

ECONOMIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MEETING
Minutes- November 21st, 2017

Meeting Location:

Meeting located in Mayor's Conference Room, called to order by Andy Gonzalez at 4:00 PM on November 21st, 2017. Those present introduced themselves.

Present:

- Mayor Willie Rosas
- Andrew Woloszyn- Councilman at Large
- Andy Gonzales-Third Ward Councilman
- Don Williams – 1st Ward Councilman
- Rebecca Yanus- Director of Planning & Development
- E.J. Hayes- Deputy Director of Planning & Development
- Matthew Bourke- Community Development Planner for CDBG

Also Present:

- Andy Bohn- City of Dunkirk Engineer Tech
- Nicole Gugino-Dunkirk Observer
- Plus Farms founder-Matay Denes
- Plus Farms co-founder-William Haskas
- ❖ **Please note-** for a complete list of attendee's please refer to attendance sheet attachment.

Old Business:

Motion to accept last month's meeting minutes made by Councilman Gonzales, Councilman-at-Large Andy Woloszyn motioned to approve minutes, Councilman Gonzales 2nd the motion.

New Business:

Rebecca Yanus stated the main topic on the consent agenda is Adam's Art Gallery. She stated Plus Farms is interested in acquiring the building and will give a presentation to present to the public their plan for the building.

Presentation from Plus Farms on Adams Art Gallery Plan:

- William started presentation gave homage to what the Adams Art Gallery used to be 15 years ago, stating it was a thriving art center showcasing beautiful art work, performances and opened on the weekends offering kids art programming.
- William stated the idea is to create a place once again on Central Ave for a center of collaborative arts where people of all ages can come together, creating a simple idea of programming a place offering live music performances, events, exhibitions, art and education which displays a staple of a healthy community.
- Some ideas he stated for the Adams include classes for the kids to have arts class on Saturday or Sunday also a after school program teaching about arts allowing a productive form of expression through the arts program.
- He stated the idea to revive the Adams is about creating a center of exhibitions and activities, such as a wedding happening there or a market in the winter time to

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buy hats and gloves. And have social events to go and get dressed up and listen to music while having a drink.

- William stated some steps to take to implement the plan include identifying the body of the building then begin stabilization, renovation and restoration. He stated the plan is to take small steps such as getting roof work done which would get the doors open and then build from there to create programs this spring and bring people in this year.
- He stated that if they can get the support of the Council to transfer the building to them they can then start implementing the plan.
- He stated they already have a roofer lined up who could start tomorrow; he added that with all the water damage the roof cannot make it through another winter which is why it's critical to start the project now before the snow hits.
- William summarizes the plan as he stated the idea is simple; take a big building break it down into small pieces evaluate critical issues, work from the most important pieces then tackle the smaller issues which activates the building.
- Matay stated they have taken into consideration the budget of what it will cost to restore and start stabilization of the building and also to operate the building and create programming. Some of the "moving targets" that they have with the budget will give details on grants, donations, fees and incomes. He stated that as new grants and opportunity for funding present themselves throughout the years they can grow the budget and do things such as the windows and the apartment attached to the building which they will hopefully build a residency program as well to allow various artist to come and spend time here while they produce work in the community.
- Matay stated that with their 40 years combined experience as architects they have come up with a 5 year budget plan and with the above mentioned steps they will move the project forward practically with small efforts step by step.
- William stated the project aligns with regional projects, regional funding cycles and goals. He stated some of the benefits of making the Adams project grow are because money follows art and development follows money which is a project of culture and commerce and it gives back to the community. The goal he states of the Adams and plus farms is to invite local, regional and other artist across the state into a center of collaborative arts. He stated that within a 300 mile radius of this place includes major metropolitan centers where art has generated significant capital showing that money follows art.
- Matay stated they are not there to dictate what the Adams will be but rather facilitate the possibilities of what it can be which the images shown earlier reflect the ideas of possibilities and planting the seeds of those possibilities will take input from the community voicing their desires, and with that they can bring in their network of people they have worked with in the past such as the residencies which this will bring in artist to work for the community and in the community.
- William stated they are classically trained architects who became builders and fabricators. He stated that their shop in Brooklyn is specifically made up of things they designed, and they are also working on a project in Buffalo NY for a 35,000 square foot lake boat, called the SS Colombian where they are creating a space

that will become a youth center for arts and activities on the Buffalo waterfront that will not require any renovations or any building of new architecture.

