



City of Dublin

Office of the City Manager

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Memo

To: Community Development Committee Members
From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager
Date: October 18, 2021
Initiated By: Megan D. O'Callaghan, Deputy City Manager/Chief Finance and Development Officer
Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Planning
Tammy Noble, Senior Planner
Re: Historic District Task Force Recommendation – Historic District Area Plan Update

Summary

The Community Development Committee has had a series of discussions regarding the Historic District Task Force (HDTF) recommendations and next steps for implementation. The focus of the material below is with regard to the HDTF recommendation to update the Historic District Area Plan.

Background

The Historic District Task Force was established in October 2019 and conducted their work throughout 2020. The HDTF's final primary recommendations included the "Creation of an Updated Historic District Area Plan", "Consider Management Options for the Historic District", and "Support Existing Efforts that will Lead to Short-Term Successes". Each of these recommendations sets forth objectives and tasks to accomplish the recommendations. The HDTF presented their report to City Council on January 4, 2021. City Council referred the topic to the Community Development Committee for further review and vetting of the recommendations. The Committee met on January 20, 2021, March 1, 2021, April 27, 2021 and May 25, 2021 to discuss the Historic District Task Force recommendations.

Historic District Area Plan Update

One of the primary recommendations of the Historic District Task Force is to update the 2007 Historic District Area Plan. In 2015, the Historic District Area Plan was incorporated into the Bridge Street District. City Council requested the Task Force consider whether the development patterns of the Bridge Street District were appropriate for the Historic District and whether the City should adopt a specific Area Plan for the Historic District. The Task Force concluded that the Historic District is unique in its intended development patterns and based on maintaining an appropriate scale, massing, and street character, the City should move forward with updating the (2007) Historic District Area Plan based on current policies and recommendation. This conclusion was solidified as the first HDTF recommendation for the Creation of an Updated Historic District Area Plan. Staff has included a request within the proposed 2022 Operating Budget for this Area Plan update.

The Task Force identified a series of objectives and specific tasks to be addressed within the Area

Plan update, which are outlined below.

- a. *Gateways* – incorporate features that signify entry to the District and specific focus on east gateway.
- b. *Streetscape* – wider sidewalks, various modes of transportation, street lights, benches and other amenities unique to District, tree specifications that are native to Central Ohio, and planted to ensure health.
- c. *Parking* – encourage shared parking, investigate alternative parking standards for District, adopt application-based technology for parking management, and parking areas are well-maintained.
- d. *Open Space and Parks* – preserve open space, properly demarcate and connect parks, identify areas for greenways connections, create accessibility to waterways, increase park areas along SR 161, encourage redevelopment of 55 South High Street, and collaborate with Parks and Recreation for all open and park space.
- e. *Indian Run Corridor* – minimize impacts to corridor, maintain natural buffer, consider permanent easements, and investigate multi-use paths enhance an east-west connection.
- f. *South High Street Vitality* – promote more venues, all promotional opportunities like banners, art, and displays.
- g. *Diversity of Uses* – utilize active uses on the ground floor and uses that support local businesses, encourage service and office uses and residential uses on upper stories (vertical mixed use), and incentives for retail uses.
- h. *Preservation* – permitting demolition only in terms of health and safety risks, provide funding mechanism to assist historic buildings are maintained, conduct strict enforcement of the Code, and purchase derelict historic properties and renovate for market rate purchase price.
- i. *Proper Scale* – enforce design standards that establish the character of the Historic District and recommendations that align with ARB, Historic District Code and Guidelines, and Historic District Area Plan.
- j. *Connecting the District* – identifying synergy between the north and south end of the District, pedestrian connections and movement across Bridge Street, opportunities for an anchor in southern portion of the District, explore continuous riverfront open space, and reinforce connections between the District and Bridge Park.
- k. *Wayfinding* – explore app-based technology to enhance wayfinding and other methods of promoting the district.
- l. *Arts and Culture* – provide art and cultural artifacts that represent the history of the District, work with Dublin Arts Council for citywide opportunities in District and engage the Historical Society for valuable information and resources regarding the District.

Recommendation

Staff requests the Committee discuss and consider the HDTF recommendation to update the 2007 Historic District Area Plan. Staff has included a request to fund this update within the proposed 2022 Operating Budget.



