

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday April 27, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.
Virtual**

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Reiner called the April 27, 2021 Community Development Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Reiner, Mr. Keeler and Mayor Amorose Groomes

Staff present: Mr. Ridge, Ms. Rauch, Ms. O'Callaghan, Ms. Gilger, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Earman, Mr. Stiffler, Ms. Noble, Mr. Fagrell, Ms. O'Malley, Ms. Renzetti, Mr. Brown

Also present: Jamie Greene and Logan Stang, planning NEXT; Chris Miller, Bishops Crossing applicant; Peg Alexis, Riverside Woods applicant; Cyndi Barrera, Savona applicant; Rose Beeson, Terrazza applicant; Kathy Harter, Wyandotte Woods applicant; Russ Balthis and Greg Daniels, Squire Patton Boggs

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Keeler motioned to approve the Community Development Committee minutes of March 23, 2021.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes.

2021 Beautify Your Neighborhood Grant Application Review

Mr. Ridge stated that the total budget for the Beautify Your Neighborhood Grants this year is \$32,000. The requests that have been received total \$23,244.

- o Bishops Crossing - Request: \$5,000

Mr. Ridge stated that this project is within the City-owned, HOA maintained reserve along Hyland-Croy Drive. It proposes to plant 30 new trees along the corridor and within the reserve. Mr. Miller stated that this is the third phase of a project that was started eight years ago. There were originally 90 Cherry Trees in a grid pattern that experienced problems and proved to not do well in this location. The new trees are more naturalized and should tolerate the drainage issues a little better.

Mr. Reiner stated that he saw the Cherry's declining and he believes the new selections are wise.

Mayor Amorose Groomes expressed appreciation for the work. She asked if there was a tree protection on the trunks offered in the quotes they received due to the

active Deer in the area. Mr. Miller stated he hasn't experienced a great deal of Deer damage, but he thanked Mayor Amorose Groomes for her suggestion.

Mr. Keeler mentioned the policy of a neighborhood applying for this grant no more than once in a three year period, but they are not experiencing a budget issue, so no need to enforce that at this point.

Mr. Keeler motioned to recommend approval of this application to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

- Riverside Woods – Request: \$5,000

Mr. Ridge stated that this project involves the removal of dead or dying plants and trees; the relocation of existing plants, small trees and ornamental grasses; and installation of new, deer-resistant plants. Ms. Alexis stated that the area of this project is about 15 years old. She stated that they would like to add some color and beauty.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked if the wall was going to be power-washed. Ms. Alexis stated that they had originally made the power-washing part of the application, but they removed it because it is considered maintenance. The residents will power-wash the wall.

Mr. Reiner thanked them for the work.

Mr. Keeler motioned to recommend approval of this application to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

- Savona – Request: \$3,244

Mr. Ridge stated that this is part of a multi-phase project that will add new plantings and up-lighting for existing trees.

In response to Mr. Reiner's question regarding the amount requested, Mr. Ridge stated that this is the balance of a project that was previously started but unable to be finalized due to COVID. Ms. Barrera stated that they were fortunate to have the initial cost reduced due to a change in contractors. Mr. Reiner stated that he liked the plant choices.

Mayor Amorose Groomes thanked the residents for their work.

Mr. Keeler motioned to recommend approval of this application to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes.

- Terrazza – Request: \$5,000

Mr. Ridge stated that this project is to replace dead or diseased plants with new plants. Mr. Reiner stated that he likes the choice of boxwoods. Ms. Beeson

stated that they are trying to coordinate this landscaping with what was used throughout the area and to have four season beauty.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that often plants succumb to disease and insect issues due to being buried too deep. She expressed her appreciation for the work being done.

Mr. Keeler motioned to recommend approval of this application to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Keeler, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes.

o Wyandotte Woods – Request: \$5,000

Mr. Ridge stated that the request from Wyandotte Woods involves planting new plants and trees in bare areas and installing 1.75 tons of Delaware Grey stone.

Mr. Reiner had no questions, but stated that the Norway Spruce may be hard to get.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she would add an approved substitution for a White Fir. Ms. Harter stated that this neighborhood is 18 years old and praised this program for helping to keep Dublin beautiful. She is hoping to add more color and additional stone.

Mr. Reiner stated that this is a complex design. He thanked them for their efforts.

Mayor Amorose Groomes expressed her appreciation for the work.

