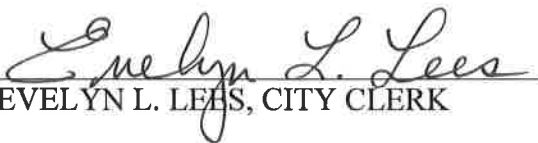
Ms. Johnson stated meetings are in progress to develop a communications plan to keep businesses and citizens informed about disruptions as a result of large construction projects, especially in Downtown. Ms. Wiles noted parking will be the biggest concern.

Staff Miscellaneous

Ms. Smith stated she is working with the Hamilton County Auditor's office to ensure businesses receiving tax phase-ins comply with the terms of their agreements.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.


WIL HAMPTON, COMMITTEE CHAIR


EVELYN L. LEES, CITY CLERK