HISTORIC DISTRICT TASK FORCE

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

TASK FORCE REPRESENTATIVES

Task Force Chair	Kim Way - Dublin Resident
Task Force Vice Chair	Kathy Lannan - Historic District Resident
Business Representatives	Craig Price Enas Lanham Lynn Long
Historical Society	Clay Rose
Historic District Residents	Alan Szuter Mary Szuter
Dublin Residents	Sally Van Horn Jay Nordenbrock Garrick Daft Burt Downden Carol Matune Ed Ostrowski Paula Yonnotti-Ansel
Youth Representatives	Rohan Madan Olivia Wirth



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

The City of Dublin would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Historic District Task Force for their dedication and participation in this process. Each member provided an invaluable perspective as residents, business owners and members of the Dublin community, and were appointed to the Task Force to provide various perspectives about the future of the District. Members were highly engaged in a range of meetings that included member input

sessions; personal and hosted tours of the District; a presentation series and involvement from Heritage Ohio that specializes in the vitalization and historic preservation, and staff and outside agency-facilitated sessions. These sessions resulted in the development of specific recommendations by the Task Force outlined in this document for City Council's consideration. The dedication and time commitment of the group is well recognized and we thank them for your efforts.



PURPOSE

The Historic District Task Force was established by City Council by Resolution 57-19 that was approved on October 21, 2019. The Task Force was appointed to provide an update to the Historic District Area Plan that was previously adopted in 2007 and subsequently incorporated in the Bridge Street District in 2013. City Council wanted to reevaluate whether this significant portion of our community should be embodied in its own area plan and what other recommendations the Task Force would have for the future of this area. City Council has always embraced continually revisiting our City of Dublin Community Plan, as well as Special Area Plans to ensure these plans align with the short-term and long-term objectives of the City. Council emphasized the need for the Task Force to provide a venue for community-wide visioning and selected a wide range of stakeholders throughout our community to assist in this process. Specific tasks of the Historic District Task Force included:

- Referencing the 2007 Historic District Area Plan as a starting point for this future area plan update. This may include but is not limited to considerations including the character of the area, historic preservation,

housing needs, economic vitality and mixed-use opportunities, gateways to the District and wayfinding, streetscape and open space/gathering spaces, and public art and events.

- Understanding the complexity and needs of the District and identifying key issues that require additional exploration. This includes significant input from our community, as a whole, as well as key stakeholders in the region.
- Engaging with Heritage Ohio that concluded an inclusive two-and-a-half-day visit that would assess the Main Street Program and provide input gathering sessions from other relevant groups that align themselves with the health and vitality of a historic area.
- Producing specific recommendations for implementation and present to City Council for consideration.



City of Dublin, OH

The Task Force was appointed to present their findings in the enclosed report which includes specific recommendations to City Council. The

Task Force has worked diligently to meet these tasks and respectfully submits this report as a result of their efforts.



PROCESS

The Historic District Task Force held twelve meetings overall with a kick-off meeting on January 30, 2020 and the last meeting held on November 17, 2020. The meetings were put on hold from March to July based on health considerations of the pandemic but resumed in the later portion of July 2020.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION MEETINGS:

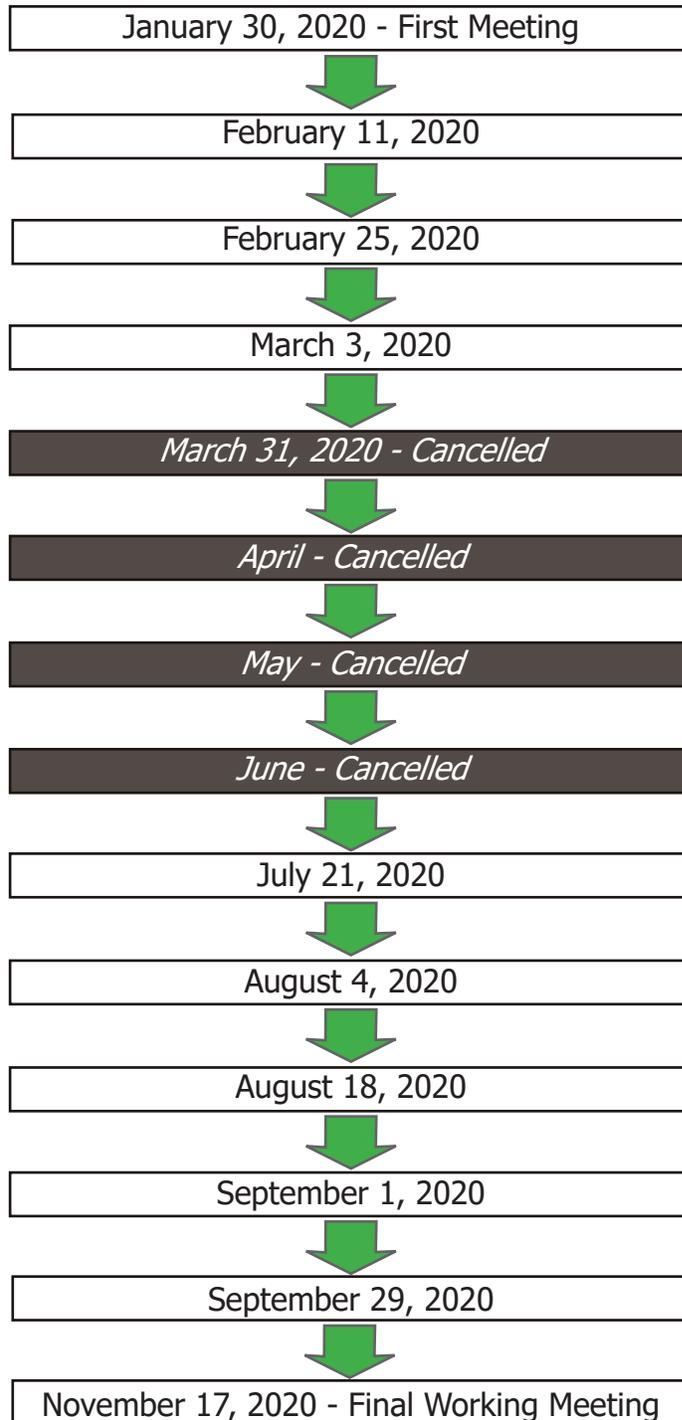
The first three meetings were educational in nature and included introductory comments from the City Manager and the Mayor, as well as other members of City Council as to the purpose and expectations of the Task Force. The meetings included an overview of planning principles by City staff that outlined the purpose and utilization of a Comprehensive Plan, as well as Special Area Plans in evaluating development proposals that were presented to the various Boards and Commissions, including City Council. The meetings also included a speaker series that involved our Economic Development and Finance teams to outline economic incentives and programs related to the Historic District. The presentation series also included presentations from various interest groups of the District including the Visit Dublin, the Historic Society, the Historic District Business Association and the Downtown Alliance. These presentations culminated in a two-and-a-half-day event with Heritage Ohio.