Mr. Keeler motioned to recommend approval of this application to Council.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Keeler, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

Dublin 2035 Framework

Ms. Rauch introduced the Dublin 2035 discussion. Ms. Rauch provided a list of goals for this discussion. She referred to the information provided to the Committee in the meeting packet and stated that, regarding the Dublin 2035 Framework:

- What is it?
 - o The development of a unified framework
 - o Visionary set of big ideas or unique actions
 - o Looking out to 2035
- Why are we doing these exercises?
 - o Guide City investments, policy decisions and community collaboration
 - o Dublin is forward thinking community
 - o Stretch our thinking
- How will we use the Dublin 2035 Framework?
 - o Overarching guide
 - o Direct updates for Community Plan, CIP etc.
 - o Opportunities to address community challenges

Ms. Rauch shared the theme milestone timeline. There are three milestones: initial big ideas; additional ideas, research and insights; and refinement & priorities. The committees are currently in milestone one. Milestone one focuses on identifying big ideas for the future.

The two discussion questions for this meeting are:

- What are the big ideas for Land Use?
 - Land Use Elements include: Housing, Aesthetics, Nature, Development, Historic/Cultural, Responsible Growth and Special Area Plans.
- What other resources do you need?

Ms. Rauch shared a graphic to jump start the big ideas that have already been shared in previous Council work sessions and encouraged the group to build upon these or come up with new ideas entirely.

Mr. Greene and Mr. Stang, planningNEXT were present to assist with the discussion. Mr. Greene shared that they have mapped out the ideas shared by the other three committees. He encouraged providing images to accompany the big ideas. The following big ideas were shared:

- Mr. Reiner: He shared that while he was in Rouen, France, he witnessed that every evening at 10:00p.m., they projected their history on the side of the Cathedral. He stated that many stopped to watch. There are many companies in Europe that do this. There were sound effects and it was very well executed. He would love to see that in Bridge Street on one of the buildings.
- Mayor Amorose Groomes: She stated she would really like to focus in on closing the gap regarding the few areas of the City that do not have bike path connectivity. Regarding land use specifically, she would like to also focus on blue ways; soil preservation and protection; and sustainability. She stated that we have a long way to go in this City on those areas. We have some victories, but there is still much to do.
- Mr. Keeler: He stated that the first element for Land Use is housing. He stated it is important to understand how housing and development can work together. He stated that it is an evaluation of the different available housing opportunities that the City does have today to attract development that is money-making. He asked Mr. Stiffler to reiterate some comments that he made in the previous Finance Committee meeting.
- Mr. Stiffler: He stated that there was a dominant economic model in the City's early development (1990's) that was really built around the office park. Dublin was an office park and single-family housing type City that provided a strong economic standing. The negative consequence to that model was largely traffic. Council made conscientious decisions to balance some of the negative consequences of traffic and congestion with increasing parks and green space. Since March of 2020, the dominant economic model has changed. People are no longer satisfied being in strictly an office park. He stated that there is now the start of a different economic paradigm and it brings with it different housing,

commercial, retail options etc. We are in the process of finding out what the new economic model will be – will people continue to work from home? He expressed that if you pursue the model that will provide the best economic outcome for your City, then you can open up opportunities for everything else, like parks, best in class services, etc. Mr. Reiner agreed with Mr. Stiffler's analysis.

- Ms. Renzetti: She spoke of her experience at Babcock Ranch that was planned specifically to consider energy efficient building, water conservation, solar, a town center, self-driving mini-transport, etc. She was interested in this concept.
- Ms. O'Callaghan: She stated that a goal would be that every resident would have access to multi-modal transportation within a certain distance of their residence. She added that the expanded use of drones could change the way we manage City services.
- Mr. Earman: He stated that staff has always been charged with offering outdoor recreational opportunities and space. Outdoor recreational space is now becoming more in demand; new activities are competing with higher level sport competitions for field space. We don't have the ability to exclude anyone from using the recreation spaces. He suggested entering into regional partnerships with other entities to be able to expand opportunities.
- Mayor Amorose Groomes: She would like to see the City adopt a strategy of land acquisition as a defense mechanism. There are a lot of opportunities.
- Mr. Anderson: He stated his belief that we must preserve and protect the woodlands that we are lucky to have in Dublin. He stated that connectivity, and the extension of our bike paths is important, and so is redevelopment potential in legacy neighborhoods.
- Mr. Fagrell: He shared a visual of an inventory of office buildings by age and size. He would like to develop a team to look at the office buildings and what would be needed to make them more marketable and improve their occupancy. Mayor Amorose Groomes responded favorably to this idea.
- Ms. Gilger: She agreed with Mr. Fagrell's analysis and idea. She would like to grow our boundaries. She would like to have a "Grand Park" sports complex like the one in Indiana. It is a stunning facility and visited by so many.
- Mr. Rogers: He stated that he thinks often about power needs for the future. Electrical vehicles and automation will require more power. He also stated that green space is very important, and the tree population needs to increase where possible.
- Mr. Brown: He stated that his thought process is around the preservation of land and how that is accomplished; whether by one large reserve or multiple smaller reserves. Connectivity among the pocket cities and the transportation is the other topics he addressed. He suggested that instead of building out, build up.

