

Woodburn Redevelopment Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2014, 7:00 PM

Meeting was called to order by Chris Haddox at 7:04 PM.

PRESENT: City Manager Jeff Mikorski, City Council Representative/Deputy Mayor Marti Shamberger, and Commission Members: Mary Angel Blount, Christina “Nikki” Byrne-Hoffman, Chris Haddox, Kerry Lilly, Tim Mashburn, and Bonnie Witmyer. Commission member Mark Furfari was not in attendance. Councilmen Bill Kawecky, Abigail Arnold from Mon County Boys & Girls Club, Lynn Stasick and Rodney Bonner from Preservation Alliance of WV were in attendance in the public audience.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Minutes were approved as submitted. Deputy Mayor Marti Shamberger moved to approve, and it was seconded by Kerry Lilly.

CORRESPONDENCE/ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA:

Paul Preserve correspondence- Secretary Byrne-Hoffman relayed information that the Jerome Park Neighborhood Association is looking for donations for completion of BOPARC’s pocket park at Paul Preserve (letter from JPNA and park plan is on file). She said some area businesses had donated construction materials and Kiwanis had raised money for playground equipment, but more funds were needed. She asked members to think about similar ideas on how to approach local area businesses and individuals for support in similar projects at Woodburn, as well as to let her know if they knew of anyone interested in donating funds to BOPARC for the Paul Preserve project.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Woodburn Arts & Music Festival Debrief- Abigail Arnold provided a summary of the activities at the Woodburn Arts & Music Festival. She said it was planned as an annual event, but she won’t be planning the festival next year, as her AmeriCorp appointment is ending. She said the general idea was good and there was a lot of interest in the event. However, there were multiple other festivals that weekend and the weather was not ideal. She said later in the Spring or in Early summer would be more conducive weather-wise. She thinks next year, the her festival planning successor should meet with the commission monthly for progress. She was only alerted of the need to plan the event in Mid-March. She said starting planning the August before would be better to facilitate partnership and make the event more profitable for all parties.

One issue she saw with the event was there was no table charge for vendors. There was trouble getting vendors due to the other festivals that weekend, but they also need a more stringent application process and possibly a \$10 table fee. Parking was a huge issue at the event. Vendors and staff had to park off-site. She suggested borrowing a nearby parking lot and possibly charge a fee for parking.

Kerry Lilly reiterated the Cheat Fest was the same weekend and he has been attending the festival for 20 years. Abigail said many of her volunteers did not show due to Cheat Fest and next year, it should be a requirement for B&G Club volunteers to attend the event. Secretary

Byrne-Hoffman stated her volunteer group was not able to make it due to timing with the end of the university semester and final exams.

Abigail said time to advertise and time to plan is needed. She wanted to get BOPARC more involved, such as renting their bounce house. She has a list of resources suggested for next year. Chair Haddox said these issues will be addressed for next year's festival and everyone thanked Abigail for her hard work and dedication in festival efforts.

Non-profit Center- Chair Haddox met with Brandi Helms of the United Way. Brandi reminded him of a conversation 15 years ago with Lynn Hale of Community Action of North Central West Virginia regarding a non-profit center. This will be discussed at the June 11 meeting. Chair Haddox said a non-profit center could be a themed model but doesn't have to be just social services; could be arts or others. The idea is socially responsible real estate, and a non-profit center could fill that.

Marketing of Woodburn Product/Website- The website is live. Tim Mashburn said he thought there would be some collaboration back and forth, but they used the files he sent and put them up. The City is working with a company for the web hosting and back end. He said things need to be updated on the server. City Manager Mikorski said he thought there was supposed to be a test website, but they pushed it through. He is in the process of getting a process for updating files, and will provide Tim with a place to upload as soon as it is arranged. He should be able to FTP the new files into the same place. Manager Mikorski said luckily, the website name is a short URL and the City didn't have to pay for it.

As far as progress by the Multimedia Group, Councilman Kawecki said the multimedia group meets and shares experiences and this is the 1st time they've taken on a project together. There appears to be some difficulties in working together as a group. He has told them if they turn over something that appeals to us, we'll run with it. Chair Haddox and Councilman Kawecki discussed that we need to follow up with the reporters that were at Woodburn to see if we can get the video for our website.

BOPARC system and facilities management- City Manager Mikorski said he is collaborating with BOPARC. They are coming up with fees and duties of each party for event rentals. They will have something by June. Chair Haddox reminded everyone that Mel had sent out suggestions for costs of space. Deputy Mayor Shamberger thought it was reasonable. Manager Mikorski said BOPARC will be handling the booking, but not long-term rentals. The modular space is expected to be rented out long-term. Chair Haddox said he hears a lot of people saying "so and so is looking for space". He wondered if we should follow up with approaching BlissBlissBliss, as someone mentioned in an earlier meeting. Several commission members said they had discovered that was a BlissBlissBliss patron's idea because she thought the space was crowded, not an idea put forth by someone associated with managing BlissBlissBliss. Mary Angel Blount concurred that she doesn't think they are actively looking for a space.