- William stated that they already know of about 10 artists within NYC and about 6 within Toronto that would love to come do a show in a space like the Adams and this is the kind of collaborative that the center can become.
- Matay stated one of their first projects was the Hall house in Perrysburg which was an 1860's farmhouse that was in much worse condition than the Adams that they re-conditioned it to run workshops out of, where it initially started as an abandoned house for 20yrs turned into a space where students gathered every winter and summer. He went on to mention the projects they have done such as Lot Radio and Silo City in Buffalo right along the Buffalo River consisting of 16 acres where they activated what was present without building anything new on it. He stated that these were big projects that they approached in small pieces, breaking it down and activating them.
- Matay stated that with their 40 years of experience they have worked on projects like the Lincoln center and schools in NYC, also the TWA terminal which was scheduled for demolition, which they took and re-envisioned the possibilities of what it could be.
- Matay stated the idea of the Adams is about central connect, connecting the waterfront to Fredonia, all the businesses and places where people can grow and play. He continues, saying, it's about taking an empty building and transforming it into an arts center that can generate capital. Matay closes presentation stating that their experience has put them in a position to get Dunkirk and the Adams where it should be.

Comments from Council & City Attorney on the Adams Art Gallery Presentation

- Councilman Andy Woloszyn asked if Plus Farm will need any Council participation far as the project is concerned be it now or in the future. He stated he is impressed with the idea and hopes that it does come to fruition. Councilman Williams also stated he supported the idea.
- William stated in order to begin the project they must address the issue of ownership of the building and bring clarity to that matter, however the idea of having the Council's support in the transfer of the building from access of the arts to Plus Farms is critical and once that is handled they can move forward. He stated they have \$100,000 already available to invest in the building and a roofer ready to repair the roof.
- Andy Gonzales stated that he hopes they can move ahead with the project and get proper paper work handled with the attorney before the roof falls in, and they have their full support.
- Mayor Rosas stated that he would like clarification as to what the Council members mean far as them stating "they support this" and what are the expectations of the city, and asked the city attorney to give enlightenment as to what that support from Council will be exactly.
- City attorney Rich Morrisore stated at this point the city doesn't have a direct role in the property, it's owned by Access of the Arts. He stated that its been inactive for a while and they had a board change but based on their research it appears that

everything is ready for them to follow the necessary steps for NYS law to transfer title of the property. He stated that the city does not have an official role in the project however there has been talk about potentially investing some block grant money through DLDC & the city to help with roof repair or replacement but beyond that there's been no further discussion far as the city's role. He asked if Plus Farm could send him a copy from the financials of the plan, just to get a general idea of the long term goals of the plan and also an idea on some of the artwork from artists that would be walking through the door for those kinds of events. Rich stated that this would be a question more so for potential funding sources be it foundations locally or nationally but that's not something he could answer. Rich stated that he has done some research on potential block grant funding for the project and if it were to take place in the future then there would be steps the city would have to take to make it happen however if it should get to that point, Council would have to approve it.

- Andy Woloszyn stated that Fredonia State has an award winning music and arts program, and suggested that possibly collaborating with them may open up some new ideas for revenue. He also stated that the College invested in the incubator here in Dunkirk and its possible they would love to see the city of Dunkirk become more vibrant for that purpose seeming as through the new president there is very involved in local community as well. Councilwoman Szulaka agreed.
- William responded stating they have done a workshop at Fredonia, they have a good relationship with them and they are members which is one of the things that brought them to Dunkirk and are in contact with them.
- Andy Gonzales asked if they all can have a packet of the paperwork that they have so they can give it to the members of Council not in attendance and also so the attorney and development department can take a look at it as well.
- Andy Woloszyn stated that if plus farms needed anything in writing such as a resolution showing their support they could contact the city attorney at that time to discuss it then.

Discussion on Defined projects-DRI

- Director Rebecca Yanus stated that there was discussion in the last economic development meeting regarding the DRI and the \$2.5 million that was won for the smart growth projects. She stated they have met with Empire state development and they have put in line their priorities for what projects that will receive funding which include Pier improvements and the Central connections project. She stated they will be working specifically with the empire state development to create budgets and timelines and also there will be a large public participation process to be held in January which they will make a public announcement for in the future.
- She stated that some great public investment projects are in the works that will impact our downtown and waterfront areas.

Discussion on Wright Park & Point Gratiot projects

- Deputy Director E.J. Hayes stated they broke ground November 13th 2017 for Point Gratiot project with Senator Cathy Young and Mayor Rosas in attendance along with some of the Councilmen and County Legislator. He stated they had their 1st construction meeting today (11-21-17) the crew has already cut out all new concrete where the main pavilion is and replaced it. They also have gutted

out all the bathrooms including the fireman's grounds bathroom and the plumber will be there tomorrow installing the infrastructure. He stated they meet the 1 & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, April 30th is the completion date for the project however the project may slow down a bit due to the upcoming winter weather.

