

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2020**

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (“RC”, “Commission”) met in an electronically convened meeting using the Zoom platform on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. The meeting was convened as an electronic meeting pursuant to Governor Eric Holcomb’s Executive Order 20-04, 20-09 and 20-25 now extended through 01 December 2020 by his Order 20-47, allowing such meetings pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-3.6 for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency. The Study Session was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Redevelopment Director Kathy DeGuilio-Fox.

Minutes were prepared by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director and Recording Secretary.

Roll Call: Commissioners present included Jack Havlin, Robyn Radford, Renee Reinhart and Tony Washick. Commissioner Cy Huerter was absent. A quorum was established.

Additional Officials Present: Patrick Krull, School Town of Highland Liaison and non-voting member; Roger Sheeman, Council Liaison to the Redevelopment Commission; Ed Dabrowski, IT Consultant; and Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director.

Also Present: There were no additional attendees identified.

General Substance of the Discussion

1. Parking Lot Project Highway & Kennedy - Update:

- a. **Construction:** A brief overview was given of the construction activities since the last report. Director DeGuilio-Fox reported the completion of most of the stamped asphalt, lot lights have been installed and are waiting for NIPSCO to complete installation of the electrical panel as well as the near completion of the Depot. She also briefly described the changes in the east entrance especially in regards to pedestrian entry and explained this is the primary reason for Change Orders Number 9. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked if there were any objections to the Change Order #9 and explained she would like a verbal approval, rather than waiting until November 24th when official approval via voice vote will be made, so that the construction crew may continue moving forward with their work. She advised of her concern that the weather is turning and the need for the crews to continue to move forward so that the project may be completed on time. Discussion ensued followed by full consensus that the commissioners approved of Change Order #9 and moving forward with the work.

2. **Downtown Streetlight Retrofit or Replacement – Update:** Director DeGuilio-Fox reported she had received word from the Indiana Office of Energy Development that the Highland Redevelopment Commission has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$40,000.00 for the downtown light replacement project. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox explained that she is still waiting for completion of all of the paperwork but expects that to arrive soon. In the meantime she asked Commissioners to take a look after dark at the sample lights that had been installed on poles #23 and #53 and provide their feedback. She will ask Mark Knesek to do the same. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised of the Commission’s probable share of costs and what fund that money could be available spent from. Discussion ensued.

3. **Bult Oil Public Offering – Report:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that the Public Offering for the disposition of the former Bult Oil property has been advertised and Requests for Proposals made available at the

Town Hall. She also reported there have been no proposals submitted to date. And, as follow up she reached out to those parties who were previously interested in purchasing the property to alert them to the public offering and that RFPs have been advertised. For various reasons neither entity felt they would bid on the property at this time. Discussion ensued.

4. **Container Market – Discussion:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported she had met with Jay and Darryl Lieser of 1st Metropolitan Builders on Wednesday, October 28th and that they had expressed interest in the potential Highland. Once the gentlemen have conducted some due diligence of their own they will be in touch.
5. **Highland Main Street – Restaurant Crawl:** Director DeGuilio-Fox opened discussion of the October Downtown Restaurant Crawl by reporting that participating restaurants had expressed their satisfaction with the increase in business for the evening. Some of the restaurants, however, mentioned that while they did better overall than other Tuesdays, customers tapered off after about 7:30 PM. Because of this a few of the smaller restaurants advised they may close prior to the 9:00 PM ending time set for the event. Discussion ensued. Liaison Sheeman insisted that restaurants should stay open so that there is a uniform timeframe for the event. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reminded him that for the smaller restaurants it is difficult to remain open and keep staff working if there is no revenue. She did agree that she would speak with Dawn Diamantopoulos of Highland Main Street, who is coordinating the event, about the time issue.
6. **Business Development – Report Miscellaneous:**
 - a. Director DeGuilio-Fox reported that Gas n Wash continues to be interested in the former Coach USA site however Ken Mika has not spoken with them again since their conference call.
 - b. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox also reported that she has not heard from the new owner of the north section of the Highland Plaza. However, once the sale is final and closing has taken place she believes the new owner will call her. She also advised that a small, family-owned business from Illinois is interested in the former Ultra grocery store and the parcels in the south half of the plaza. Contact information for DLC Management has been provided to the interested party. Discussion ensued.
 - c. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported that Highland Volkswagen has been sold and is now City Volkswagen of Highland. She advised that the new owners also own two other Volkswagen dealerships in Illinois. And, she reported having spoken with both the owner and the representing attorney in regard to the tax abatement that was awarded to the property several years ago. Both were made aware of the compliance review that is conducted each year and provided paperwork that shows the goals that must be met to meet compliance. Discussion ensued. Commissioners were advised that by Indiana statute a tax abatement follows the property and not the owner and that as long as the business is in compliance each year they should continue to receive their abatement for the term originally defined.
7. **Redevelopment Commissioner Comments:**
 - a. Commissioner Radford asked what the Commission needs to do to propose a different attorney. She explained that the Commission's current attorney is slow to respond and she is concerned this is holding the group up. She explained her thoughts. Commissioner Havlin asked for and was provided clarification on the matter as for incidents, including a recent situation that Commissioner Radford was referring to. Brief discussion ensued. Liaison Sheeman commented that he would contact attorney Reed to discuss with him the Commission's concerns and promised to get back to Director DeGuilio-Fox by the following afternoon.

- b. Liaison Sheeman congratulated Pat Krull on his successful reelection to the School Town of Highland Board. Brief Discussion ensued.

There being no further business the November 10, 2020 study session of the Highland Redevelopment Commission was adjourned at 7:46 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Recording Secretary.