- Ms. Rauch: She stated that she thinks about the Historic District and how to demonstrate the history of Dublin using technology so people can experience and understand what made Dublin what it is.
- Mr. Stiffler: He stated that where there is activity, there is revenue. He also briefly commented on the out-of-town ownership with buildings and the struggle that causes in a community.
- Mr. Reiner: He stated the importance of “blue zone cities” and thinks it is a worthwhile consideration for the future.

Mr. Greene concluded the discussion by encouraging the sharing of any images that reflect the ideas that were discussed. He briefly discussed the next meetings regarding Dublin 2035.

Historic District Task Force Recommendations Implementation

Ms. Noble stated that there were two items of information requested by the Committee at the last discussion. The first was to identify expenditures from the City to the Historic District that is not done in other areas of the City. She stated that the expenditures amount to approximately \$60,000, which is mostly décor. Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about maintenance items in the District. She would appreciate having all the costs assembled in one place for review.

The second item of focus was to determine how to use different financial tools to help elevate the objectives of the District. She introduced Mr. Balthis and Mr. Daniels from the law firm Squire Patton Boggs.

Mr. Balthis stated that the goals of his presentation are to:

- Provide a list of economic development tools and strategies, including a brief summary of each;
- Establish a foundation for a discussion regarding which tools and strategies would best serve Historic Dublin in meeting particular goals and desired impact; and
- Identify which specific tools and strategies the Committee would like to investigate further to achieve the desired impact in Historic Dublin.

Mr. Balthis provided some questions for Committee members to consider, such as what kind of economic activity do we want; how will we encourage that activity; and how will we generate the financial resources for sustained activities. He stated that the Historic District Task Force (HDTF), with community involvement, answered the first two questions. He reviewed briefly some of the HDTF recommendations; specifically: preserving historic charm, supporting small businesses, encouraging preservation, arts and culture.

Mr. Balthis shared the following economic development tools:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIFs): TIFs exempt certain improvements from real property taxation and may require the property owner to make payments in lieu of taxes which may be used to fund other municipal purposes, mainly public infrastructure improvements that support the parcel subject to the TIF. Mr.

Balthis stated this option is not likely in the Historic District because the infrastructure improvements have already been invested in.

- Downtown Redevelopment District (DRD): A DRD functions much like a TIF. The maximum amount of improvement that can be exempted from taxation is 70% for ten years. The district is limited to 10 acres and must include at least one historic building that will be rehabilitated. This option is very popular with historic districts.
 - The process of creating a DRD includes a public hearing and the creation and adoption of an economic development plan.
 - The owners of real property within the DRD may enter into agreements with the City to pay redevelopment charges to support the DRD.
 - DRDs were created in 2016.

In response to Mayor Amorose Groomes' question regarding whether or not multiple DRDs could be in the same area, Mr. Balthis stated that there can be more than one, but they each cannot be more than 10 acres. The limitation is on the amount of money that can be spent on non-public infrastructure costs.

- Community Reinvestment Areas (CRAs): CRAs allow the City to grant tax abatements on improvements of real property to incentivize private investment.
 - Like TIFs, the benefits of a CRA are limited in areas where most of the property has been improved or developed.
 - The Historic District is currently in a CRA that permits abatements for new commercial or industrial projects.
 - City Council has the authority to make residential improvements and renovations eligible as well.

Mr. Balthis stated that it seems to be working well and would not recommend changing it at this point.

- Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit (OHPTC)
 - The OHPTC is administered by the Ohio Development Services Agency in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Ohio Department of Taxation.
 - Applications are accepted in two rounds per year, in March and September.
 - This competitive program provides a state tax credit up to 25% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures for the rehabilitation of historic buildings;
 - OHPTC are used by private entities as a source of capital to rehabilitate or preserve historic structures.

