

**HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
STUDY SESSION MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2023**

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (RC Commission) met in person at Town Hall on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. The Study session was called to order at 6:35 pm by President Sean Conley.

**Present:** Commissioners Sean Conley, George Georgeff, Bill Leep, Alex Robertson, and Town Council President Tom Black were present in person at Town Hall.

**Additional Officials Present:** Attorney Scott Blise, Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra, Assistant Redevelopment Director Susan Hale

**Also Present:** None

**General Substance and Discussion**

1. Letter of Support for 8141 Indianapolis Development— Commissioner Leep expressed additional support for the project, noting that it is a small piece of property that cannot be used for much else and that the building looks like a tall strip mall rather than storage. The Commission then requested that Redevelopment Director Maria Becerra and Assistant Redevelopment Director Susan Hale be present at the BZA meeting to take notes and report back.
2. HRC PHP (Highland Redevelopment Commission's Police Homeowner Program) – It was discussed and compared with the Hammond Homebound Program. The HRC decided to ask the Town Council for a bulk amount to start for this program rather than ask periodically. The HRC also amended the payback aspect of the program to Commissioner George Georgeff's suggestion of requiring 100% payback if the house is sold during the first 5 years, then prorate years 5-9. The HRC also discussed if Officers should be able to use this money only for the down payment or also for the closing costs, deciding on the latter. Discussion ensued about whether this would only apply to new hires or any Officers and if this is something that would only be eligible once. It was decided that this would only be for individuals who use this as their primary home. It was also decided that candidates would have to take a class on homeownership and provide the certificate.
3. The HRC reviewed and commented on the Goals for 2023 Draft, including reviewing updates to Highland Municipal Code, Wayfinding Signs, HMS, and HNS. Finalized version will be presented in February.
4. There was some discussion relating to the Tasty Olive sign, and information from Ken Mika was relayed to the HRC about design standards and other businesses on Highway Ave having been grandfathered in, allowing them to have signs that are out of compliance.
5. Updates were given to the HRC about NWI Parkinsons and Nephilim Studio.
6. The workplan for 2023 included web updates, and the HRC asked for an update on this. Susan Hale told them about work she has done with sending updates on the commercial properties "For Sale" and "For Lease" sections on the Highland website. The HRC asked that all the minutes and notices be checked to make sure they are up to date and accessible.
7. Highland Neighbors for Sustainability (HNS) – Updates were given about the meeting that Maria and Susan had with HNS. Some points from the agenda for the HNS meeting were explained.

8. HMS Restaurant Crawl was briefly discussed. Maria stated that Susan got 100% participation from restaurants for this month's crawl.
9. South Shore CVA membership was discussed. Examples of previous years' events advertised were shown to the Commission and they decided that this was not something to pursue at this time. In the future there may be a formal vote for involvement if a future event requires that level and price range of advertising.
10. Appropriations – HRC is asking Town Council for funds for the HRC PHP but that will happen next time appropriations are advertised. After some discussion about what to ask for, Town Council President Tom Black suggested asking for a bulk of money up front rather than requesting in increments as applicants are approved. Following this, discussion about Commercial Improvement Grants ensued and the HRC decided to ask the Town Council for money for this as well, with Tom Black's suggestion.

The meeting was adjourned by President Sean Conley at 7:30 pm.