



February 12, 2020

BRIDGEPORT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES

City of Bridgeport
County of Harrison
State of West Virginia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

President John Stogran, Members Mark Bonamico, Ron Eagle, Bridget Furbee, Andy Lang, Doug Marquette, Drew Pomeroy, Fred Sartoris, Jeff Smell and Frank Sutton (via phone).

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jim Christie and Bill Hostutler.

CITY STAFF AND VISITORS PRESENT:

City Manager Randy Wetmore, Community and Economic Development Director Andrea Kerr, Director of Finance Monica Musgrave, City Attorney Dean Ramsey and Connect-Bridgeport Jeff Toquinto.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Bridgeport Development Authority meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 in the Conference Room of the Bridgeport Municipal Complex at 515 West Main Street by President John Stogran.

President Stogran introduced new BDA board member Ron Eagle, President of HQ Aero Management (US) Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the December 4, 2019 regular meeting were unanimously approved as presented on a motion by Member Furbee; seconded by Member Pomeroy.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

General Economic Development Update – Community and Economic Development Director Andrea Kerr

- Total permits issued for 2019 was 991.
- Total cost of construction for 2019 was \$95 million, which is a record high for a single year.
- Total permits issued for 2020 year to date is 67.
- Total cost of construction for 2020 year to date is \$6.5 million.

City Projects

- Indoor Sports and Recreation Center: Work continues as scheduled.
- Rt. 131 Phase 1: One building has been erected for Parks and Recreation and work continues on-site for the new salt storage facilities.

Commercial Projects

- United Hospital Center: A \$320,000 building permit was issued for an addition to their Cath lab and there are plans to begin office renovations in the spring.
- Market Place at White Oaks: Percheron relocated their business to the second floor of the new Market Place building.
- Audi/Volkswagen Dealership: A \$6.24 million construction permit was issued in late 2019 but there has not been a lot of progress to date.
- Menard's: Site work is continuing.
- Centerbranch: Construction continues, and they plan to open by Easter 2020.

Residential Projects

- Dan Ryan: New construction permits totaling nearly \$800,000 have been pulled for four new single-family homes.
- Worthington Townhomes: Site work is continuing.
- The Vale: Infrastructure plans have been completed and they plan to start new home construction in the spring. These are large estate-type lots and homes.

Miscellaneous Discussion:

- The Bridgeport Planning Commission continues work on an updated sign ordinance. Once a draft is completed, it will be sent to City Council for final approval.
- The WVDHHR deadline for medical cannabis applications is February 18, 2020 and city staff has been busy supplying zoning and utility information to applicants.
- City Council has requested the Planning Commission review zoning regulations to determine if changes need to be made to specify or restrict where medical cannabis facilities can be located.
- City officials will meet with Congressman McKinley on February 19, 2020 to discuss economic development and road repairs. City Manager Randy Wetmore, Mayor Andy

Lang, Community and Economic Development Director Andrea Kerr and BDA President John Stogran will attend the meeting.

- Member Lang inquired about the Tom Davis property and whether there was any new information available. Community and Economic Director Kerr said that she believes there was an offer to purchase to property, but to date, no building plans have been submitted to the city.
- Member Lang also asked about a new Kroger store at Eastpointe. Community and Economic Director Kerr explained that the City of Bridgeport supplies water and sewer to Eastpointe and confirmed that the city approved utility plans for Kroger to move the former K-Mart location.
- Member Lang informed the board that Benedum Airport Authority expansion project is moving forward. There are tentative plans to start a small excavation project over the summer and hopefully start a larger excavation project in the fall for the terminal site. He also said Pratt & Whitney has received a large contract which is expected to add at least 50 new employees, if not more, over the next several years.

Consider the request for Façade Improvement Grant for proposed project for Hair Apparent located at 229 East Main Street

- Finance Director, Monica Musgrave, stated that after the encumbrance of all the grants that have been approved by the BDA and City Council as of February 12, 2020, there is a balance of \$30,525.31 available to be used toward grants.
- Andrea Kerr, Community and Economic Development Director, provided the following background information on the Hair Apparent Façade Improvement Grant request –
 - December 5, 2019 – Hair Apparent owner, Christina Hooker, applied for a building permit to replace the front porch.
 - December 10, 2019 – Christina Hooker asked Andrea Kerr via text for the Façade Improvement packet.
 - December 10, 2019 – Staci Unger, Administrative Assistant, emailed the complete economic improvement grant information packet to Christina Hooker.
 - December 16, 2019 – Christina Hooker submitted Façade Improvement Grant application.
 - January 15, 2020 - Community and Economic Development Director Andrea Kerr informed Christina Hooker that the request had been denied because a building permit was obtained, and work began before an application and approval was received for the Façade Improvement Grant. The grant application packet clearly states -
 - Qualifying requirements.

