

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**City of Germantown**

**September 17, 2020**

**Meeting Minutes**

PRESENT: Tom Winning, Mark Heistand and Jeff Fannin

ABSENT: Steve Boeder, Mayor; Mike Kuhn

ALSO PRESENT: Heidi Grant, President of FNB of Germantown, Dan Bish, Community & Economic Development Specialist - Economic Development, Montgomery County Community and Economic Development; Keith Brane, City Planner, Pat Higgins, ED Consultant/City Grant Writer

The Zoom meeting was called to order by Tom Winning at 9:04am.

### **MINUTES**

The August meeting minutes were approved with a motion by Jeff Fannin and Mark Heistand.

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Business Space Inventory**

After the August Economic Development Committee, Tom and Pat had a few conversations regarding the need and possible ways to develop an inventory of vacant commercial, office and restaurant space. Pat searched other community's webpage to see if they had lists of available space. She also contacted Montgomery County to see if they were aware of inventory lists on the County level or used by other communities. Pat learned that Montgomery County is linked to the State of Ohio Property Search webpage and several communities also are using this system. Dan Bish from the County walked Pat through the website and she asked Dan to join the September meeting.

Dan Bish explained the system is used throughout the State of Ohio to identify available buildings, as well as, sites that could be developed. The site allows a person to limit their search to specific geographic areas and site requirements. Dan demonstrated the websites information available to potential buyers and builders. Each posting must have at a minimum the address of the property, property type and a picture. Additional information regarding the site helps the listing and the potential buyers. The City staff would be responsible for entering the data on each site. The system also has a feature in which each community is notified every three months to review their inventory and update where necessary.

Jeff Fannin asked if Loop Net and Co-Star are still used to search properties or if this new system is used instead. Dan indicated Loop Net is still available and is used. Co-Star is used but not as much as in the past. The new State of Ohio site came online in 2017. Jeff also asked if small properties such as storefronts in Germantown would be on this system. Dan indicated both large and small properties are listed on the website.

In addition to the property search information there are resources that a business might also use, such as DP&L, Vectren, Montgomery County business assistance programs or demographic information.

Tom Winning asked if the City webpage could be linked to this website to further help businesses find locations in Germantown. Dan said the City webpage can be linked to this website to help people looking for property in Germantown. For a person exploring possible locations, they could also go to the Montgomery County Community and Economic Development website and find property search.

The committee members and staff thanked Dan for attending the meeting. Tom asked if committee members would be able to assist with identifying vacant commercial and office space in Germantown. He felt there are four areas in Germantown to target: (1) Downtown and west of downtown, (2) Triangle area including Hickory Pointe, (3) Township and Germantown commercial properties and (4) City owned property.

#### Update on the Façade Improvement Program

Pat indicated the City was waiting on a new agreement with the County to continue the Façade Improvement Program. City was hoping for the final agreement in October and Council approval in November. Applicants would be sought during the winter months and construction in the spring. To encourage more participants, staff is thinking of changing the program from 50/50 to 60/40; as well as, increasing the amount of available funds from \$2500 to \$5000.

#### Highlighting Businesses in Germantown

Pat briefed the committee on a potential effort to highlight local businesses. With so many new homes being built, new residents might not know all the businesses Germantown has. Therefore, the city could highlight a business a month or so. Keith questioned how a business would be selected without causing problems with other businesses being disappointed they were not selected. Pat indicated staff was also concerned with this possibility. Heidi suggested checking local chambers to see how they highlight local businesses. Tom felt this project should be held until the property inventory was completed.

#### Other Business

Tom indicated the Valley View School District Superintendent would like to come to an Economic Development Committee meeting to discuss the school plans in the future. Everyone agreed it would be a great idea. Tom will reach out to Ben Richards, Superintendent for the October meeting.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06am.