

FARMERSVILLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD (4B)

MINUTES ~ March 5, 2018

5:45 P.M. City Council Chambers

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

The Farmersville Community Development Corporation Board met on March 5, 2018 in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. President John Politz called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m. and announced that a quorum was present after roll call. The following board members were present: John Politz, Katherine Hershey, Jesse Nelsen, Cynthia Craddock-Clark, and Mike Goldstein. Others recognized were Reagan Rothenberger, Main Street Manager; City Manager Ben White, and Donna Williams.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President John Politz opened the floor for comments. There were no comments.

WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Ben White led the presentation to the board the basics of the comprehensive plan, briefly describing each section in the comprehensive plan. The sections that we will look at today is the Economic Development Study, the Recreation and Open Space Study, and the Central Business District sections. Other groups are looking at other sections to make sure that the goals and plans are what is what our citizens want as a city and to make sure there aren't any gaps. Dr. Goldstein commented that the product is already very impressive. Mr. White stated that Grant Works did a pretty good job getting everything in line even due to time constraints due to the grant. This document is actually called a work book, and the comprehensive plan will be a shorter more condensed version of this book.

Each section has an overview paragraph. In the Economic Development section there is an overview of the general set of businesses in the in city. The map that shows the various city limits in different colors so that we can better see the various competing cities. There is a brief overview of the NCTCOG plan which might be changing. Goals are rather general, such as increasing the competitiveness of the area, and to make the city friendlier for entrepreneurs. The city in general wants organic growth that helps to define the character of the city. Mr. White asked Reagan Rothenberger to help find what makes our town unique and help market the uniqueness and help find its identity. In short, to compete for something we have to know where we're going as an entire city. That's what this plan is for.

One of the issues of attracting company is the issue of having people in the town that can support that industry. John Politz asked about Lexington Medical Lodge and how they attracted workers and residents. It took little time, which shows the market is better than we realize. Mr. Politz stated that the commute from these cities to Farmersville is nothing compared to many other commuters in DFW. One edit that could be made is table 10D in the workbook, as it could easily show that there is a tremendous number of workers within 30 minutes as to attract business in ensuring that they consider Farmersville. There was discussion of commutes of citizens of the town and how they compare to other areas. Mr. White pointed out the graph in the workbook that shows how many individuals work in Farmersville who do not work here. Dr. Goldstein commented that as soon as he retired he moved to Farmersville for the small town atmosphere. He further stated that he recently went to "The Star" in Frisco, and though that's not really attainable here, we have to start someplace in marketing the town as a neat place to visit.

Mr. White discussed that when he is talking to brokers many say that there is a quality of life that few cities have in DFW. Having the simplicity of the city is unique. Dr. Goldstein commended that our town's event put on by our various organizations really help bring in people. Mr. White again emphasized that

for a city our size we have good planning, strong community groups, great parks and amenities and we need to focus on being an inviting town. Ms. Hershey brought up the concept of "new urbanism" described in the comprehensive plan. The primary issue of this town is housing, so how could we mimic places like Seaside and Rosemary Beach, Florida where developers do not just develop basic developments that lack character. Mr. White discussed that cities do not necessarily grow best by different subdivisions, however creating a community by with higher density. There is an opportunity for infill near our downtown. Ms. Hershey stated that this would be a great way to keep the ambiance of our downtown. Mr. White stated there are different ways to think about building up your city, which would include the increase of walkability in our downtown. Mr. White stated that 4A would like to set aside more land in the industrial areas for more organic jobs so that we can help build the sense of community so that people both live and work here. Row houses would be great in the downtown. Mr. Rothenberger showed an example of Dallas Baptist University which follows the new urbanism style in the creation of its living areas. Ms. Hershey said that those kinds of living areas are now seen in McKinney. Mr. White asked that is this the kind of living we would like to see. Dr. Goldstein state that Farmersville is in need of some better housing. Mr. White stated that we do have starter homes and apartments on line and we are encouraging the growth of housing options.

