

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
STUDY SESSION MINUTES  
MONDAY, JULY 2, 2018**

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission ("RC", "Commission") met on Monday, July 2, 2018 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building located at 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana. President Bernie Zemen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Minutes were prepared by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director.

**Roll Call:** Commissioners present were Mark Herak, Michael Griffin, Dan Vassar, Steve Wagner and Bernie Zemen. A quorum was attained.

**Additional Officials Present:** Pat Krull, School Town of Highland Commissioner; Rhett Tauber, Esq. Redevelopment Commission Attorney; Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director.

*Also Present:* Larry Kondrat, Board of Waterworks Directors was also present.

**General Substance of the Discussion**

**Downtown Business Update:** Director DeGuilio-Fox reported that the sale of Lincoln's continues to move forward. The Broker will contact the office to schedule a meeting when they've closed the sale. Anthony's Café has a new prospect looking at it. McColly's has the listing. The Green Witch Smoothies and Juices continues to renovate at 2845 Highway and hopes to open in August. They will also sell health supplements and health foods. I've spoken to a couple that are planning to open a new shop at 2923 Highway (formerly Highland Deli). Both are trained in the culinary arts. I also mentioned the possibility of a Façade Improvement Grant for the front of the building. Asada Grill continues to move forward with the purchase of the former Zuni's restaurant on 45<sup>th</sup>. Exotic Thai's owner is renovating and has removed the front of the restaurant where there was atrium type seating. Nothing new to report in regards to Nine nightclub. Director DeGuilio-Fox reported the office received an inquiry about the SW corner of Ridge Road and Indianapolis Blvd. The caller shared his thoughts about locating a drive-thru restaurant there. Everyone's attention was directed to the Vyto's article in the TIMES. Very nice article about one of our local success stories.

**Maria's Bueno Cocina:** There was nothing new to report. Lengthy discussion ensued. Commissioner Herak reported he has spoken to several contractors to ask their opinions regarding the cost of renovating the Grace Street property. He also mentioned he spoke to Scott Cherry at Skillman Corporation, who is to meet with Ken Mika about the needed renovations. Discussion ensued. Attorney Tauber was asked to contact Attorney Schocke again. He will attempt to contact him and advise that the Redevelopment Commission must have a request presented to them no later than July 16<sup>th</sup> if there is something they wish the Town to help with.

**Bult Oil Property:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised there is a new business group interested in the property. They are currently doing their due diligence and investigating the status of the environmental safety of the property. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised she has been meeting with them since last fall and believes they could be successful in their endeavors. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised the group that George Georgeff of McColly Realtors has been working with the group since they were interested in Anthony's. Mr. Georgeff has asked if the Redevelopment Commission would consider a brokerage agreement such that if his client purchases the Bult Oil site, he will receive a brokers fee in the amount of \$295 plus 2.5% of the sale price. Commissioners asked that the agreement be brought back to them once Attorney Tauber has reviewed it. Discussion ensued.

**Move to Indiana:** Director DeGuilio-Fox advised the Commissioners of the "Move to Indiana" Campaign that the South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority, NWI Forum, LCEA, The Times of Northwest Indiana, NIPSCO and other organizations in NWI are supporting in an effort to encourage Illinois residents and businesses to move to Indiana. She presented the lower end of the sponsorship levels and inquired as to their interest in becoming a community sponsor. Discussion ensued. The Commissioners advised it is not something they want to do at this time.

**Redevelopment Priority Areas:** Director DeGuilio-Fox suggested that the Commission as a unit determine what areas of Highland are priority areas for property acquisition and initiation of redevelopment/economic development projects. She shared that she's received independent direction from several of them but hesitates to act until there are definite plans for activity and we're certain of the overall costs. The Redevelopment Commission must use their resources wisely and is unable to purchase all of the properties that we'd like to. Discussion ensued regarding numerous properties and suggestions made as to where development should likely take place. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox asked that each member email or call her to discuss their thoughts on the topic and she would develop a priority list.

**8200 Indianapolis Blvd Beautification Project:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported having a conversation with Derek Snyder of NIES in regard to the landscaping project at the former Petrites property and that he was extremely helpful in beginning to conceptualize what type of landscaping would be appropriate there. Mr. Snyder was also able to advise of the sewer and other utilities located on and proximate to the property due to his familiarity with it. She reported that she had invited Mr. Snyder to submit a proposal so that NIES could provide consultation on the project.

**Russell Company:** Director DeGuilio-Fox reported that, at the request of the Russell Company development team, she had facilitated meetings between them and Public Works, Parks, Building Department and the Fire Department. On Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> a meeting and tour of the current public works facility was held and information gathered as to the potential requirements for a new facility. The same tour and informational gathering was conducted with the Parks Director. A meeting was also convened at the Central Fire Station with Building Commissioner Mika and Chief Timmer to discuss their requirements for a new facility as has been proposed by Russell Company. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox will continue to facilitate information exchange between the town entities involved and the Russell Company development team. Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion, the July 2, 2018 Study Session of the Highland Redevelopment Commission ended at 7:59 p.m.