

**COMMON COUNCIL
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 10, 2020**

The City of Noblesville Council Downtown District Committee met pursuant to public notice on Monday, August 10, 2020 in room A213 at City Hall. Darren Peterson, Pete Schwartz, Aaron Smith, and Megan Wiles were present. Mr. Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Also present were City Clerk Evelyn Lees, Deputy Mayor Matt Light, Community and Economic Development Director Sarah Reed, Engineering Director Alison Krupski, Engineering Project Manager Andrew Rodewald, and Community Engagement Manager Kayla Arnold.

Old Business:

Status of Funds

Ms. Arnold stated the balance of the Downtown Development Fund at the beginning of 2020 was \$761,324.00, of which \$500,000.00 was appropriated this year. She stated the current remaining balance is approximately \$369,500.00. She stated approximately \$109,000.00 has been transferred to the Economic Development budget, of which \$64,000.00 has been expended for alley activation and alley archways. She stated approximately \$280,000.00 has been appropriated to the Engineering Department budget for streetlight replacement projects. Mr. Light asked if \$75,000.00 in the Downtown Development Fund could be appropriated in the Economic Development Department's 2021 budget to fund small projects. He stated the projects would still be reported to the committee, but having the amount in the budget will allow the department to respond more nimbly to small needs. Ms. Reed stated the funding would be used primarily for aesthetic projects. She stated the Economic Development Department used to have a budget line for aesthetics, but it no longer exists. She stated Ms. Arnold would track what is spent. Mr. Peterson suggested a \$10,000.00 threshold for projects and reports to the committee. He stated this would be similar to the small appropriation transfers authorized by the Office of Finance and Accounting that are reported to the Council quarterly, which has worked well. The committee agreed to support the request.

Streetlight Replacement Update

Ms. Arnold stated an appropriation transfer is on the Council agenda for tomorrow to fund replacement of streetlights on Logan Street from State Road 19 to Lakeview Drive. Ms. Wiles stated the streetlights in the County employee parking lot should be added to the project to replace the lights on the Conner Street Bridge over White River. Ms. Arnold stated the Parks and Street Departments will work together to paint the light poles at Federal Hill Commons black.

New Business:

Downtown Business Update

Ms. Arnold stated Antiques on the Square opened July 1 and plan a grand opening for August 15. She stated a steakhouse is pursuing the former Copper Still space on Conner Street, and the holding company of All Local is working toward a new concept to reopen in the same space. She stated a café is pursuing the space in the Hamilton building on Conner Street next to Persimmon Avenue. She stated a bank is under contract for the space on Logan Street formerly occupied by Old Picket Fence. She stated she is working with all Downtown business owners to include their information on the Economic Development Department's ZoomProspector website in order to quickly relay interest in vacant sites to owners. Ms. Reed stated she received an email that Grindstone Public House plans to expand into the space next to it on the west. Ms. Arnold stated plans are for the expansion to be complete and open by December.

Mr. Light stated the upcoming Downtown project to enact the Streetscape Master Plan will include sidewalk expansion to facilitate outdoor dining. Ms. Arnold stated she has been speaking with business and building owners, and they are comfortable with the project. She stated their main concern is the timing of the project, but no one is opposed to the project itself. She stated a web page with information or something similar is being planned. Mr. Peterson stated the Noblesville Preservation Alliance (NPA) should be included as a stakeholder in any discussions. Mr. Smith offered to act as a liaison between the City and the NPA.

Mr. Rodewald stated the Engineering Department recently received an extremely detailed scope for the project from DLZ. He stated DLZ estimated \$645,000.00 for a contract that would include a survey of the project area, 30 percent project design, utility coordination, alternative designs, outreach efforts, meetings with stakeholders, and final design for 2021 construction. Mr. Light stated they expect the cost to be paid half in 2020 and half in 2021. Mr. Rodewald stated the design is planned to be complete by March 2021. He stated construction is estimated to cost \$6 million. Ms. Krupski stated once design concepts are completed, decisions can be made concerning what should and should not be included in the project. Mr. Smith asked when the concepts will be complete. Mr. Rodewald replied they are due in mid-October. Ms. Krupski stated the plan is scheduled for a very fast pace. She stated City reviews will have to be completed quickly. Mr. Peterson asked who would complete the reviews. Ms. Reed replied the reviews will be completed internally first, then will be presented to the committee. Mr. Rodewald stated concepts will be developed first, then one will be chosen to take to 30 percent design. The committee recommended review by a larger group of stakeholders once the 30 percent design is completed. Ms. Arnold suggested an open house-style meeting. Mr. Rodewald stated the meeting will need to comply with COVID-19 protocols for meetings.

Mr. Light stated three months ago, \$350,000.00 per year debt service for 20 years would purchase \$7.5 million in bonds. He stated bond rates are more favorable now. He stated some funding will be included in the Engineering budget for conduit installation and similar features. He asked for \$100,000.00 this year from the Downtown Development Fund for the design

contract. He stated the rest of the funding will come from the Engineering budget and/or the one year bond. Ms. Krupski stated capital projects and funding will be discussed this afternoon.

Ms. Reed stated the Façade Improvement Grant program may be amended to include murals. Ms. Arnold stated one suggestion is for a \$5,000.00 project total eligible for a \$2,500.00 grant.

Alley Activation Update

Ms. Arnold stated the archway and mural in the north alley will be installed by the end of the month. She stated Andrea Haydon has been hired to create a mural for the north alley. She stated Mattingly Concrete, Inc. has poured bases for the archway, and bollards will be installed soon. She stated Edison lights and gobo lights have also been installed in the north alley. She stated Edison lights and gobo lights will also be installed in the east alley, but on 14 foot poles to allow for vehicles. She stated she and Nickel Plate Arts Executive Director Ailithir McGill are working with the building owner for a potential mural project in the east alley. Mr. Smith complimented the work in the north alley as top notch.

Small Business Resilience Grants

Ms. Arnold stated all grant recipients submitted their reports. She stated the majority of the grants were used to pay overhead costs such as payroll, rent, and utilities, as was intended. She stated one business was able to procure a Paycheck Protection Program loan from the Small Business Administration, their business rebounded, and they returned their \$7,500.00 grant to the City. She stated many businesses were swift to adapt to changes, and some have expanded and opened second locations. She stated full time employment for grant recipients increased 61 percent and part-time employment increased 60 percent during the second quarter. Mr. Peterson suggested a series of press releases highlighting individual businesses. The committee agreed.

Other Business:

Ms. Wiles asked if there were a way to connect the speakers on the Square to concerts when they perform there, since traffic noise can make hearing difficult at times. Ms. Arnold replied it is not possible currently, but it will be part of the DLZ contract. She stated she is also working with the IT Department for new hardware, which will be needed once the Levinson is completed.

Determine Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be set for October when DLZ completes the concepts for the Downtown project.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.



DARREN PETERSON, COMMITTEE CHAIR



EVELYN LEES, CLERK