Mr. White showed radar charts in which we see that most of our residents go southwest toward Dallas. We have citizens driving to Fort Worth. We want to have a job for those people in Farmersville. Ms. Craddock-Clark provided an example of a cousin who drove to Fort Worth for a time. He and the family had to move to the Colony in order to be closer. Mr. White briefly showed various data regarding sales data and education data. Josephine is seeing considerable growth. Collin County is seeing a continual growth. Mr. White stated that the city did the right thing to focus on a new logo as many people admire it. There is a growth of interest in agro tourism. Ms. Hershey noted that there is a great strawberry farm near town. In closing on this section, Mr. White stated that we must focus on the quality of life aspects when seeking future development. There is a focus today in families to make sure the kids are taken care of. Our town has good schools, so we need to be sure there are extracurricular activities for them. We have a lot of land in our parks that we can use for future additions. In closing, there are a lot of good ideas in this section, but let's make sure that the goals here are what we want as a city. It is all about priorities, such as the shift of importance of the senior citizen center, which is making good progress. Mr. White suggested to take a look at the work plan of section ten and we'll review it again. Also look at the data that follows the section in the appendices. Mr. White stated that we need to list of the state of Texas economic development resources in the final plan.

Mr. Nelson asked about the plan for upgrading internet capabilities of the city. Mr. White stated that the city looked into the investment of fiber optics in recent years, but the investment is still a little risky. A micro-data center would have gone along with this project which could have helped create some jobs.

Recreation and Open Space:

The section starts out with a projected growth. By 2027 we will see considerable growth. If Camden Parks starts building in selling we will see some faster growth. Mr. White briefly overviewed some of the data, including age groups, racial makeup, and very broad goals listed in the document. As said before, we want to make sure that the goals and objectives in this section are the ones that the city wants. One of the biggest issues facing recreation in this town is JW Spain Complex, which could use a significant boost of money in order to become something special so that people will come to it. It may also attract new residents. With a higher flow of money with new developments we might be able to see the renovation of the complex in the future. We also need to take into account the underutilization of Southlake Park. Ms. Craddock-Clark asked what is meant by the underutilization and what would be the plan for it. Mr. White stated that though it is currently a pretty park, but in the future we might have to put a soccer field and other forms of fields for the use of the citizens. Chairman Politz stated that right now it is more focused

on fishing and small boating. Ms. Craddock-Clark noted the importance of the park as it once was a country club and really the center of community events.

Chairman Politz asked about the survey that was sent out to the schools in Farmersville to determine what the students would like to see. Some desires are realistic and unrealistic. A pool would be a major liability and difficult to maintain for a city our size. Perhaps splash pads would be more appropriate. Furthermore, basketball courts are a serious need. The school has some tennis courts for the public to use, but basketball courts are lacking. We could think about a basketball court in several areas, perhaps the open area near the Onion Shed, or Ramblers Park. Perhaps a volleyball court near the splash pad at Farmersville Parkway. Ms. Craddock-Clark noted the need in the area for students to work out and play during vacations from school. Mr. White discussed the concept of an enclosed workout center somewhere in the city that could charge a small fee for use. It could have indoor courts and various amenities such as a running track and meeting spaces. Ms. Craddock-Clark mentioned how people in town are building basketball courts because there isn't one for the citizens to use. Mr. White asked the board to keep in mind the safety aspect of an enclosed and self-contained center like this. It would set a great precedent for our town. Chairman Politz pointed out the new YMCA in North Rockwall and how full it is most of the time. Dr. Goldstein noted that church facilities in town are often available for citizen's use. Mr. White stated that we have the land, we just need to work on building up the plan for the use of it as recreation space. Mr. White showed the board the survey that was sent to the students. It was discussed that it is less than two years old. Mr. White stressed to take a look at the plan and offer any thoughts at a future meeting.

