

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

The Highland Redevelopment Commission (“Commission”, “RC”) met in person at Town Hall. The study session was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Commission President Sean Conley.

Minutes were prepared by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director and Recording Secretary.

Roll Call: Commissioners present in person included Sean Conley, George Georgeff, Bill Leep, Cyril Huerter and Alex Robertson. A quorum was established.

Additional Officials Present: Pat Krull, School Town of Highland Representative and non-voting member to the Redevelopment Commission; Town Council Liaison, Tom Black; John Reed, Abrahamson, Reed and Bilse; Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Redevelopment Director and Lance Ryskamp, Redevelopment Assistant were present in person.

Also Present: John Jurisa, Weichert Realtors present in person.

General Substance of the Discussion

1. **2022 Commission Appointments Update:** Liaison Black was asked if the Town Council had made a new appointment to the Highland Redevelopment Commission. He commented that there have been no new appointments. Commission President Sean Conley inquired as to whether the Council had received any new applications. Councilman Black responded there has not been any new applications received directly.
2. **Sale of 2815 Jewett:** Director DeGuilio-Fox briefly commented that the listing for the sale of 2815 Jewett has been posted and asked John Jurisa to give an update on activity. Mr. Jurisa reported there has been numerous viewings of the listing resulting in sixteen showings to date. He reported that the individual who had wanted to purchase 2821 Jewett for a Lego museum had inquired as well as numerous others interested in using the garage for light industrial uses. Mr. Jurisa commented that most of the interested parties he’d spoken to expressed interest in keeping the tenants with primary interest in the garage. He mentioned that he’d also had an inquiry as to entry to the upstairs to look at that portion of the building. Director DeGuilio-Fox advised that access to the stairway was blocked off by a wall and had been closed off for many years. She expressed caution as to the integrity and safety of the stairway and upstairs in and of itself. Mr. Jurisa also suggested there be an addendum to the purchase agreement disclosing the continued access to the garage and basement by the tenants. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that the mechanicals for the tenants are located in the basements. Discussion ensued regarding the zoning of the property in light of having several inquiries wanting to primarily use the garage for storage and/or light industrial purposes. No offers have been received yet. Discussion ensued regarding questions from Commissioner Robertson about the history of the property and why the commission wants to dispose of it.
3. **Bult Oil Property Sale Update:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that the closing on the sale of the property was held at 4:30 on Thursday, January 27th. Two representatives of the Eriks family, Mary Jo Hall, Escrow Officer with Community Title, Mr. Jurisa and Ms. DeGuilio-Fox attended. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported that while the closing took far longer than it should have due to some paperwork glitches the closing was finalized. The check and a copy of the closing paperwork were submitted to the Clerk-Treasurer immediately following the closing.

4. **Welcome to Highland Sign:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox opened the report by advising that she and Lance had met with Scott Lovell from Landmark Signs and that she had asked Lance to run point on the project. Lance reported that we'd received three options and accompanying quotes during our meeting with Scott Lovell earlier in the day. A brief description of the options was given. Lance explained that the options were all based on the use of LED lighting rather than neon and that the LED lighting technology would be easier and less expensive to maintain. Lance also advised that Mr. Lovell was invited to attend the Commission's February 22nd study session to provide additional information and photos of the three options as well as to answer any questions the commissioners have. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Robertson suggested a second quote be requested from Roeda Sign company as well as seeking a completely new design, perhaps with a more updated look. The Commissioners asked Lance to follow up on these suggestions.

5. **Downtown Marketing Brochure Update:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox opened discussion of the brochure by advising she'd received a quote for the tri-fold brochure mock-up that had been discussed in 2021 and advised that prior to responding to the Idea Factory she thought it best to inquire whether it is the intention of the Commission to move forward with the project or not. She reminded the commissioners that this was something the Highland Main Street members had requested and that the commissioners had expressed interest in upon reviewing the brochure mock-up designed by the Idea Factory. She also advised that the quote she received did not have the website component included. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Robertson suggested the use of social media to disseminate the information instead of using a printed brochure. He also suggested creating a marketing video and embedding it in the Highland website would be more productive. Discussion ensued in regard to the video that the town used several years ago on the Town website. Commissioner Robertson suggested that a QR code or even a logo on a business card could be used to open the video and gave a demonstration of the technology Fuzzyline Brewing Company uses. Discussion ensued. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox will follow up with Commissioner Robertson.

6. **8200 Indianapolis Blvd:** Ms. DeGuilio-Fox reported that she and Ken Mika had met with the new owner and his developer interested in building a mixed use development on the site of the former Tri State Coach terminal. The proposed development includes self-storage on the west side of the property with retail/commercial space along the front of the development. Parking would be located on the front/east portion of the Property. She advised that the developer is expected to submit concept drawings. Discussion ensued. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox will provide updates as they are available. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Conley inquired if the Tri State Coach property includes the parcels south of it. Director DeGuilio-Fox advised that numerous of the properties to the south – that which has landscaping – is owned by the Redevelopment Commission. He was further advised that the new owner had inquired about the use of the Redevelopment property for an access road crossing from the Tri State Coach terminal to the ingress where the traffic light is. However, there are numerous issues which would make it very difficult including the State-owned storm water pump station between the two properties, the electronic sign that is owned by View Outdoor Advertising and the town has an active agreement with (they purchased the property in order to erect the sign and then donated the property to redevelopment with the understanding the sign would stay intact) as well as numerous easements owned by NIPSCO and the State of Indiana. Commissioners asked that they be kept up to date on the progression of the development. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox advised that once the renderings are submitted the owner and developer will go before the BZA and/or Plan Commission for initial approvals.

7. **Redevelopment Commission Comments:** Councilman Black advised that the Council members found the goals list difficult to understand. He advised they would like the accomplishments be

scratched out and the rest of the list be pared down. The council would like to focus on what projects are in progress at this time. Councilman Black advised that at a future study session the council would like a report as to what each in progress goal is about because they are not familiar with the projects. Once that is done and the council has provided their feedback the commission may move forward. Discussion ensued. Commissioners felt there is good reason to include the accomplishments especially since certain council members had mentioned at their meeting that they did not think the Redevelopment Commission had accomplished anything in 2021. Everyone agreed that although the goals list details could be pared down they want the accomplishments to stay on the list.

Councilman Black also advised that certain of the council are unsure about the Redevelopment Commission's process for hiring of a new director. They wanted to know if the commissioners plan to interview candidates and then forward their recommendations to the Council. Commissioner Georgeff advised that the Council does not do the hiring for Redevelopment staff, the Redevelopment Commission makes those decisions. It was made clear that approval is not needed from the Town Council for the hiring of a new director. Councilman Black inquired as to whether redevelopment would be responsible in that case for paying the director. Ms. DeGuilio-Fox confirmed his question and then assured him that director compensation comes directly out of the Redevelopment Department General budget as do all of the other department expenses. She reiterated that the Redevelopment Commission is responsible for hiring, firing and compensating, including salaries, insurance and any other expenditures, the employees of the Redevelopment Department. Discussion ensued with additional explanation of the history of who has provided oversight to the Redevelopment Commission and Department over the years.

There being no further discussion the Redevelopment Commission study session was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Recording Secretary.