



BOSS 2020 REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
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SINKING SPRING BOROUGH
BOSS 2020 REVITALIZATION STEERING COMMITTEE
BUSINESS & COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

Call to Order

Charles Coleman (President) called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Present: Charles Coleman (President-D), Merlin Weaver (ED), Robert Hughes (ED), Brian Hoffa (Borough Council), Lisa Gantner (Borough Council), Sam Loth (CDS) and Bob Ludgate (LEC).
Guests: Ken Pick (Berks Redevelopment) and Chris Gulotta (Marketing Consultant).

Note: Committees: ED-Economic, D-Design, P-Promotion.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Brian Hoffa to approve the Meeting Minutes of July 16th and August 20th, 2015.

Second by Robert Hughes. Motion Passed.

Treasurers Report

Dave Meas was absent. The Treasurer's report will be tabled until the October 15, 2015 meeting.

Real Estate Market Study

Sam Loth reported that the RFP distributed in August yielded three proposals. Twelve members of the BOSS 2020 Committee, Consultants and the Borough Economic & Community Development Sub-committee reviewed the three proposals and ranked them 1-3 based on the previously approved criteria: 1) Fourth Economy Consulting, 2) Gibbs Planning Group and 3) HCP Associates.

Mr. Loth opened the floor for discussion stating that he believed that the recommendation to Borough Council should be to select Fourth Economy Consulting as the company to be offered the contract to complete the Study. He asked those present to comment on any portions of the other proposals received that might be worthy to include in the Fourth Economy scope of work and/or any comments or suggestions pertaining to the Fourth Economy proposal:

- Chris Gulotta began with the need to identify the project manager for the study. He recommended that a principal of Fourth Economy should occupy this role. The Committee consensus agreed with Mr. Gulotta.
- Second, Mr. Gulotta noted that Fourth Economy wanted to extend the timeline for completion of the Study into January 2016. The Committee consensus agreed.
- Third, that in the Gibbs Planning Group proposal, there was a component "Letter of Opinion" supporting any conclusions reached by the Study. He suggested this component should be incorporated into the Fourth Economy scope of work. The Committee consensus agreed.
- Fourth, that there were components of the Fourth Economy proposal that might not be needed by the community. For example, a community visioning exercise may not be needed thereby

reducing the overall Study cost by \$5,250.00 and that the Study Scope of Work should and could be adjusted along with the overall cost budget of the Study.

- Brian Hoffa said that he was impressed with the Fourth Economy Proposal. He further reviewed the Lebanon, PA market study that Fourth Economy had conducted and said that it was very comprehensive.
- Mr. Hoffa liked the idea in the Fourth Economy Proposal of engaging other organizations in the Study. He thought that soliciting comments from other groups with different views and objectives would benefit the overall Borough/BOSS 'Action Plan' once the Study is completed.
- Sam Loth added that by engaging other groups, BOSS would be able to identify stakeholders who could activate the objectives of the SSB Business & Community Alliance.

After more discussion, the Committee designated Chris Gulotta and Sam Loth to contact Fourth Economy Consultants by telephone and negotiate the following:

- A company principal to act as Project Manager
- A final study report in January 2016
- A Letter of Opinion on retail development supported by documentation
- A revised Study scope of work and overall budget cost

A Memorandum to Council will be distributed by Brian Hoffa outlining these BOSS Committee actions including that Mr. Loth will contact DCED for their opinion of the Proposal and how to proceed with requesting funding from the State.

Mr. Loth and Mr. Gulotta in cooperation with Mr. Hoffa will present the revised proposal at Council's Workshop Meeting on September 23rd. Council will then decide what action to take.

