

Woodburn Redevelopment Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 23rd, 2014, 7:00 PM

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

PRESENT: The meeting started with City Manager Jeff Mikorski, City Council Representative/Deputy Mayor Marti Shamberger, Chair Chris Haddox, Vice Chair Kerry Lilly, Secretary Nikki Byrne-Hoffman, Commission Members Mary Angel Blount, Mark Furfari, Tim Mashburn, and Bonnie Witmyer. Noel Hoffman, a local veteran, and Jordan Young, Abigale Clapham, and Abigail Gottshall from the Boys and Girls Club were also present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Minutes were approved as corrected. Bonnie Witmyer stated the Mountaineer Kennel Club interest came from a friend who is a member, not directly from MKC itself. She made the motion to approve, Mark Furfari seconded the motion.

CORRESPONDENCE/ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Property Upkeep Update-

Boys and Girls Club Garden- The Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club Garden project was discussed in further detail. Jordan, Abby, and Abby presented figures with proposed garden plots. They sent soil samples to the WVU Agricultural Department on October 17th and hope to have the information back two weeks from that date. The hope to have 16 vegetables planted, with help with donations from Lowe's. They have been local sourcing vegetables from farmers to incorporate into the diets of the children. They hope to receive more input from Master Gardeners and teach the kids more about vegetable planting, harvesting, and use in the kitchen. They are proposing two additional raised beds, made of cedar, in Plot 5 on the front corner of the main building. They will have materials from a \$500 grant and there are a couple of more grants in progress. The kids have been involved in weeding and they will install place cards to label vegetables and native species. The members asked questions about garden placement, upkeep, and content, and other specifics.

City Manager Update- City Manager Mikorski said a guard rail for Charles Ave has been ordered and will be installed within the month. No sledding signs will need to be installed before winter. Unfortunately, it is a liability and too dangerous to permit. Kenny has removed the graffiti from the door on the multipurpose building.

Update of Leasing/Marketing/Website-

Mountain People's Co-Op- Chair Haddox said Mountain People's Co-op has shown some interest in the property. He has asked them to submit a proposal and they may have a board meeting on the property to discuss the idea. The City Manager stated that the district is a R1-A zone, and he will have to check to make sure the Co-Op qualifies under a "neighborhood grocery store".

Frack water testing- Chair Haddox also stated he had a gentlemen that may be interested in having a small lab on the site to test fracking water for disposal. Secretary Byrne-Hoffman

pointed out the EPA and other safety and health regulations that would have to be placed on the property to allow that. Some discussion expressed additional concerns.

Veteran's Housing- Chair Haddox has been in contact with some people regarding veteran's housing. Bob Turner from PACE and Hilda Hetty may be good collaborators and able to address the health/rural issues. Noel Hoffman, a local Army veteran came to express his concerns over housing veteran's housing on the property with Boys and Girls Club and other youth organizations. He gave figures for veteran alcohol and drug use, as well as PTSD and weapons statistics, as well as veterans service availability and pitfalls. He stated that from his perview, housing may not be the biggest concern, depending on which age group the group would be focusing on. He said all veterans groups are often associated with increased risk for substance abuse, mental health problems, and other concerns. Afghanistani and Iraqi conflicts often face the most issues with access to appropriate services, such as job placement, mental health services, and other assistance issues instead of housing, so a non-profit center focusing on access to services may be a better option. There was some discussion amongst the group and it was agreed that veteran housing may pose some dangerous risks to the current lessors and the surrounding community, given the mental health, weapons, and substance abuse potential of veteran populations who are often at most risk for lack of housing. Chair Haddox said it was something to think about further.

Update on Endangered Buildings- Deputy Mayor Shamberger and Mary Angel said the form is basically done.

NEW BUSINESS and DISCUSSION:

Music Festival (First Fridays at Woodburn)- Member of the group have been advertising for the event on November 7th. Councilman Bill Kawecky has been especially helpful with getting the event posted on the radio and other avenues. The next one is tentatively scheduled for December 5th at 6 PM. Matt Jordan will play the blues.

Open House for Prospective Tenants- Chair Haddox asked if the group would like to host an open house for prospective tenants. Group consensus was that it was a good idea.

Mary Angel Blount asked if alcohol is allowed on the property, in case groups wanted to host art shows or art & wine classes. City Manager Mikorski said he's not sure and would check into it.

ADJOURNMENT: The next meeting will be moved to Wednesday, November 19th at 7PM due to Thanksgiving conflicts. The December meeting has been moved to December 18th to avoid the holiday season conflicts. The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM with a motion made by Mary Angel Blount and the motion seconded by Bonnie Witmyer.