Mr. Rothenberger led discussion on the Central Business District survey and re-iterated much of what was discussed at the earlier Main Street Workshop. Mr. Rothenberger noted that some data needs to be updated especially regarding the uses of the buildings and their vacancy. Furthermore the Main Street board discussed the issue of land use of the open areas south of downtown. We should encourage some kind of mixed use. Ms. Hershey asked what exactly are the parameters of the central business district. Mr. Rothenberger pointed out that the "Central Area" district which is downtown proper, and the "Commercial" area in the immediate perimeter. There are several districts in play with Main Street. First and foremost is the National Register District, then the "Main Street District" which includes many private homes which may become commercially used in future years. Some of the goals mentioned in the workbook are good. A goal that I would like see better discussed is the issue of a Historic Preservation Ordinance and its upkeep. That is a major issue that I am preparing to tackle and seek to communicate. The Main Street board discussed the amenities that are currently in downtown. The only issue that we might see are the addition of new benches, but for the most part downtown has a lot of what's needed. Traffic flow has been a major discussion of late, so Mr. White and staff will install a "Keep Right" sign at the bullnose of downtown that is the intersection of McKinney and Main Street. In regards to branding, Mr. Rothenberger has loosely been using the term, "downtown is the jewel box", playing off of Farmersville is a Texas Treasure. A goal Mr. Rothenberger and board agreed on is the placement of a mural on a building in downtown. Donna Williams and Clay Potter have offered their buildings as potential places for a mural. Mr. Rothenberger discussed that though he is appreciative of 4B's payment and upkeep of the two billboards, perhaps we could use those billboards to target casual shoppers or visitors to the downtown, rather than focusing solely on riders for the trail. Mr. Rothenberger briefly discussed design standards and role that the Historic Preservation Ordinance will play in that. Mr. Rothenberger mentioned the need to the Main Street for the desire to pursue Certified Local Government status through the Texas Historical Commission. This can help in acquiring grants and can help support the historic preservation efforts of the city. There was brief discussion among the 4B Board and Mr. Rothenberger about the new "National Register District" signs and the existing one that is now damaged. Mr. White stated that it will be repaired soon.

The Main Street board thought that most of the goals were reasonable. There were discussions of vacancy taxes and other methods to reduce vacancy and hopefully encourage building owners to rent their buildings for a more reasonable rate. Mr. Rothenberger discussed a possible goal of working with 4A to broaden the spectrum of the façade grant and think of ways those funds could be used for other uses, such as finish out or rent subsidies. Mr. Rothenberger also stressed his goal of ensuring that the Historic Preservation Ordinance is communicated well in the near future as interest in the general community grows.

Mr. White stated the need for the board to feel free to advise staff moving forward on their ideas. Mr. Rothenberger and Mr. White and other staff will be taking a stab in working to make the comprehensive plan more concise so it is easier to read.

Chairman Politz discussed the great work that had been done increasing the workbook. 4B needs to be careful in deciding where it wants to go in the near future without over promising. Priorities changed recently with the playground equipment and the senior center, and that future priorities need to be looked in this manner.

Dr. Goldstein briefly discussed the idea of passing the "Taste of Farmersville" event on to another entity in town. First Methodist may not be able to continue it, and it would be a great fundraiser for whatever organization would like to take it on. General discussion among the board suggested that this might be a good Chamber of Commerce event.

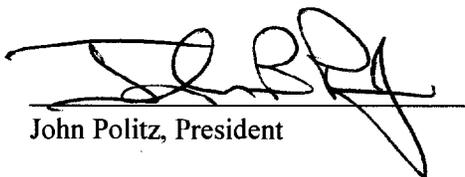
DISCUSSION OF PLACING ITEMS ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There was general discussion of an update on the playground equipment and that Mr. White would give an update at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, John Politz adjourned the meeting at 7:32 PM.

Signatures:


John Politz, President


Cynthia Craddock-Clark, Secretary