

## Gibsonville Development Advisory Committee (GDAC) Meeting Notes

April 17, 2019

### *Attendance*

In attendance were members Ben Baxley (BB), Sean Dowell (SD), Lori Lacassagne (LL), Dick Swank (DS), and Steve Harrison (SH). Not in attendance was Ricky Cox (RC), Wanda Small (WS), and Lance Wood (LW).

### *Review of Prior Business*

**Approval of Last Minutes.** Group reviewed prior meeting notes and approved this with very minor revisions.

### *Updates*

**Downtown Strong / Home Town Strong:** Discussed in last meeting. No action has been taken on this opportunity yet per BB update.

**Murals Project:** This topic has been an active discussion for a few meetings since downtown improvements / beautification was one of the 2019 goals for GDAC. See prior meeting notes. Added at this meeting was that (in no particular order):

- DS spoke with city of Burlington downtown staff. They brought up liability issues, which we should be mindful of. Whatever we have done, have our paperwork and contracts done professionally.
- BB to check with NC DOT about any potential issues related to art near public roadways. Also, BB provided for review a copy of Burlington's RFP for artists, if needed.
- Case studies were discussed. BB brought up Siler City had a successful murals program. GDAC members to investigate after meeting.
- SD added that per LW's discussion with Marty Kotis, typical costs were \$5K - \$7K for decent size projects. This matches prior discussed Belmont mural which cost \$7K.
- LL thought we should try to reduce cost by getting the paint donated. As an incentive, we could allow donating companies to put their logo up on the mural. Sherman Williams was an idea. LL thought for process we should do a contest.
- SD brought up that Gibsonville already has a Facade and Downtown Improvement committee for similar uses. SD suggested that GDAC align potential locations, materials, and process. With this framework in place, we could then see if the Facade and Downtown Improvement Committee could not run the selection and installation of this public art.

As in our last meeting "homework" for all on above was to 1) look for funding / grants, 2) try to get specific location nailed down, and 3) BB to investigate town rules related to making this art project real.

### *New Business*

**Gibsonville Commercial Real Estate Marketing Analysis:** At last meeting, GDAC reviewed SD and LW's commercial real estate inventory and professional findings report. This included a Gibsonville Non-Residential Real Estate Report (dated March 20, 2019). The conclusion of this report was that

with the dated age of our downtown properties and their long term ownership, only improvements or property sales could aid Gibsonville in increased tax collections; this was specifically due to depreciation of these properties. Also SD sent this excel list of all downtown property owners and real estate to BB for use in a letter campaign, keeping a current inventory list of available real estate, etc. With this economic development step covered, GDAC was presented with functional differences between residential and commercial brokerage. Presentation attached with these meeting notes. SD's conclusion was that if downtown property owners were unwilling to pay a brokerage fee, they would not get the quality tenants represented by real estate professionals. Also, being mindful of the difference between commercial and residential marketing could aid the town in general in "getting our information out there."

**Sidewalks & Bike Lanes:** Group actively discussed how "people traffic" interacts with current city infrastructure. Discussions were:

- SH is highly interested in a safer Westbrook Avenue, specifically a sidewalk on this busy corridor. SH pointed out a significant portion of Gibsonville's population is on this corridor and would support this cost, per his own informal polling.
- LL thought this would be good for all and that this corridor was dangerous for walkers today.
- SD pointed out this could really aid downtown businesses.
- DS suggested we get details and approach Gibsonville's Concerned Citizen's group about getting their support.
- Bond financing was discussed and BB pointed out this would take 6+ months, which was too long to get it on the next ballot for the next election (coming at the end of 2019).
- Also discussed was a bike lane down Burlington Avenue to connect Elon to downtown Gibsonville. The road seems large enough to accommodate for a simple newly stripped line to allow for walkers and cyclists on the current roadway.
- SD suggested approaching Fidelity about the vacant land by the Gibsonville Pharmacy to add bike racks. Since there is no space to do this in downtown, this would allow for people to lock up their bikes and walk into our CBD.
- Looking back into Impact Alamance grant money for this improvement was an idea of BB and SD.

GDAC in general thought any means of making downtown accessible, easy to use, and safe was a good idea. BB to investigate costs and "do-ability" in general.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is planned for May 15th, 2019 from 2 PM – 3:30 PM. This is a typical third Wednesday of the month meeting.

