

Woodburn Redevelopment Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 11th, 2014, 7:00 PM

Meeting was called to order by Chris Haddox at 7:02 PM.

PRESENT: City Manager Jeff Mikorski, City Council Representative/Deputy Mayor Marti Shamberger, and Commission Members: Mary Angel Blount, Christina “Nikki” Byrne-Hoffman, Mark Furfari, Chris Haddox, Kerry Lilly, Tim Mashburn, and Bonnie Witmyer.. Andy Johnston from Loudon Cares, Patrick Kirby with WV Redevelopment Collaborative, Lauri Abildso from Girls on the Run of NCWV, and Amy Skeens and Brandi Helms from the United Way of Mon County were also present.

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

CORRESPONDENCE/ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA:

Denny Poluga had responded to an email from Chair Haddox regarding property upkeep. A summary is in Unfinished Business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Property Upkeep Update- Denny sent Chair Haddox an email stating that garbage would be policed by his volunteers daily. They are also interested in a community garden, but need final approval on where to put it. City Manager Mikorski said he may also have some internal funds to approve some maintenance on the curbed areas. Patrick Kirby also mentioned there is about \$2000-2500 left of the seed money that was raised towards the property.

Update of Leasing/Marketing- City Manager Mikorski is still working on finalizing the details.

NEW BUSINESS and DISCUSSION:

Non-profit Center- Andy Johnston has been working with the Nonprofit Centers Network for the last 10 years in Leesburg, VA. NCN serves communities across the US and Canada. They provide roadmaps for nonprofit center development and have developed a best practices library. He explained different models exist and they are essentially quirky real estate projects. There is a cost savings for nonprofits due to involvement of in kind services. Needed for the project are real estate expertise, a quality space, organizational readiness, operational expertise, and scalability. Space, equipment, and vehicles can be shared, as well as specialized equipment, such as copiers.

There are Theme Centers, Multi-Sector Centers, and Service Centers (such has Health & Human Services). Themes could be Disabilities, Family, Arts, or Environmental. Multi-sector is a little bit of everything.

Andy stated there is “no free lunch”. It is a business proposition and the bills and loan must be paid. However, for organizations involved, it can provide stability, a hub for collaboration, and

quality space and services in order to meet their organizational capacity and community impact goals.

Non-profit center models are different than commercial real estate due to the financial model, shared spaces, and shared services. The mission of the center must be clear, concise, and compelling. More partners involved = more time. Partners involved could include the nonprofit organizations, the government, the private sector, the community, funders, investors, or philanthropic organizations or donors. Control and risk varies on the type of stakeholder, whether it be the tenants, the co-founders, the board, or the co-owners.

Essential to a successful venture are organizational readiness, complimentary missions, compatible personalities, and structured agreements. The missions, finances, risk, governance, and charity status of the organization all have an impact on these attributes.

Andy described the different types of management: owners, master lease (government/community), community nonprofit owner, LLC/partnership, etc. He also mentioned funding and that community block grants were available, but if the property is sold, HUD must be paid back. Membership within the NCN is \$250/yr, but if our center joins, \$100 will be donated back to effort.

He gave examples of what could be shared in the facility: security, janitorial and maintenance services, information technology, training, HUD accessibility, etc.

The floor was then opened up for discussion. Secretary Byrne-Hoffman said she really likes the idea of a non-profit/recreational center combination facility. Marti said the Y, as was discussed in previous meetings, was probably not an option at this point as part of the Clarksburg branch is financially in trouble.

When asked how long it might take to get a nonprofit center up and running, Andy said we have time on our side because we have what a lot of centers don't start out with. We have a building and an engaged city, but we need a champion who is willing to step up and get it done faster. We need to find out how much it will cost to renovate, for the architecture and engineering, and investigate the nonprofit partner status. The start-up period for the project could take 1-4 years. He said financial incentives could be given to organizations, such as 3 months free rent. A model needs to be chosen. For example, if a for-profit rec center was established, non-profit health-related organizations could be included.

Brandi Helms from the United Way mentioned they have several organizations who may be willing to move to a new location or the location they're in is not necessarily convenient. Big Brothers and Big Sisters is in a modular at Mylan Park.

Tim Mashburn said our location is good but he is concerned about the long-term financial viability. It was discussed that the success of non-profit centers in WV is kind of a mixed bag. A feasibility study was then discussed. There is about \$1500 from the initial grant awarded for Woodburn, and there are fast track proposals and tax credits available. A market assessment study costs about \$3500 on average. It was then discussed how many organizations have had issues with their buildings or may be ideal to approach regarding how a non-profit center could benefit them. The feasibility study would also show potential for how you fund those who work in the shared space; the ability to fund differently based on this space versus separately. Organizations could also partner more easily for fundraisers.

Pat Kirby mentioned that it is a concerted effort and incentives and subsidies to be examined. Foundations are available to aid in this type of project, such as AU Associates in KY. Low-income tax credits may also be available.

Brandi Helms said she could help with recruiting non-profits.

Tim asked Jeff for clarification on the mortgage of the property. The \$70,000/yr repayment begins in July. Initially, it was thought that the I.C. White money would be available for a couple of years. Due to lack of funds, the I.C. White will fund Woodburn for 1 year. Other funding is being looked at. Park funds may be available for maintenance of the lower part of the property.

Secretary Byrne-Hoffman asked Lauri from Girls on the Run how she felt about the idea of a non-profit center and how that affects her organization's goals. She said their organization is small, so they don't need a lot of space. They have a good collaboration with Boys and Girls Club and can provide trainings in B&G Club rooms. They also share the internet and so far it has worked very well. The space at Woodburn also costs less than Space Camp. They paid \$150/mon and had a conference room, but there wasn't enough room, there was no storage. They had to store their things at a storage room on Van Voorhis through Mon General. Most of their programming is conducted at the schools. They don't need additional space, but might need more storage. Most their organizational mission involves character development, running, and life skills. It's a 12 week program, with a different lesson every week, and a 5K run at the Morgantown Learning Academy. There are about 200 councils for Girls on the Run around the country. Her organization serves 480 girls in 19 schools in Mon, Harrison, Preston, and Wetzel Counties.

Chair Haddox mentioned that the McQuain Trust may find favor with a project like this because it fits with the types of things they like to do. He said he would post his presentation from a few meetings back, as it was unable to be shown due to technical difficulties. He asked the board if we want to pursue a project like this.

Member Mark Furfari said a pitch was needed to the foundation/group. A sales pitch is needed to sell people on the idea and we needed to get our tentacles out into the non-profits that serve thousands. It was definitely something to consider.

Chair Haddox asked if we wanted to do a feasibility study and then seek investors. Tim Mashburn said outlay funding was needed and suggested bridge funding that we or the City could look for. Chair Haddox said we probably won't find funding without a vision. Deputy Mayor Shamberger said she supports moving ahead with due diligence. Something was needed to base decision on and if we apply for funding, we need to show we've done our homework. She supports a feasibility study. Tim Mashburn submitted a motion to move ahead with a feasibility study. Mary Angel Blount seconded the motion. Chair Haddox said he will put Pat Kirby on the task to move forward with the feasibility study.

Pat Kirby told Brandi Helms that she may want to informally ask her organizations when their leases are up. Brand said there is a wealth of information in the budget line of their applications. Brandi can also look at different models of money allocations within the organizations.

Tim Mashburn made the motion to adjourn. Bonnie Witmyer seconded the motion. Chair Haddox adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM and reminded everyone the next meeting would be July 24th at 7PM.

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