

Gibsonville Development Advisory Committee (GDAC) Meeting Notes
April 25, 2018

In attendance were Ben Baxley (BB), Ricky Cox (RC), Sean Dowell (SD), Steve Harrison (SH), Lori Lacassagne (LL), and Dick Swank (DS). Missing was Wanda Small (WS) and Lance Wood (LW).

Topics Covered Included:

Approval of Last Minutes.

Town Updates: BB updated GDAC 1) he is the midst of annual budgeting and very busy, 2) town is now a part of Impact Alamance and can work with the city of Elon on side walks, 3) the planned downtown bathrooms were underway.

Internship / Part Time Economic Developer: BB also discussed GDAC's prior request about a person to do economic development on a more than once a month basis. In prior meetings, a part time economic developer was discussed as a goal to pursue. BB noted the town did not have the budget for this. GDAC discussed the idea of having someone from one the local colleges do this as an internship. Business and other programs are often looking for these types of opportunities. BB pointed out that he had text for what this job could incorporate, based on what was done for another area town. "We" / GDAC could write up a role and suggest this as an option to Alderman and the Mayor. Text for this role is submitted at the end of these meeting notes.

Co-Operative Alamance: SD recently attended an event by this Graham based group. Info at www.thecooperative.co. This group is focused on pulling efforts across the county together and for this meeting SD was the only person representing Gibsonville. SD pointed out this is where an Economic Developer for the city would be very helpful.

Reflections on the GMA Business Social: As outlined below:

BB: Thought event was positive for the city and went off well.

RC: No comment.

SD: Right was that this was a solid event, despite the reschedule. This event can be improved by pushing the date later in the year (rescheduled two years in a row) and also by making the one hour presentation shorter. More time for folks to mingle would allow this event to have more positive impact.

SH: Right was the set up for the venue, ie "enough room to mill around". We could improve by having a more specific panel. SH thought the panel was too varied.

LL: Right was the venue. LL was left questioning how we had exactly the same number of persons as last year.

DS: Thought event was good overall and worth repeating.

Reflections on GMA Golf Tournament: As outlined below:

BB: No comment.

RC: We can improve by having better marketing in the city hall for future events.

SD: Right was the two person format, which allowed for less prizes to be given and more proceeds for the charity. Wrong was the raffle at the end (unnecessary) and lack of handicaps for golfers. The "pros" just took the event and the beginners did not have a chance.

SH: Right was the course. Wrong was that 1) too many political signs made this feel like a political event and 2) don't separate tees by age.

LL: Right was the course. Wrong was the limited participation in this event other than by a select few.

DS: Right was the choice of course. We could improve by doing this on a weekend or perhaps Sunday afternoon, over a Friday afternoon. Also noted lack of participation, like LL.

Local Buy In: Whether through the prior discussed "Thank You" campaign or otherwise, GDAC discussed the need to get local buy in. Focus on what we have over going out of town to find others to do this for us was an active discussion. The same few people can't be doing the same events / activities without burning out. Perhaps rather than a golf event (which may not be "our character") we should do a downtown chili cook off? Also, SH brought up the idea of 'pop-up's in downtown. Doing an informal event like this in downtown brings local residents to our downtown core and is a win-win for all.

Chamber After Dark: Expanding on above, LL announced the Burke Manor Inn would be hosting this Alamance County event in September 2018. This social event is a once a year occasion, changes venues annually, and cost the town \$250 to host plus food / drink costs. This is less formal than the GMA Business Social and will put abundant persons in our downtown later this year. Excellent opportunity to "sell ourselves" for those that don't know Gibsonville.

The Microbrewery Project: SH has spearheaded attempts to find a microbrewery for town. This was discussed in prior meetings and he is now making calls to these groups.

Carry Over Topics From Last Meeting: Re-reviewed and pulled from last meeting notes.

Thank You's: Discussion of varied, past failures lead to this new idea. "We" should do a Thank You and Recognition Campaign. The city, the GMA, or just regular citizens should recognize active current and prior community leaders and families. This should be done without strings and sincerely. Homework for our next meeting was to consider 1) who we should think about for this recognition and 2) specifically why. This meeting is the genesis and first discussion of this project.

