

Gibsonville Development Advisory Committee (GDAC) Meeting Notes  
May 16, 2018

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

*Topics Covered Included:*

**Town Updates:** BB updated GDAC that the town budget was passed. He has saved a small amount of money for signs from Northeast Park to our downtown. This will complete the Recreation to Downtown Signs project started two years ago.

**Gibsonville School / Dr Dick House:** GDAC talked about the recent Alamance News press for the pending Dr. Dick open house. It is hoped this successful rehab will also be partnered with a rehab at the immediate proximity Gibsonville School. SD noted that recent discussions with developers was that they were in design / finance entitlements and this project was still underway.

**Real Estate:** SD updated GDAC that 1) the Minnola Mill historic rehab project pushes forth and past through the Guilford County Historic Preservation Committee the following night with approval. Next step for this is the June 14 state meeting with the Historic Preservation Office, and 3) we have a strong chance at the Publix distribution center, per local real estate / political contacts.

**Growth & Growing Pains:** Discussion of real estate prompted discussion of residential growth in and around our town. GDAC feels that “we” can do a better job of educating citizens about benefits of growth. Recent projects had citizens as more reactive than thoughtful. A “pitchforks and torches” approach to what a few individuals do not want does not lead to smart long term planning for all. Discussion with citizen and education about the positives of growth could help us avoid such reactions. For example, it could be explained that with each new apartment complex the city has enough new tax money for another police officer, etc. Case studies and real data could be presented. Citizens may not be so concerned then that new growth makes current “problems” worse. As people vote with their wallets, an economic explanation of positives of growth may help people understand why growth could be embraced.

**Future Use Planning & Citizens Event:** The above discussion prompted an idea for a new citizens event. Invite out all Gibsonville citizens to an event with 1) a table with their political officials there to talk to, 2) clear signage about who is who, 3) maps about the towns current and future use zoning, 4) a pros / cons outline about growth and growing pains, 5) a requests for feedback from citizens about these points. This event could be done by the city or hosted by others. If successful, this could be an annual meeting of the minds. One venue offered for this was the new community center. This would be a great way to show Gibsonville its newest amenity. If downtown, this could be partnered with current Saturday activities.

**The Parking “Problem”:** Another topic discussed was the “need” for downtown parking. Whether there is this actual need or not, this is a perceived issue. SH talked about a desire to find an answer to this question. SD pointed out that with the pending fencing around the downtown tracks (due to high speed rail), there is an opportunity to do further parking safely in this easement. For example, behind Town Hall. It was also pointed out that there are numerous vacant lots that can be further development. Example the grassy area behind Fidelity Bank directly adjacent to downtown. If this perceived issue were resolved, there might be the chance to have one road through downtown, not two and expand the town greens.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is planned for June 20th, 2018 from 2 PM – 3:30 PM. This is a typical third Wednesday of the month meeting.