

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee
CHAIRPERSON: Steve McIntyre
DATE/TIME: Monday, April 26, 2021 @ 4:00 PM

PRESENT:

☐ Nick Tranel	☒ Emily Legel	☐ Don Schaible
☒ Gary Diedrick	☒ Steve McIntyre	☒ John Schultz
☒ Mike Dittmar	☐ Rose Noble	☒ Scott Toot
☒ Janelle Keeffer	☒ Fran Peterson	☒ Eric Tison
☐ Jason Kevern	☒ Hendrica Regez	☒ Darcy Wild

Others: Dan Reimer, Diane Gallagher, David Schmit

1. Call to Order – Steve McIntyre called the meeting to order at 4:02.
2. Roll Call – A quorum of members was present.
3. Introductions - None
4. Approval of Minutes
 - a) Minutes of the March 29, 2021 Ad-Hoc Economic Development Committee meeting
Hendrica Regez moved to approve the minutes; Darcy Wild seconded.
Motion carried.
5. Citizens' Comments - None
6. Unfinished Business
 - a) Discussion and possible action on a request from the Galena Area Chamber of Commerce on a possible Jo Daviess County Zoning Survey
John Schultz stated the survey has yet to be distributed, and that he will forward the Galena Area Chamber of Commerce email of concerns to the Committee.
Hendrica Regez asked how the survey will apply to future edits of the county's comprehensive plan. Emily Legel replied with some details of the survey. John Schultz commented the survey will not interfere with comprehensive plan updates.
 - b) Discussion of the items identified for business development from past meetings:
 - i. Sites: Shovel ready sites for businesses, residences, and parks/recreation
 1. Upper Mississippi River Update
Emily Legel stated the March 31, 2021 workshop was hosted by Blackhawk Hills Regional Council.
David Schmit stated he will include the workshop's agenda with Committee minutes.
 - ii. Transportation: 4 lane highway, rail, river ports, and other infrastructures
 1. Update on Passenger Rail
Hendrica Regez stated she will ask that passenger rail be included on the Planning & Development agenda, and that a Ride the Rail meeting is scheduled for 4/29/2021.
David Schmit stated Quandel Consulting intends to hold citizen focus groups beginning in May.

- iii. Connectivity: High Speed Internet/Cell coverage/and other connectivity needs
 - 1. Update on Fiber / Cell Needs
 Steve McIntyre stated realtors are losing sales due to the lack of connectivity in certain areas.
 Emily Legel replied home sellers can get their addresses on a Jo-Carroll Energy list for when USDA broadband grants are awarded.
 Hendrica Regez commented the Federal Communications Commission offers the Emergency Broadband Benefit program.
- iv. Building Services: Utilities and other site infrastructure needs
 Gary Diedrick stated township supervisors and highway managers will be contacted about their needs.
- v. Workforce: Education, training, attracting outside and inside workers
 Emily Legel stated Northwest IL Economic Development is considering hosting a Manufacturing Day in 2021.
- vi. Marketing: How to market our county being “ready”. Living Large in Rural America
 - 1. Update on GGMI marketing plans
 None
 - 2. Relocation Guide Update
 Emily Legel stated the guide has been distributed and is being utilized.
- vii. Business/Residential/Community Impeding Ordinances
 - 1. Survey Update – (See 6 a)
 - 2. Discussion and possible action on Abandonment or Discontinuance with nonconforming use is discontinued or abandoned for a period of *12 months* or more. (*possibly change to 60 months*)
 Mike Dittmar requested moving agenda 6 b vii 2 and 3 onto Planning & Development for a vote.
 Hendrica Regez stated there is a need for a public hearing. Eric Tison replied hearings would occur at Zoning meetings.
 Steve McIntyre summarized the current language and also detailed how public hearings would work.
 Discussion topics included the motel at 84 and Highway 20 and Terrapin Ridge Motel as potential nonconforming uses.
 Eric Tison reviewed the current zoning language, which was then followed by Committee conversation.
 John Schultz motioned to send amended language to Planning & Development; Mike Dittmar seconded. Motion carried 6-0-4 with Eric Tison, Fran Peterson, Janelle Keeffer, and Emily Legel abstaining.
 - 3. Discussion and possible action: One (1) accessory building may be established on a lot prior to the establishment of the

principal use, *provided that such building is used only for the storage of machinery and equipment necessary to maintain the otherwise vacant lot.*

Mike Dittmar stated he wants to encourage rural construction, but the current language is a limiting factor, and that inspections will find improper uses of buildings.

John Schultz stated the current language was repurposed from outside sources in 1991.

Steve McIntyre asked if there are variances in the language between districts – industrial, residential, commercial, agricultural.

The Committee has conversation on current and proposed language.

Mike Dittmar motioned to send amended language to Planning & Development; John Schultz seconded. Motion carried 7-2-1 with Gary Diedrick and Emily Legel voting No, and Eric Tison abstaining.

viii. Business Grants and other funding

1. Small Business Stabilization Grant Update

Eric Tison stated he received 15-18 applications totaling ~ \$16,000 in awards.

Hendrica Regez asked if the grant should remain open beyond the close date.

Scott Toot stated the large volume of Covid-19 federal aid may be a factor in the low interest level.

Dan Reimer stated the grant has funds remaining.

John Schutz recommended letting the grant run its course.

ix. Quality of Life – Amenities, Welcoming programs, etc.

1. Updates

Hendrica Regez stated the subcommittee is working on diversity and inclusion issues, including outreach to the Hispanic community.

Hendrica Regez also stated Public Works is considering relaunching the Adopt-A-Highway program.

7. New Business - None

8. Staff Reports

a) NWILED

Emily Legel presented her report, including upcoming special events, and a new Covid-19 grant specific to restaurants.

b) Planning and Development

Eric Tison stated the department has yet to see an uptick in building applications.

c) RE Sales Data YTD

Steve McIntyre presented his Residential Properties Sold in Jo Daviess County report stressing the need to attract builders to the area even if build costs are high.

Emily Legel commented Northwest Illinois Economic Development is looking to secure funds for a Jo Daviess and Carroll County housing study.

d) County Administrator

Dan Reimer presented his report Jo Daviess County Employment 2000-2020 giving focus to Goods Produced, Manufacturing, and Leisure and Hospitality data.

9. Citizens Comments - None

10. Committee Concerns – None

11. Next regular meeting –

Monday, May 24 at 4:00 PM

12. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM following a motion by Emily Legel; seconded by Janelle Keefer.