- E.J.-**Wright Park Project**- stated that they met yesterday (11-20-17) with the engineers for the Wright park project. He stated 70% of the plan is complete and full completion is scheduled for December 8th which at that point it will go out to bid. He stated that Randy Woodbury and Andy Bohn were at the meeting also helping to finalize planning concerning plumbing and infrastructure.
- E.J. stated that tentatively the bid is scheduled to close January 9th in order to have the bid approved at the council meeting January 16th. He stated that the bid will have language in it that the project must be completed within 90 days estimated start day of February.
- He stated the engineers are doing a project rendering which will be on display at Wright Park within the next couple of weeks.

Update on Comprehensive plan

- Director Rebecca Yanus stated they passed a resolution at the last council meeting to hire the Laberge group for the consultants to help with the comprehensive plan. She stated that after thanksgiving they will hold a kick-off meeting however the date for the meeting is yet to be determined although it will be in December and will be announced shortly.

Update on Zombie's Property survey

- CDBG Planner Matt Bourke stated things are moving along with the grant project, they had a meeting last Tuesday (11-14-17) at the incubator and the survey for that project is done and they are now analyzing the data far as the housing market in Dunkirk, into January and February they will look to more community engagement.

Update on the Waterfront Revitalization Plan

- Director Rebecca Yanus stated as for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan that they are a part of with the County they did meet 2 weeks ago, the consultants are in the analysis phase as well. They looked at current land uses at the waterfront and also future land uses to determine what they'd like to see in the future in recognition of the current land use.
- She stated they will hold another public participation meeting which will be announced shortly.

BOA Update

- Director Rebecca Yanus stated the BOA Plan is in its final stages of environment review.
- She stated a SEQR still has to be done which is the state environmental quality review act involving a 30 day comment period, then at the December 19th council meeting they will have a resolution in there to pass the environmental, she stated that they will be receiving packets on that shortly and once that's passed they are pretty much done with things far as on their end. She stated that it is in NY State's hands for review, once the State puts their stamp on it, we will be a designated BOA community and can start using those incentives to bring in developers for the Brownfield sites.

Grants Update

- Director Rebecca Yanus stated the EPA Assessments grants was due November 16th which they successfully put in for. She stated it's a \$200,000 grant which looks at phases 1&2 of environment assessments of Brownfield sites which means for example if there is a vacant site across from City Hall the assessment determines what's in the ground and soil such as any containments, this funding goes toward paying for that and its one less thing a developer has to do if they want to develop on the site, which makes it shovel ready.
- She stated its \$200,000 no match, meaning they don't have to have a matching fund toward it.
- She stated it's an EPA Assessment Grant which is going to be U.S. wide so there's a certain amount of grant funding for NYS that they will be competing for.
- Andy Woloszyn asked if it can work in conjunction with the BOA Plan; Rebecca responded it's another incentive to add to the list and yes, it can.
- She stated they are working toward the Restore NY Grant due December 15th; this grant is going to be specifically for the vacant building on the corner of Lakeshore Drive and Washington of whom they have been working with the building owners Jerry Burgess and Alan Shaw to do a revitalization project for that site. The grant application is for a \$1 million with a 10% match which they would put up. She stated the owners have already invested a good chunk of money toward the roof which can count toward their match, they are thinking about a mixed use project for the building which would include loft apartments on the top 3 floors and then some sort of offices or restaurant or brewery on the lower floor. She stated they don't have to have the vision completely in detail for the grant application but if they are awarded the funding they will be working together to come up with a good plan, and this is a great opportunity to get another building in use in Dunkirk.
- Andy Woloszyn stated that he sees the building is currently up for sale and how would the grant work if it was awarded.
- Rebecca stated that if the grant was awarded then they would be the ones developing it.
- Andy Woloszyn asked "so they would retain ownership at that time, and take it off the market? Rebecca agreed stating yes, they are in recognition of that.

Upcoming Events

- CDBG Planner Matt Bourke stated Small Business Saturday, which is a national event, to draw attention and support local businesses in the community and Dunkirk will hold their Small Business Saturday event from 12pm-5pm on 11/25/17 at the D&F Plaza in the former JC Penny space. He stated local vendors will be there along with a raffle and a Santa appearance possibly. He stated after the plaza event they will host the annual tree lighting event at 5pm in front of City Hall.

CDBG Update

- Matt stated they had a draw down on October 30th in the amount of \$86,000.
- He stated Hoyt Street is complete along with 3 other housing rehabilitations that COI has done with a few more to come.