## A Comparison of Residential Verse Commercial Brokerage

August 21, 2018

Residential brokerage and commercial brokerage are two different worlds. While all NC brokers have the same general state license, each real estate specialty has different customs, product knowledge, resources, professional designations, and peer groups. See below for details.

### **Residential Brokerage**

*Overview:* Residential brokers work on the sale and leasing of residential properties.

*Resources:* Residential brokers use the MLS system. This system is local in nature. For example, the Alamance County Realtor Association is not the same as the Greensboro Realtors Association. Unless you are a paying member of each area Realtors organization and a licensed NC broker, you cannot get access to the full functionality of their marketing system. While each MLS feeds information to [www.realtor.com](http://www.realtor.com), [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com), and [www.trulia.com](http://www.trulia.com), this local marketing system has a limited, specific audience. Outside parties have limited means of accessing this information.

*Timing:* Typical residential transactions can be negotiated within a few hours or days. Complicated commercial transactions can take months to negotiate. Commercial brokers slow, calculated responses can frustrate a residential broker. Alternatively, the rushed nature of residential brokers makes them seem aggressive and less thoughtful to commercial brokers. This is a significant cultural difference between the two different product types.

*Designations:* Residential brokers will many professional designations through the Realtors Association. These can include ABR (Accredited Buyer's Representation), ALC (Accredited Land Consultant), CRS (Certified Residential Specialist), GRI (Graduate of the Realtors Institute), etc.

### **Commercial Brokerage**

*Overview:* Commercial brokers work on all real estate other than the sale of residential homes.

This is broken up into separate specialties including industrial, land, multi-family, office, and retail. This can be further broken down into leasing, sales, and/or investment. Commercial brokerages many product types force commercial professionals to develop a specialty in at least one specific product type. Whereas one commercial broker may be a specialist in industrial sales and leasing, another may focus on land development. Each product type will have different general real estate requirements, finance methods, lenders, zoning requirements, and so forth. While many commercial brokers are generalists, it is best if you can choose a commercial specialist in your property's product type.

*Resources:* Many commercial brokers do not use the MLS. Commercial brokers use different online systems. Often these are national rather than local in nation. General examples include [www.costar.com](http://www.costar.com), [www.loopnet.com](http://www.loopnet.com), etc. To further complicate this explanation of resource, different product types also have different resources. As seen above, commercial brokerage covers many different product types and specialties.

*Timing:* In general, commercial transactions take longer to negotiate and complete than residential transaction.

*Designations:* Commercial brokers may be CCIMs (Certified Commercial Investment Member) or SIORs (Society of Industrial & Office Realtors, a commercial specific designation). Commercial brokers often do not need to be Realtors and therefore avoid can avoid designation and its related costs entirely.

### **Cross Over Between Commercial & Residential Brokerage**

Because they have different systems and peer groups, residential and commercial brokers rarely interact with each other. This is important to note. If you list your commercial property with a residential Realtor, you can know their MLS marketing system will reach a residential audience primarily. In this same way, you would not want to list a residential home with a commercial broker. No one consults a commercial marketing resource to buy a residential home. If you have a broker whom claims to work in both fields, ask them how they market their properties. This answer will allow you to clearly understand whom their peer group is.

Between the product types, there are generally only two areas of cross over in which a residential and commercial broker meet: 1) residential land development / the sale of single family land or lots for subdivisions and 2) in smaller multi-family development. Please note that most conventional lending programs will not finance more than 10 acres into the sale of a primary residence. For this reason, land sites in excess of 10 acres will require a broker with a land specialty.

### **The Take Away**

The best way to make this residential verse commercial brokerage decision is through the best and highest use of the real estate itself. Hire who can best handle what your property is.

In general, if you have a house for sale which 1) has less than 10 acres and 2) no potential commercial uses, hire a residential broker. If your property has any uses other than residential, you should consider a commercial broker and ideally one who understands the particular best and highest use of the property. To check on a broker's background, ask for their detailed information. A real estate professional with any time in the business will have already put together both 1) information on themselves professionally ("a deal resume" or "list of completed transactions") as well as 2) a reference list. A real estate professional should be happy to share any of this information with a potential client.

All in all, choose wisely who you want to list your property with.