HERITAGE OHIO:

The City of Dublin consulted with Heritage Ohio to discuss their Main Street Program and gain their insight on how the City can continue supporting the vitality of the District while appropriately balancing preservation efforts. This two-and-a-half day process included small and large group discussions with the Historic District Task Force, walking tours of the District, and an interactive public meeting that hosted over 80 people from the Dublin community to share their visions for our Historic District. Heritage Ohio produced a report summarizing their recommendations and is included on the City's website at <https://dublinohiousa.gov/planning/historic-dublin-task-force/> under the meeting date March 3, 2020.

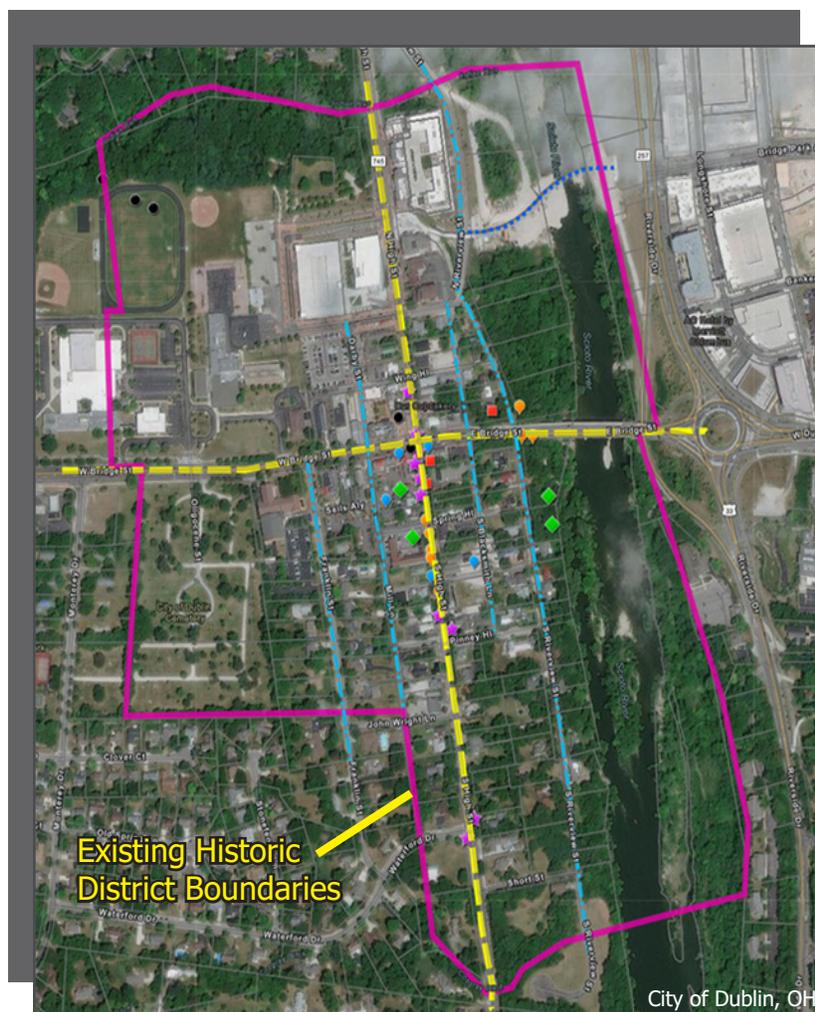
Meeting Dates and Progression



The Task Force reconvened on July 21, 2020. This meeting incorporated the findings of Heritage Ohio and a representative of our consultant was available for questions. This meeting provided an in-depth overview of pending modifications to the Historic District Zoning Code and Historic District Guidelines. The members had strong support for the modifications and incorporated their support in their final recommendations.

In August, staff led the Task Force through a mapping exercise that helped members visualize members' comments

related to examples of preferences and challenges in the District. The map includes a color-coded legend that identifies specific themes the group discussed including; Architecture and Historic Preservation, Land Uses, Open Space and Natural Corridors, Parking and Wayfinding. Each example includes comments made by the Task Force members that memorializes their references to the District. A visual representation of the mapping exercise is below and the link is <https://dublinohiousa.gov/planning/historic-dublin-task-force/>.



The following two meetings in August and September provided the opportunity for City staff members representing Engineering, Parks and Recreation, and Planning to present current and future efforts within the District to the Task Force. These meetings proved beneficial to members of the Task Force to understand the many efforts the City of Dublin is undertaking within the District, which addressed previous concerns raised by Task Force members for improving the District. Examples of projects the Task Force learned included:

- Utility line improvements within the District.
- Safe pedestrian crossings within the area.
- Brick sidewalks and lighting fixtures improvements.
- Wayfinding efforts.
- Historic District specific street signs installation.
- Planting and landscaping improvements.
- Updates about the Downtown Parking Study.
- Mobility programs such as shuttle services and bike share programs.
- Alternative transportation option plannings.

