

**Gate City Planning Commission
Combined Meeting with
Gate City Economic Development and Revitalization Committee
March 4, 2008**

Minutes

Attachments: None

Materials needed: None

A determination of a quorum was determined and the meeting was called to order on Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 6:03 p.m. by Planning Commission Chairman, Michelle Jenkins.

Planning Commission members present were: Michelle Jenkins, Eric McMurray, Richard Hubbard, Rita Tipton, and Robert Q. Barker.

Economic Development members present were: Joe Coates, Harold Willis, Frances Perry, Marvin Egan and Rita Tipton.

EDARC member absent was: Jay Dixon.

Others present were: Mark Jenkins, Mayor, Cindy Coates, Acting Town Manager and Jason McCully.

There was no public expression at the meeting.

There was a motion by Eric McMurray, seconded by Robert Barker, to adopt the February 5, 2008 minutes as presented.

Voting aye: Michelle Jenkins, Eric McMurray, Rita Tipton, and Robert Barker.

Voting nay: None

Abstaining: Richard Hubbard

Unfinished Business:

a) Cindy explained that the public hearing was held by the town council regarding the rezoning of the new boundary area that begins at the farthest northeast corner of the old town boundary boundary near State Rt.71. There were no public comments at the hearing. This was passed by the council.

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Joint Meeting

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New Business:

Michelle turned the meeting over to Joe Coates, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee. Joe introduced the members of the committee. He explained what the EDARC has been working on over the past months. The CDBG has been a priority to members of Economic Development, giving whatever assistance it could to the Town. Short term and long term goals from the Master Plan have been discussed. Joe explained that visible things such as way finding signs are needed to give the public and residents a sense of some accomplishment. He explained that Marvin has been doing drafting of the signs and also donated brick for the bases of the new signs the committee is working on. Volunteers will be a vital part of projects such as the signs, etc. The vocational school is a possible opportunity for volunteers. The Economic Development committee has been going over the master plan and trying to come up with an action plan and decide what to do first. That is how the decision of new signs at each gateway of town was decided upon so there would be a visible aspect of the start of revitalization. There was further discussion regarding a possible spot to put the new sign at the entrance to Gate City at the bridge. The main goal is to get something visible.

Richard Hubbard brought up the possibility of the town having to revisit the ordinances in regard to way-finding signs in the future.

Jason McCully stated the civic club sign coming into Gate City needs to be refreshed. Richard explained that this civic club sign is owned by the Civitan club. They could possibly be approached to refresh or replace the sign.

There was discussion regarding Gate City applying for the National Historic Register. There was an attempt by the previous town manager to begin this process. It is unsure as to what has been accomplished.

Michelle asked about the Main Street program and as to where we are with it. The town must apply for a 501(c) (3) status. Cindy has inquired as to the process of filling out the application. In order to be an official Main Street program, this must be done. The town must be an affiliate of Main Street to apply for the revitalization CDBC grants.

Joe stated Marvin was getting estimates on plants and trees for Jackson Street. There are 78 tree boxes in town. There was discussion on whether to try to plant some different types of trees or change to plants, etc. Trees should be kept at crosswalks. Michelle mentioned there had been discussion in the past regarding taking out every other light in town and extending them out further or down Water Street. Also, new sidewalks or repairs are also needed. The town has

applied for a grant for new sidewalks from the Baptist Church toward the East end of town. This section of sidewalk is in real bad shape. We should be notified about this grant in June.

Cindy has spoken to VDOT in regard to the peeling paint on the bridge wall entering Gate City. The paint should be removed at least by the second week in April, or earlier, depending on weather.

Michelle said the work the EDARC has done to help on the CDBG was really appreciated. She mentioned that anytime the Planning Commission can do something to help on any projects, for them to let the commission know. She also mentioned that it is helpful to have these joint meetings for this purpose.

Michelle mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan update is due in 2009. She asked both committees to think about things that need to be in the plan for the future of Gate City. It will be real helpful if a couple workshop meetings could be scheduled to discuss ideas. We need to ask, "Where are we now, and where do we want to be?" It is an intensive project, and looks at a lot of different angles. We do not have to wait until 2009 to begin. Workshop meetings need to be scheduled in the near future. Signage changes are included in this plan.

Cindy stated she appreciated the Planning Commission members getting signatures for the mixed beverage referendum. Michelle suggested we get a list of the people that actually voted in the last election, and send out mailers, make telephone calls, etc. to promote the referendum. Michelle stated perception is the key when talking to voters.

It was suggested that someone get in touch with John Kilgore to inquire as to what property he knows of that is available for sale in Gate City so that the town can work on promoting these properties.

The Technology Zone has been passed by the town. It is geared to technology related businesses within the town of Gate City. Tax incentives relating to the technology zone could be offered.

There was discussion regarding a theme for the town. Different ideas such as **Where Mountains & Music Make Memories**, **The Soul of Mountain Music**, **The Heart of Mountain Music** and **Where the Mountains Meet the Music**, etc. were suggested.

There was further discussion on participation of business owners, letters of support, etc. for the block grant. The fact that we are getting a letter of support from Carter Fold owners is a plus. We need to work together and support the different venues of music. Mark suggested we work on a community calendar to keep the different venues from having conflicting events.

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Cindy stated we are beginning to work on the new budget. Mark suggested a line item for a music venue.

There was discussion regarding the town website. A new server is a suggestion for the 2008-2009 budget.

Michelle stated she needs to resign her position as Chairman of the Planning Commission due to the fact she will be running for office and she would like the Planning members to consider a solution to be discussed at the next regular meeting.

There was a motion by Eric McMurray, seconded by Richard Hubbard to adjourn.

Voting aye: All members present.

Voting nay: None

Acting Secretary

Chairman