Goals Reviews (2018): Homework at our last meeting was to consider what we want to work on in 2018. Each GDAC member was asked for their two top goals / priorities.

³⁵₁₇ BB: Infrastructure. Benches downtown specifically, sidewalks to Elon, and/or the "other projects" that did not get financed with the library / downtown parking funds from the state.

³⁵₁₇ RC: TBD

³⁵₁₇ SD: 1) completion of the signs / recreation project which is specifically signs from Northeast Park to downtown (regional traffic we can push to our retailers) and 2) active, intention marketing of the free stage in downtown (to increase downtown visitation)

³⁵₁₇ SH: 1) a microbrewery in our downtown and 2) a full time marketing person.

³⁵₁₇ LL: 1) Continue working with relationship with town of Elon, along with and create interactive events with Elon staff/students (ie: Art Contest, "Elon night", Internships, Volunteering Opportunities - golf, fall festival, event planning) and 2) Continue working with town "beautification" projects that businesses can see and make them feel continued support with enhancing the look of Gville.

³⁵₁₇ WS: 1) Mixed use development at Minneola Mill (like the Revolution Mills project). This would include office space / co-op / executive suites space. Downtown development

specifically to also include a play area for kids in something like the prior submitted Home builder's life sized train and 2) walkability.

³⁵₁₇ DS: Parking downtown.

³⁵₁₇ LW: 1) getting direction from city and other citizen groups, ie working together in a larger group and 2) "a unified plan" / intentional direction for downtown.

SD pointed out that many of these goals overlapped. It was discussed that all of these are possible with effort and that GDAC members could put their own personal time into any of these goals they supported.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is planned for May 16, 2018 from 2 PM – 3:30 PM. This is a typical third Wednesday of the month meeting.

EXAMPLE: Economic Developers Role

The Town of Ayden, NC, (pop. 5000) is seeking qualified applicants for position of Economic Developer. Position is full-time w/excellent benefits. Economic Developer is part of Management Team and reports directly to Town Manager and performs complex professional work in planning, organizing, and directing economic development activities of the town. Performs wide range of duties focused on supporting businesses seeking to create or retain jobs in the Town of Ayden, and as such, plays an instrumental role in promoting Ayden as a great place to live, work, and conduct business. Works in partnership with a network of agencies and resources, serves as the initial point of contact for business looking to locate to Ayden, assist existing businesses planning to expand or seeking assistance in helping their business achieve its potential. Essential functions and responsibilities performed include, but are not limited to: serve as community ombudsman to assist businesses navigating local processes; work with site selectors, industrial and commercial realtors and other agencies to coordinate activities aimed at obtaining necessary zoning permits and other approvals as needed for new development, to include residential development, and business prospects; serves as a resource for the development community, property owners, business and community organizations; grant writing. Desired capabilities: develop and maintain strong and effective professional relationships with business leaders, developers, other organizations and town staff; plan, organize and administer economic development programs; knowledge of Town and Pitt County development procedures and assist businesses and developers in navigating these procedures; knowledge of trends, developments and techniques in the field of economic development, including site selection, business outreach, recruitment, business expansion, downtown revitalization and related activities; forward thinking and ability to foster successful public and private partnerships; handle confidential information appropriately; strong customer service skills, ability to work effectively in a team environment, excellent oral and written communication skills; effective verbal presentation skills; maintain flexibility in work schedule with some evening and weekend work required for special events, conferences attendance, etc. Requirements: bachelor's degree in marketing, sales, communication, economic/community development or a related field: 3-5 years of successful, demonstrated experience implementing economic development related strategies and techniques. Town's target is for person to begin work on June 1, 2018, or as soon thereafter as possible. Salary negotiable with hiring range of \$55,000-\$65,000. Mail résumé with cover letter and salary requirements to: Town of Ayden, P.O. Box 219, Ayden, NC 28513 Attn: Town Manager, or via email to sharrell@ayden.com. For more information and a complete job description, please visit www.ayden.com. *The Town of Ayden is an EEOC employer and does not discriminate against any qualified applicant.*