

## Minutes

### **Economic Development Committee**

**Tuesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – 4:30 pm – New London City Council Chambers & via Zoom**

Members present: Chairman Morack, Bishop, Kopitzke, Dorsey, Asman, Faucher, Pinch (via Zoom), Wolf, Zaug, Thompson (via zoom).

Absent: Johnson, Lathrop

Others present: Mayor Herter, City Administrator Hoerth, Alderman Besaw, Tom O’Connell, Randy Retzloff, Ingrid Retzlaff, Jacqui Miller with SC Swiderski LLC (via Zoom), Madeline Check with SC Swiderski LLC (via Zoom), Kalan McHugh with SC Swiderski LLC (via Zoom), Josh Wolf

Voting members present: 13

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30pm. O’Connell/Zaug to approve the agenda. Carried by all.
2. The November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 minutes were approved, motion by Asman/Faucher. Carried by all.
3. Two development firms provided presentations on conceptual designs for the downtown riverfront property. Randy Retzloff a developer who owns several apartment units currently in New London provided two site plan options including one with 7 buildings and one with 8 buildings. Each building would have 8 units in them (56-64 total apartment homes). Depending on when design, engineering and permitting can be completed, Retzloff stated he would be interested in starting construction in the spring of 2021 and it would take 1.5-2 years to complete his plan. Jacqui Miller, Business Development Manager with SC Swiderski led a presentation which included a site plan proposal with 8 buildings including a unit mix of 3 different building styles for the site. The proposal would include 44 total apartment homes. Planning would begin in 2021, with construction starting in 2022. The project would be completed in the fall of 2023. The Committee thanked both developers for their interest and creating proposals for the site. Administrator Hoerth will put together some additional questions for each developer to answer and come up with a matrix for the Committee to review at the next meeting.
4. Kopitzke presented the results of the first round of a Small Business Covid-19 Survey. 273 survey requests were sent out, at the time of the meeting 30 responses were received. Some of the take away points included:
  - a. 65% of respondents stated they are not at risk of any employee layoffs at this time, whereas 11 responded stating that they were at risk of laying off some employees due to the pandemic.
  - b. If business disruption continues , 1 business is at risk of closing in 1-2 months; 2 businesses within 3-5 months; 4 businesses in over 5 months; and 78% of respondents stated that closing is not a concern at this time.
  - c. The largest concern for most respondents moving forward was the risk of losing work and customer traffic to their business.
  - d. When asked what type of resources would be most helpful in the future, the most requested response was information on financial resources.

Kopitzke and Hoerth will work together to send out another request for those who did not fill out the survey to see if more responses can be captured.

5. For the past few years, the city has hired a consultant to manage video and digital marketing on social media promoting city services. Hoerth proposed allowing the current contract with the consultant to expire at the end of 2020 and managing those advertisement efforts with the talents of the city's new Video Producer, Casey Zempel. One benefit of organizing the advertisements in house is that the city can release a variety and more relative content on a quicker timeline.

Asman moved, seconded by Kopitzke to allow the current advertising contract with Bill Zeinert LLC to expire on 12/31/2020 with the intent to begin digital marketing efforts with in-house staff. Motion carried by all.

6. Kopitzke's business report included new downtown business front openings from the Democratic and Republican parties closing operations following the presidential election, the opening of a new alternative Church called Blue Gorilla Lounge at 309 N Water Street, and a new specialty boutique called Bom Bom at 1923 N Shawano Street.
7. Hoerth provided a progress report on the status of working with Midwest Properties I, LLP in their plans to develop in the NE Business Park.
8. Public Input- Josh Wolf provided his opinion on how to move forward with choosing a developer for the downtown riverfront site including going to some of their previous developments.
9. The next Committee meeting will be scheduled for January 26 at 4:30pm.
10. O'Connell /Bishop moved to adjourn at 5:56 pm. Carried by all.

Chad Hoerth  
City Administrator