

Gibsonville Development Advisory Commission Meeting Notes  
Sept 18, 2019

*Attendance*

In attendance were members , Sean Dowell (SD), Steve Harrison (SH), Seth Rosson (SR), and Dick Swank (DS). Local resident Bobbie McAdam and Gibsonville economic developer Chelsea Dickey (CD) were guests at the meeting. Those unable to attend included Ben Baxley (BB), Ricky Cox (RC), Lori Lacassagne (LL), Wanda Small (WS).

*Review of Prior Business*

**Meetings Minutes:** Group reviewed prior meeting notes. Minutes were approved.

*Updates*

**Murals:** Murals were only briefly discussed. Per SH, the mural idea now has Concerned Citizens of Gibsonville support, though where funds come from was important to them. CD has put in for a \$4,500 grant for this and is talking to others about money. News of if this is granted or not happens in late October / early November 2019. If we don't win, there is a spring application round. CD advised that hiring a talented, local artist with a specific task would be the easiest way to get this project to reality. Less chefs in the kitchen so to speak relative to a contest or other formats. Guidance from SH and DS was that money was more easily approved by the Board if a plan were detailed and specific. It was discussed that if grants could cover half this money, the other half of the money could potentially come through the towns facade program (which is specifically dedicated for downtown improvements like this). All in all, plans for the mural can be made over the winter with the art being done in 2020.

**Historic Project(s) Update:** Tower on the Gibsonville's Minneola Mill sold this week. Since there are not currently NC historic tax credits (pending in the next NC budget) and construction costs are high, development will likely occur later rather than sooner. This is also the real estate trends fighting against development of the Gibsonville School. All in all, these development groups will put out press when their projects are planned, designed, and underway. That said, the tower component of Minneola Mill is now owned by historic developers who primarily build apartments. We seem to be in the when, not if side of this apartment conversion conversation.

**Workforce Housing / "Missing Middle":** SD spoke about the real estate trend that 1) construction costs are high paired with 2) only a small increase in potential rents. This has created a real world situation of a) financial assistance granted only to poorer and fixed income residents (sub 60% rent to income ratio). Where b) the rich don't need this assistance (120%+ income) but c) those between the 60% - 120% of rent to income ratios could use aid. These "regular folks" are NOT getting new multi-family construction they can live in. Due to these high construction costs, new apartment product is really only being built for two income classes while "the missing middle" is becoming a larger problem. SD asked GDAC to think of this as seniors (fixed incomes) getting taken care of while youth and those in the workforce being ignored by apartment builders. Middle income individuals are forced to rent / buy older or starter homes which becomes unintentional affordable housing. This is not a product type they desire and can often be sub-par housing. This is the specific reason why market rate apartments are not built in smaller cities and also why youth avoids moving to smaller cities. Sadly it is in smaller cities where this efficient housing choice can do the most good; for example, imagine how much small downtown businesses would benefit by having dense housing walkable to it. Proof of this

demand includes that the Triad market overall was reported at a 3% vacancy rate only a few months ago; this is the Triad's lowest apartments vacancy rate in 20+ years. SH noted that multiple small multi-family projects (up to 5 units) had already been done in Gibsonville, with one in the works at the next zoning meeting. Please note the above discussion started due to a prior online back and forth regarding affordable and workforce housing (which is not section 8 housing).

**Planning Update:** Specifically SH updated GDAC about the 5 unit multi-family deal (Springwood @ Cedar rezoning) and also about Poets Walk. Poets Walk is a 90 unit town home complex prior zoned. This is on Highway 61 north of Highway 70 and south of the 61 & 70 split south of downtown Gibsonville.

**GMHSI Calendar:** GDAC updated by SD about the Gibsonville Museum & Historical Society's Inc's (GMHSI) request to find advertisers and photographers for their pending 2020 calendar. More information available at [www.gmhsi.org](http://www.gmhsi.org)

**Economic Development Update:** Chelsea Dickey updated GDAC about multiple potential deals in the works. Details on the projects will be announced as they come to fruition.

**Appreciated Assistance:** Appalachian State University student Seth Rosson's time with Gibsonville ends in November 2019.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is planned for October 16, 2019 from 2 PM – 3:30 PM. This is a typical third Wednesday of the month meeting.