

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, March 25, 2015**

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (“RC”, “Commission”) met on Wednesday, March 25, 2015, at 6:18 PM in the Upper Conference Room within the Municipal Building at 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana. President Dominic Noce called the meeting to order. Minutes were prepared by Cecile Petro, Redevelopment Director.

ROLL CALL: Commissioners present included Greg Kuzmar, Jim Kessler, Dominic Noce, and Kathy DeGuilio-Fox. Commissioner Rachel Delaney was absent with notice. School Town of Highland Commissioner Pat Krull, Town Councilman Dan Vassar, and Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro were in attendance.

General Substance of the Discussion

1. Art and Cultural District

The Director reported positive progress on negotiations with the owner of 8610 and 8612 Kennedy Avenue. A final offer will be submitted to the owner.

The Commission reviewed the amount of work needed at 8630 Kennedy Avenue in order for this building to be brought up to code. Approximately \$87K would be needed to remove and replace the roof and to install an HVAC system and electrical service.

2. Town Theatre

Councilman Vassar reported that the Town Theatre Board met on March 18, 2015 for the second time. Two additional members, Tracy Oprea and Dawn Diamantopoulos, have been appointed to represent the grass-roots organization, Highland Main Street. Incorporation papers have been approved, a Federal ID number has been provided, and preparations will begin on applying for 501-C-3 tax exempt status. A draft timeline for construction and operations was provided to members.

Commissioner Kessler reported on the removal of the old seats within the theatre. Eight seats remain and will be remediated for display in the renovated theatre. He provided information on the many items he has cleaned and stored for future use including the old shields, letters for the marquee, and ticket machines. A contract with Angotti Landscaping removed the seats. The firm also donated labor for the project.

The next step will be to remove the ceiling within the auditorium. The Director reported that three or four quotes are expected within the next week. Once a contractor is selected, the ceiling will be removed and the Commission will acquire quotes for a structural engineer to inspect the roof structure. Commissioner Kuzmar suggested that future access to 8620 Kennedy through the Town Theatre should be considered in the planning process.

The Director asked Commissioners to review the last contract with the architect and provide suggestions for the next contract that will complete the project. Commissioner Kuzmar suggested that the terminology be carefully followed and that any additional work must have authorization with written cost estimates and written sign off be provided for any changes.

3. 2813 Highway Avenue

The Director presented a new Façade Improvement Grant application from the owner of 2813 Highway Avenue (Lincoln’s Restaurant). The project will entail removal of the existing cladding material, installation of new limestone on the entire front facade, the addition of a black awning

the full length of the windows, painting of the sign letters, and the installation of new lighting. Discussion ensued.

4. **Information Gathering Session on March 19, 2015**

Commissioners discussed the Information Gathering Session and the comments received. Both written and verbal comments were distributed to the Town Council, Department Heads, and the Redevelopment Commission.

5. **Highland Rookery Parking Lot**

Commissioners discussed a possible match to complete the trail and parking area at the Highland Rookery. The Director will contact the Little Calumet River Basin Commission to discuss completion of the project.

6. **Highland Main Street**

Commissioner Kessler stated that the next meeting of HMS will be on Thursday, April 2, 2015.

7. **Discussion**

The Director reported that she is waiting for NIPSCO to remove the gas and electric lines to 2917 Highway Avenue before it can be demolished. The fire department will conduct training within the building before that time.

The Director informed the Commission that she has received requests for incentives from businesses coming into Highland who wish to lease. Currently, the Commission does not offer any incentive for leasees, only owners. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Kuzmar reported that the Highway of Flags memorial is in need of care. The Director will contact the appropriate department and ask if there are any efforts underway to refurbish the exterior.

The Director stated that she is expecting a proforma for the area on the northwest quadrant of Kennedy and Main Streets. When that is received, the Commission will review the document, make recommendations, and then meet with the Town Council.

Discussion ended at 8:36 PM