

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Minutes: February 6, 2024

Members Present: Bryon Leggett, Ric Ware, Jeff Bennett, Doug Zirbel, Cameron Farish, Brittany Chapman, Anna Dukes, Johanna Johnson (Chamber of Commerce)

Others in attendance: Neil Burton, Jason Beaty

Approval of Minutes: There were no minutes to approve

Discussion Items:

Council Update: Council member Ducworth was unable to attend. There was no Council update.

Outcome of Clemson Connect Work Session: Lauren Gamrat gave a report to the group on the progress she has made on the suggestions made at the work session. She reported that she launched and completed a successful Passport Program during the month of December. 89 percent participation with very favorable comments. Lauren plans to expand the program by recruiting more businesses to participate and run it from July through December. The expanded Passport will require more stamps, but the prizes will be bigger and better. Lindsey Newton noted that the updates to the VisitClemson website suggested during the work session had been completed as well. These updates were mainly on the “Things to do” page. These items are now grouped by activity, not listed alphabetically.

Parking Update: Lindsey Newton gave an update on where all projects related to parking are currently. Kiosks should be installed somewhere between late March and mid-April, with a go live date to be set after CU graduation. Council voted to discontinue season pass football parking in the Keith street deck. All decks and on street parking will have a “Special Event” rate set for game days and all parking will be first come first serve. Council also agreed to open up prepaid employee parking in the Keith Street Deck on a 6-month trial period. After 6 months it will be reviewed to make sure that there is not an overabundance of employees taking up parking deck spaces intended for patrons to the downtown. It was previously only available in the Fendley Deck. Nathan Hinkle presented the preliminary design for the Employee parking project on North Sloan. The plan includes 30+ parking spaces and converting the road to one way on the stretch of Sloan between Edgewood and Shorecrest. This parking will be permitted employee parking.

Action Items:

Elect 2024 Officers: Cameron Farish nominated Doug Zirbel as Chairman, seconded by Bryon Leggett. Vote on this was unanimous. Ric Ware nominated Cameron Farish as Vice Chair, seconded by Bryon Leggett. Vote on this was unanimous.

Recommendation to Council: Recommendation to hold a bi-annual meeting of the chairs of the City’s boards and commissions. The purpose would be for all of the groups to share what items are on their radars and what they are working on. Cameron Farish made the recommendation, seconded by Doug Zirbel. Affirmative vote by all.

Old Business/ New Business:

Ric Ware briefed the committee on the previous Council meeting/ Public Hearing related to the proposed development on Keowee Trail. The consensus from those in attendance at the meetings is that they are opposed to the development. This prompted a discussion with the Committee concerning city zoning and mixed use developments, filling the storefronts in these projects, and taxations for businesses located in these developments. Lindsey Newton said that she would invite Nathan Woods to the next meeting to discuss these things with the committee.

Nathan Hinkle gave a high level overview of the downtown revitalization plan. The plan will be completed in multiple phase due to funding. Phase 1 includes demoing the substation and designing and constructing a new building. It also includes a street scape project on College Avenue from Hwy 93 to Earl Street. The City hopes to demo the substation in the early summer and place a portable building on the site until a new building can be constructed. The city plans to begin construction on the new building in December 2024 to be completed by late spring 2025. The streetscape project is tentatively planned to begin spring of 2025.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:34pm

Next meeting: April 9,2024 at 12:30 in Council Chambers.