



Economic Sustainability Commission

MINUTES of the May 11, 2022 meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair David Jessee (by conference call), Jack Moracco, Jim Porto, Soteria Shepperson, and Randee Haven-O'Donnell (by conference call), and Susan Romain (by conference call)

STAFF PRESENT: Jon Hartman-Brown, Staff Liaison; Marty Roupe, Planning and Zoning Staff

OTHERS PRESENT:

Due to Chair Jessee's attendance by conference call, Vice Chair Porto called the meeting to order at 6:12pm.

1. Consider Minutes from the March 9, 2022 meeting

Ms. Shepperson moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Moracco with unanimous in-favor.

2. Committee and Staff Reports

a. Carrboro Business Alliance Update

Chair Jessee stated that the CBA has had the Parking Study recently presented to the Town Council has been the center of the CBA's discussions, especially since more and more businesses start to reopen from COVID.

b. Comprehensive Plan Taskforce Update

Mr. Porto stated there was no updates at this time and that the Comprehensive Plan is in the hands of the Town Council at this point. The Council liaisons stated that the Comprehensive Plan is in the public comment period and will be coming back later in June for a final approval.

c. BIPOC Business Update

Mr. Hartman-Brown stated that a BIPOC Roundtable has been scheduled for May 31st and that the Town is working with Durham Tech to provide an entrepreneurship and young business training program in which BIPOC entrepreneurs and business have been prioritized.

d. Staff Update

Mr. Hartman-Brown stated that Council has approved the Fitch Lumber parking lot lease and the Town is working with the ArtsCenter regarding a potential lease on one of the

lots at their new proposed location.

3. 201 N. Greensboro Development Review

Mr. Hartman-Brown briefly summarized the project and asked Mr. Roupe to provide any additional comments on the project. This project was also presented at the Joint Review Meeting held the previous week. The Commission discussed the challenges of two different Town philosophies of parking verses widening sidewalks for pedestrians. Commission members spoke to both keeping more parking and trees and widening the sidewalk. The Commission also expressed concern with differently abled employee parking rather than have them park in satellite locations. Mr. Moracco moved to approve the site plan as presented with the following comments to the Town Council: Close analysis of the trade-off between parking and pedestrians; address differently abled employees' access to parking; and resolve the dumpster location. Ms. Shepperson seconded the motion with unanimous in-favor.

4. ArtsCenter Development Review

Mr. Hartman-Brown briefly summarized the project and asked Mr. Roupe to provide any additional comments on the project. This project was also presented at the Joint Review Meeting held the previous week. The Commission discussed the concerns of removing some Magnolia trees in order to widen the sidewalk and increased vehicular traffic along Sweet Bay Place (especially as it relates to dropping off students). Mr. Moracco made a motion to approve the plans as presented with the following comments: find ways to direct vehicular traffics during bigger events and find alternative ways to route pedestrian traffic rather than a 10-foot-wide sidewalk. Ms. Shepperson seconded the motion with unanimous in-favor.

5. Revolving Loan Updates & Discussion

Mr. Hartman-Brown summarized new changes to the proposed Revolving Loan Policy. The Commission stated that businesses should maintain the same number of employees verses prescribing the number of employees based on a potential loan amount and that businesses that are within economic region should have a stronger connection to the Town rather than simply being within the region. The Commission also discussed the challenges with the living wage requirement when it comes to tipped employees and rewarding applicants with good credit scores. Mr. Hartman-Brown said that the policy would be sent to the Legal and Finance Departments for additional review.

6. Article 46 Funds Review

Mr. Hartman-Brown described what the Article 46 Funds are and how they have been proposed to be used. The Commission requested that staff explore and consider funding for support for BIPOC businesses who have difficulty paying rent and potential technical assistance program for BIPOC businesses.

7. Carrboro Painted Goats

8. COVID-19 Grant & Loan Follow-up Survey

Due to time, staff requested the Commission review and provide email feedback if there is any input Commissioners would like to have.

9. Other Business of the Commission

Vice Chair Porto reminded everyone that there are still vacant positions that need to be filled on the Commission and requested for members to be searching for potential new members.

Mr. Hartman-Brown informed the Commission that a poll would be going out to find a potential date for a field trip to Raleigh, Cary, and Boxyard RTP.

A motion was made by Mr. Moracco to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Shepperson with a unanimous vote in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.