

Business Development Commission (BDC)

MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

MEETING DATE: Thursday, March 25, 2021
LOCATION: City Hall
CALLED TO ORDER: 8:06 AM
MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:46 AM
NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 22, 2021

Name	Present	Absent
Mike Pincus Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)		X
Tim Delanty (Old Webster)	X	
Erbab Majeede (Business Owner Rep)	X	
Jennifer Starkey (Business Owner Rep)	X	
Rebecca Now (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Kara Bowlin (Citizen at Large)		X
Andrew Scavotto (Citizen at Large)		X
John Barr	X	
Laura Arnold Council Liaison	X	
Joan Jadali, City Manager Designee	X	
Mara Perry, Staff Liaison	X	

Also in Attendance

Gerry Welch, Mayor, City of Webster Groves
Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

Approval of Minutes – MOTION: A motion to approve the February minutes was made by Rebecca Now, Erbab Majeede seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Budget – MOTION: Tim Delanty made a motion to approve the budget as presented in the February minutes and submit to the City Manager for review, Jennifer Starkey seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Webster University Video Project Phase II – Video interviews for the spring semester Video Production Class’s spring gardening-themed business video have been completed for Rolling Ridge Nursery and Maypop Coffee & Garden Shop. Schnarr’s Hardware and Roger’s Produce will be recorded next. Once completed they will move into editing. A draft should be available for viewing in mid-April. The professor is pleased with the project and working with the BDC as a client. Jennifer Starkey will make sure the BDC is in consideration as a client once again for the fall semester.

BDC Working Group Sub-Committee – The Working Group continues to meet. Their discussions fall into groupings of recommendations. One recommendation revolves around improving and reimaging the online directory of businesses; i.e. multiple categorizations, letting businesses provide their own descriptions, include a mapping feature, user-friendly searching, etc. Another is thinking thru our social media activity; i.e. include “hidden gems” that may not be located in a Special Business District, using crowd sourcing to get information, finding ways to encourage businesses to create sharable content, etc. The Working Group has identified focusing on improving business-to-business coordination and involvement; communication and coordination within business districts and across business districts, as well as getting more businesses involved in commissions and business community activities. Notes from the working group’s last meeting are available to BDC Commission Members.

Erbab Majeede put forth a question to the BDC Working Group asking what social media platforms/apps we might look at and take advantage of to encourage all Webster businesses to be using and perhaps also find a way to help those businesses to use and/or get comfortable using the “chosen” platform/s.

ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) – Erbab Majeede sat in on the recent Sustainability Commission meeting. There is some momentum in the Sustainability Commission to propose to City Council to get biking infrastructure improvements, i.e. bike lanes, mapping locations to park bikes, etc. The BDC could look at ways to collaborate in this from the business perspective.

Commission Member Update – Rebecca Now; The Webster Groves/Shrewsbury/Rock Hill Chamber has endorsed Prop #1 Use Tax on the April 6th ballot. In addition, the Chamber is honoring 29 “Creativity in Crisis” award winners; 9 businesses, 5 non-profits, and 15 individuals.

District, City, & Council Update

- Crossroads, Old Orchard, and Old Webster Special Business Districts have submitted their fiscal 2022 budget.
- Old Orchard’s Streetscape Project continues to move forward. The contract is approved; construction will likely start at Dale Avenue and proceed west to Murdoch.
- Crossroads has put funding in their 2022 budget request for a scaled down version of their Streetscape Project.
- Union Bagel in Crossroads is under construction
- Plans are in for Amy’s Cake Pop Shop in Old Orchard.
- DD Mau and Le Macaron are both close to opening in Old Webster.
- Demolition of the two existing buildings at the southwest corner of Laclede Station and Big Bend will soon start for the new Total Access Urgent Care.
- Permits have been issued for the Wingstop in Yorkshire Plaza.
- A sushi restaurant, Zushi, will be coming to Yorkshire Plaza.
- Construction continues at Fire Station #2 and Hixson Middle School.
- ADA and safety items are being done to multiple elementary schools in the Webster Groves School District.
- Single-family and two-family residential code amendment changes have been approved by the Plan Commission and move forward to City Council for approval.
- The Plan Commission is going to start working on code amendment changes for multi-family in C and D Commercial Districts.
- The City website has been doing updates to the information available about the proposed redevelopment project in N. Old Webster. Next steps will be public hearings at the Plan Commission.
- City Council received a forwarded letter from the National Restaurant Association outlining policy proposals for state and local governments to consider in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Before any decision is made on how the City might assist the restaurants and small business, the Council is waiting to see what action the Missouri Legislature will take relating to the American Rescue Plan affecting what federal funding will flow to the City that could be then used.

Next Meeting

- Potential Agenda Items: Commercial Vacancy Report and Follow-Up on Old Business Items.
- Meeting Date – April 22 at 8:00 AM via Zoom.