Application must be submitted, and approval received from the city prior to application for a building permit.

- January 17, 2020 – Christina Hooker applied for a second building permit for a room addition.
- January 21, 2020 – Christina Hooker contacted Andrea Kerr via email requesting to appeal the original decision (see attached email).
- Andrea Kerr, Community and Economic Development Director, went on to explain that the ordinance states –

Definition. Any property owner that remodels the exterior facade of an existing structure, constructs an addition to an existing structure, or any ancillary improvements such as decorative features, curbing, sidewalks, and demolition visible from the front facing street right of way may be eligible.

The following improvements do not qualify for this incentive:

Paving of parking facilities,

New Construction,

Portions of exterior improvements not visible from street right of way,

Interior renovations,

Underground or above ground utilities,

Landscaping,

Advertising Signs.

- Based on the ordinance, Andrea Kerr stated that she believes that the porch demolition costs are eligible expenses under the Façade Improvement Grant program, but the Façade Improvement Grant application was not submitted or approved prior to a building permit being issued.
- Christina Hooker’s January 21, 2020 email specifically states that the grant application is not for the porch project but rather for the room addition project. According to the ordinance, new construction and interior renovation costs are not eligible for reimbursement under the grant program.
- Member Pomeroy stated that his issue with their application is strictly procedural, in that the application procedures were not followed.
- Member Furbee asked if the requirements are spelled out on the building permit. Community and Economic Director Andrea Kerr stated that the grant requirements and procedures are included in a separate packet but not included on the building permit.
- Member Furbee inquired as to the amount of the grant, if it were approved. Community and Economic Director Andrea Kerr explained that the submitted application totaled \$34,600, which would equal a grant reimbursement of \$6920, if all the receipts were

eligible façade improvement expenses. Any interior expenses such as flooring, painting, light fixtures, etc. would not be eligible for the grant.

- City Attorney Dean Ramsey told the board that Façade improvement Grant program is an incentive program and thus the “but for” clause applies. He explained that’s the reason to apply for the grant before applying for the permit because “but for the grant, you wouldn’t be applying for a permit”.
- Member Furbee added that without the preapproval requirement, the grant monies could have already been spent on other projects and not be available for additional projects.
- President Stogran suggested that the grant requirements be added to the building permit application.
- Member Pomeroy responded by saying that improved marketing may help get word out to businesses and remind them that the Façade Improvement Grant this is an incentive program and not a rebate program.
- After some general discussion, the consensus was that Community and Economic Director Andrea Kerr made the correct decision to deny the facade improvement request for Hair Apparent.
- Member Pomeroy made the motion to deny the appeal request based on the fact that the building permit was obtained before the incentive program application was approved. Motion was seconded by Member Lang and unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 8:07 a.m. Member Lang recused himself from the discussion of the next two agenda items.

At 8:08 a.m. Member Smell made a motion to enter into executive to discuss matters involving the sale or lease of property, economic development, personnel matters, and advance construction planning which, if made public, might adversely affect the interests of the City, to discuss matters with counsel pursuant to the attorney/client privilege and as to matters not included on this agenda to determine if official action is necessary. Motion was seconded by Member Pomeroy and unanimously approved.

Discuss and act upon Marcellus Way property

Discuss Platinum Drive Property

At 8:30 a.m. Member Furbee made a motion to reconvene into regular session. The motion was seconded by Member Smell and unanimously approved.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Discuss and act upon Marcellus Way property

- No action was taken or required for this item at this time.

Discuss Platinum Drive Property

- No action was taken or required for this item at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 a.m. on a motion by Member Furbee. The motion was seconded by member Bonamico and was unanimously approved.

APPROVED:

John Stogran, President

Date

PREPARED BY:

Staci Unger, Secretary

Attachment

From: Christina Hooker <christina@thehairapparent.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 7:17:38 PM
To: Andy Lang <alang@bridgeportwv.com>; Andrea Kerr <akerr@bridgeportwv.com>;
jstogran@eqt.com <jstogran@eqt.com>
Subject: Facade Grant Review

The following information is provided to request reconsideration on my Facade Grant Application:

Upon re-evaluation of my denial, the application for the facade grant was submitted and received on 12/16/2019 (conformation can be provided). The building permit for the project for which I was applying for the grant was obtained on 1/16/2020.

The original permit (obtained 12/5/2019) that caused my grant denial was for the replacement of a porch and did not come to fruition due to the deteriorated condition of the porch—the grant application was NOT for that project. That was a failed project. The scope of the projected changed to an addition; subsequently a grant application was submitted for that new project. A building permit for the addition was obtained 1/16/20 following my denial on 1/15/2020, which obviously allowed sufficient time between the two for review of the application. It seems to me the reason for which I was denied is incorrect.

Thank you.

Christina Hooker