General Property Upkeep and Management- Chair Haddox said general property maintenance continues to be an issue. The birm on Charles street is awful, and school busses park there. He wanted to put up a decorative fence or something because curb appeal is low and the vines are ugly. He asked City Manager Mikorski if BOPARC could get the vines off the fence around the playground. City Manager Mikorski stated that their agreement with BOPARC was just for BOPARC to cut the grass, but he would check into the matter. Marti said Richwood Ave has parking available, but people don't use it. Nancy Ganz had suggested to her that it be

a dog park. Councilman Kawecki said there are some limited funds available for dog parks. Chair Haddox stated additional recycling is still needed. He also mentioned that he thinks the grass should be removed when it's cut instead of being left everywhere. There was also an issue with a yard sale bin that just showed up in the parking lot at Woodburn. Jeff said they tracked it down from looking up the phone number on the bin and it was WVU's. It has since been removed.

Chair Haddox said he had also talked to a local dance group about using the multipurpose building and asked for other ideas on how to use the building. Manager Mikorski said an event permit would be needed, just like for the festival. Deputy Mayor Shamberger suggested a neighborhood covered dish. Secretary Byrne-Hoffman suggested weekend music nights on the playground, similar to the festival, that don't conflict with any other BOPARC activities. She said it could be free or small entrance fee charged, but that you could also invite food vendors that could possibly donate some of their profits. Tim Mashburn said he thinks the event should be free, just to gain people's interest in the property. Chair Haddox also said there are few places that do music nights that are only about the music. He would like to see more of that in town.

City Manager Mikorski said there's a community development block grant available for support of buildings. He asked if anything would be needed. Chris Haddox said it would be nice if we had our own supply of tables and chairs. Haddox also mentioned there was about \$1000 left of the initial Brownfield grant Pat applied for when the Woodburn project was first introduced to the City.

Chair Haddox mentioned he would like to see the ditch by the playground installed with a culvert and smoothed over. Many people have been hurt there and it is a liability. He knows the kids use it in the winter to sled on. Manager Mikorski said there needs to be a sign they can't use the hill or it needs to be fixed. The commission agreed it needs to be fixed.

It was also mentioned there is Hott-Brown money available that is project specific. The Met Foundation was able to apply for monies for the theater. Manager Mikorski said applications for funding are submitted through the City.

NEW BUSINESS and DISCUSSION:

Preservation Alliance WV- Lynn Stasick gave a presentation on the mission of Preservation Alliance WV (PAWV). Chair Haddox said the commission is exploring ideas for the old school and the commission is open to repurposing, significant modification or taking down of the building, if need be for the goals of the project.

Lynn said PAWV is a non-profit, founded in 1982. Organized by Kent, it was given a \$5 million gift from the National Trust. Hands-on skilled craftsman and academics are involved in the organization. He is the State-Wide Field Services Representative. Sites for preservation must fit criteria for application. Six properties were chosen for 2014, both large and small, and are on endangered property lists. They perform prioritized needs assessments on the properties.

He recounted many of the projects PAWV is currently or has been involved in, including the Coal Heritage Museum in Madison, the Charles Washington retreat in Charlestown, Fayetteville High School, 1st ward school in Elkins (worse condition than Woodburn), Old Main School in Summersville, etc.

Lynn gave out handouts regarding the benefits of preservation. He overviewed some of the benefits, which included reduction of landfill waste from buildings, using the sweat equity from previous generations, recognizing the human capacity and endeavor to build, saving money by repurposing rather than tearing down and rebuilding, and the advantages of adaptive reuse.

Chris Haddox said he would like Lynn to do a walk-through at Woodburn as a preservationist. Lynn relayed there is a 2015 application deadline in the late fall and the decision is made in December 2014. It is announced at the State Capitol the day before History Day and winners are invited to a legislative luncheon to talk with legislators.

City Manager Mikorski asked if the interested party has a vague idea of what they want to do with the property, but no specific plans, if PAWV can help with the process. Lynn said yes. They help people seek monies, including applying for state and federal tax credits, ranging from 20-30%. Lynn mentioned prevailing wage must be paid if receiving federal monies. PAWV can also look into people suited for the job.

Vice-Chair Kerry Lilly asked if there was loss of control by registering the historic site. Lynn said there are many myths associated with the National Registry, and PAWV has a presentation that explains them all. Daneille Lepresta gives Preservation 101, National Registry, and Funding information seminars.

Councilman Kawecky asked how a cost analysis is determined. PAWV can give resources on how to find the information to estimate the cost. Lynn said viability of income is important if the site is a commercial property. City Manager Mikorski asked if total costs of preservation of specific properties are on the website. Lynn said no, but he can find out that information.

ADJOURNMENT: Secretary Byrne-Hoffman made the motion to adjourn. Tim Mashburn seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.