Revitalization Plan - Phase 3, Segment 1: New Retail Street Construction at Krick Avenue

- Sam Loth reported that Sheree Hoover, DCED Grant Analyst contacted him with three queries on the Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) grant application and that he and Bob Ludgate had provided the requested information.
- Ms. Hoover indicated that she would incorporate the information into the application and adjust the Project Budget before forwarding the application to PennDOT for their review.
- Mr. Loth suggested that if there is a grant award, there would likely be a change in the Borough's match.
- Mr. Loth will request meetings with U.S. Senators Casey and Toomey and U.S. Congressman Pitts to discuss Federal funding that might be available to match the State funding for the project on behalf of the Borough.
- Ken Pick added that he was working to schedule a BOSS 2020 presentation for the Berks County Commissioners in accordance with the Committee's request at the August meeting.

Revitalization Plan - Phase 3 Additional Funding Resources

- Mr. Loth reminded the Committee that they had determined private meetings between BOSS, Senator Argall and trucking/refinery company executives was preferred to a general meeting.
- The Agenda for these meetings should focus on truck and commercial traffic regulation through the new retail street and how these companies could support the costs of redevelopment.
- Mr. Loth, acting on the Committee's direction, has researched the PA 'Transit Revitalization Investment District' (TRID) Act of 2010.
- His conclusion is that the TRID will not accomplish the goals of the revitalization plan. He said that the PA Business/Neighborhood Investment District Act (BID/NID) is the legislation that would fit if the Committee decided to move in this direction.
- He said that most likely a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) mechanism could be used to raise funding for infrastructure development. Ken Pick agreed with this assessment.
- Mr. Loth said that, in accordance with the Committee's direction, he will still prepare a 'white' paper for meetings with trucking & refining companies that outlines why we need a meeting, who should be present, what geography should be included and when the meetings should be held. He will inform PDC Director Bill Fontana on this issue.

Revitalization Plan - Phase 4: TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan) RATS Committee

- Bob Ludgate reported that he has read in The Reading Eagle recently that there is activity on expanding a Berks County pipeline to deliver extracted natural gas to local refineries. This would eventually create additional truck and tanker traffic through the Borough's CBD.
- Mr. Ludgate said that Borough Council had authorized Ludgate Engineering to list Phase 4 of the Revitalization Plan for the RATS Committee TIP update.
- He noted that STV Traffic Engineers has already prepared a full preliminary engineering plan for Phase 4 in 2010 when the Traffic Impact Study was conducted.
- Mr. Ludgate further remarked that he wants the RATS Committee to list an upgraded intersection for Mountain Home Road & Columbia Avenue on the TIP and to add a "Planning Study" for the 'at-grade' Columbia Avenue railroad crossing near Alcon Corporation.
- The RATS Committee will be developing the newly revised TIP in the Fall of 2015 which will be adopted by the MPO (RATS) in the Winter of 2016.
- The Borough and BOSS will need a specific budget for Phase 4 in order for RATS to consider the project for inclusion on the TIP. Bob suggested that the budget will likely be in the \$15 Million + range.

BOSS Facade Improvement Program

- Sam Loth presented four projects for approval that are ready to proceed. Full reports will be distributed via e-mail:

Motion by Brian Hoffa to approve the project plan as presented for 3437 Penn Avenue.
Second by Merlin Weaver. Motion Passed.

Motion by Brian Hoffa to approve the project plan as presented for 3515 Penn Avenue.
Second by Lisa Gantner. Motion Passed.

Motion by Brian Hoffa to approve the project plan as presented for 3864 Penn Avenue.
Second by Lisa Gantner. Motion Passed.

Motion by Brian Hoffa to approve the project plan as presented for 4052 Penn Avenue.
Second by Lisa Gantner. Motion Passed.

Old & New Business

- Sam Loth requested approval to research two proposed local grant programs for business and property owners along Penn Avenue:
 - > A Landscaping Improvement Grant Program
 - > A House Painting Grant Program

The Committee approved the research and directed Mr. Loth to report on the two programs by the November 2015 BOSS meeting.

- Lisa Gantner said that she needs a joint article to be prepared by Brian Hoffa and Sam Loth for the Fall Edition of the Borough Newsletter.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2015
Borough Council Chambers