This is a tool available to the developer in most cases on a qualifying project. The City's only role is to designate a historic district, which Dublin already has.

- Special Improvement District (SID)
 - A SID is a physical area in which property owners petition the City to levy an additional assessment in order to fund certain public improvements and services within the district.
 - This should not reduce or replace services generally provided by the City.
 - In order to create a SID, 60% of the owners of the front footage along all the public streets of the district, or owners of 75% of the overall property, must petition City Council to form the SID and levy any special assessments.

Mr. Balthis stated the law does state that this tool is to be used to provide additional services, not replace services. These would be services that are only being provided in the Historic District. It is a great way to create additional resources with owner buy-in.

Mr. Reiner stated that Columbus has a SID running down High Street. Is there angst and fear from the property owners to participate in a SID? Mr. Balthis stated that there may be reasons political or otherwise to not do a SID. The flip side is most people are in favor of improvements. He stated that the goal would be to convince property owners that a SID, though collective action, will provide more value to the district.

Ms. O'Callaghan described her experience with a SID while working for Columbus (Morse Road area). She stated that the owners at the time wanted the area revitalized and wanted additional services that the City could not provide at that time. They used this tool to get those services. It was a successful process.

Mr. Daniels stated that his is more of a bottom up versus top down initiative.

- Façade Enhancement Program (FEP)
 - A FEP normally consists of providing matching funds to private business to make improvements to the façade of a local business.
 - Examples could include small improvements such as signage or lighting and larger improvements such as structural improvements.
 - Over time, a FEP can have a significant impact on the appearance and "feel" of an area.
 - The matching funds can be conditioned on meeting certain design standards.
 - FEPs work best when funded through a SID or another public private partnership.

Mr. Balthis stated that the prior façade program did not have a job creation requirement tied to it and it was money coming only from the City. This program could be restructured for Historic Dublin.

- Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA)
 - DORAs allow for alcohol consumption outdoors within a clearly marked geographic area.
 - They have been shown to increase revenue and sales for restaurants and bars.
 - DORAs are also used to increase foot traffic to areas to support retail businesses.
 - Dublin Council has already created a DORA and is taking advantage of this economic development tool.
- Ohio History Connection (OHC)
 - OHC provides certified local government grants.
 - Approximately \$110,000 is awarded each year and the minimum amount per request is \$5,000.
 - There is often a local match requirement.
 - Certain federal requirements are tied to the available uses.
- Public Private Partnership through the Creation of a Non-Profit Organization
 - Local stakeholders create a non-profit organization to solicit donations, raise funds, promote economic development and organize community events.
 - Such organizations can vary greatly between communities, but require strong support and buy-in from the local business community and often require financial and/or other support from the City.
 - The Heritage Ohio Main Street Program is a common example of this strategy in Ohio.

Mr. Balthis stated that this is a great tool that can evolve over time to meet the needs. He added that private sector buy-in and the willingness to help fundraise is important to this tool's success. The local government tends to provide funding due to the difficulty of funding entirely with private sector.

Mr. Balthis stated that, after reviewing the Historic District Task Force recommendations, it is recommended that the Committee have additional discussion and investigation into: Special Improvement Districts (SID), A public private partnership with the creation of a non-profit entity or committee, and a façade enhancement program.

Mr. Reiner expressed his appreciation for Mr. Balthis's experiences that were shared. Mr. Keeler thanked everyone for the valuable information. He stated that he would like to know more about the public private partnership through the creation of a non-profit organization. He stated he would like to know more about structure and how the City funnels money to either a 501c-3 or a 501c-6 no-profit and how that non-profit entity

could then funnel money into the community. He is also interested in knowing how the façade grant program can proceed either through this non-profit entity or the City.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that her thoughts are aligned with Mr. Keeler's comments. She thanked Mr. Balthis and Mr. Daniels for the information.

Ms. O'Callaghan clarified that the committee did not wish to explore a SID further. Mr.

Keeler stated that he found it interesting and would like to know more. Mr. Balthis

stated that it is a great bottom up option. It is a good tool to be aware of. Ms.

O'Callaghan stated that it would need to be apparent what the SID could provide that the District is not currently getting. It was the consensus of the committee that a SID should be considered also.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Clerk of Council