- He stated they are in the process of developing their Comprehensive Plan for the CDBG program over the next few years, they are continuing to look for public input as they draft the plan and will hold a public meeting Monday 11/27/2017 at the court apartments from 5:30pm to 7pm to get public input.

Additional Comments/Concerns: Topic-the Floramo plan

- Andy Gonzales asked the city attorney if there has been any progress in regard to the Floramo plan.
- City Attorney Rich Morrisroe stated “the problem with the Floramo plan draft is there are some NYS Law barriers to make the plan functional.” He stated, “one of the issues is that city court only has jurisdiction over defendants that are within the county or the adjacent county, so if a property line moves anywhere outside of Erie, Chautauqua or Cattaraugus County you can’t touch it, the plan tries to go through the property managers sort to speak and there is something they just put on the books in the last few years in Buffalo to license property managers and essentially get there contact info but a lot of owners don’t have formal property managers.” Rich stated, “The plan needs to be revisited for practicalities given those hurdles and one of the biggest issues, where you’d have to speak to your state representatives is we’ve got to work out jurisdiction. He continues stating, “real estate is sharing its hand all across the globe buying property in Buffalo and my assumption is that it’s happening here in Dunkirk and Chautauqua County as well and right now city court law is such that you can’t touch it so now you have a jurisdiction issue. Which means you can pass laws all day long but jurisdiction is a state law function which has to be changed at the state level which is going to be your biggest hurdle in implementing the Floramo plan” He stated, “the second issue is the question of cost, a plan like this requires more clerical support, at least 1 or 2 more zoning and code officers and more clerical support in the law office and or another attorney due to a lot more court appearances and paperwork due to the active plan.” He added that although he thinks the plan is a good starting point but he feels it needs to be revisited and pressure needs to be applied at the state level to revisit the jurisdiction not just for Dunkirk but for all cities because it’s a state wide issue.
- Andy Gonzales stated the community needs to get involved and into the state the congressmen the senator’s involvement to push the plan forward, and push on higher elected officials to make this work.
- Audience member Skeeter Tower stated that the starting point is with inspections. She also stated that she knows of several landlords that live right here within the city and own multiple properties and they are not being up kept and she feels as though the city is over looking those properties.
- Rich Morrisroe responded to her comment stating that those landlords and properties can be addressed right now under the current structure of the plan. Skeeter responded stating “but we’re not doing it”. Rich stated, “ well that’s a question we have to revisit with zoning and code department, and council has to look at that and see if there’s any adjustments that can be made on a city code level or if it’s just a function of execution. He stated, “If it’s a local property owner that’s in violation then the process works for that kind of scenario.” Rich then goes on to explain that even though you may demand that property owners

do this or that often times the judge is going to give them some level of time because a lot of the repairs are high cost, weather is an issue also, some orders of repair such as a roof or exterior paint violation may be given until March to fix due to the weather and that's not a function of city government but more so judicial discretion due to being realistic about the situation.

- Rebecca Yanus stated that they are looking at other communities and how they are dealing with those issues such as the city of Geneva and Fredonia which have some laws in place and we will see how we can replicate those models as well.

Conclusion

Motion to adjourn made by Andy Woloszyn seconded by Andy Gonzales, meeting ended at 4:59pm.

Attendance Sheet- Economic Development Committee Meeting November 21st, 2017

1. Mayor Rosas
2. Rebecca Yanus-Director Planning& Development Dunkirk NY
3. E.J. Hayes-Deputy Director Planning& Development Dunkirk NY
4. Matt Bourke-CDBG Planner Planning& Development Dunkirk NY
5. Andrew Woloszyn- Councilman at Large
6. Adelino Gonzalez-Chair
7. Don Williams-1st Ward Councilman
8. Plus Farms Founder-Matay Denes
9. Plus Farms Co-Founder-William Haskas
10. Andy Bohn-City of Dunkirk Engineering Tech
11. Linnea Carlson-Chautauqua County Health Network
12. Gina Kron-Owner Tim Horton's Dunkirk NY
13. Nicole Gugino-Dunkirk Evening Observer
14. Sharon Perdue-Citizen
15. Steve Reese-Citizen
16. Mary Reese-Citizen
17. Allen Hollander-Citizen
18. Judy Hollander-Citizen
19. Skeeter Tower-Citizen
20. Marcia Merrins-Citizen
21. Mary Jane Covley Walker-Citizen
22. Kevin Dunne-Citizen
23. Michala Golga-Citizen
24. Richard Goodman-Citizen
25. Paul Somerfeldt-Citizen
26. Jeanette Delgado-Citizen
27. Mike Stanton-Citizen
28. Karen Shepherd-Citizen
29. Diane Hofner-Citizen