Finally, the Task Force convened in September to review and finalize their recommendations to City Council. This task was the primary purpose of the Task Force and included recommendations that focused on all components of the vitality in the District. The recommendations of the Historic District Task Force are listed below in the "Outcome" section of this report. The recommendations have been grouped in three main areas of focus including; the creation of an Historic District Area Plan, management options for the Historic District, and supporting existing efforts that lead to short-term successes within the District.

**"THE CITY NEEDS
TO SUPPORT
SMALL BUSINESSES
THAT MAKE UP
OUR HISTORIC
DISTRICT"**

-Task Force Member



OUTCOME

I. CREATION OF AN UPDATED HISTORIC DISTRICT AREA PLAN

The Historic District Task Force has worked diligently to compile recommendations to City Council about their desired outcomes for the Historic District. The members considered historic preservation, open space preservation, economic vitality of the District, event planning, streetscape design and historic features, building mass and scale, walkability and pedestrian movement, and overall management and oversight of the District. The Task Force presents the following for consideration to City Council.

The Historic District Task Force had lengthy discussions about the purpose of an Area Plan and how the recreation of the Historic District Area Plan would give the appropriate considerations to the character, scale, diversity of uses, walkability and preservation that is especially vital in an historic area. The Task Force recommends the following objectives and specific tasks be addressed within an Area Plan update.

- a. GATEWAYS:** Consider gateway features at the transition points into the Historic District that differentiate the District from other parts of the City.
 - Incorporate features that signify entry into the Historic District; (i.e., columns, archways, monumental signage, walls, landscape, etc.).

- Specific focus and improvements need to be made to the east gateway, across the SR161 vehicular bridge to High Street, to minimize or eliminate curb cuts and screen parking areas, (i.e., low screen walls, landscape screening, street trees, etc.).

**"PRESERVATION
OF DUBLIN'S
HISTORIC
CHARM IS KEY
WITHIN THE
DISTRICT"**

-Task Force Member



South High Street Sidewalk



West Bridge Street Streetscape

b. STREETScape: Focus on a streetscape design that is pedestrian friendly and fits the character of the Historic District.

- Wider sidewalks to allow adequate pedestrian movement that are well kept, well maintained and surfaces are level and do not create tripping hazards.
- Amenities for various modes of transportation including biking (i.e. bike racks, bike service/repair stations, etc.).
- Streetlights that are similar in nature and appropriately designed and scaled for the District.
- Benches, trash receptacles, and other amenities that are in character with the District.
- Street tree selections that are species native to central Ohio and have a growth rate and scale that is appropriate for the District and local streets.
- Ensure that street trees are provided with underground space and soil conditions that will support healthy growth (Silva Cell System, etc.).

c. PARKING: Rely on existing parking lots and on-street parking instead of creating new parking areas/lots, unless required.

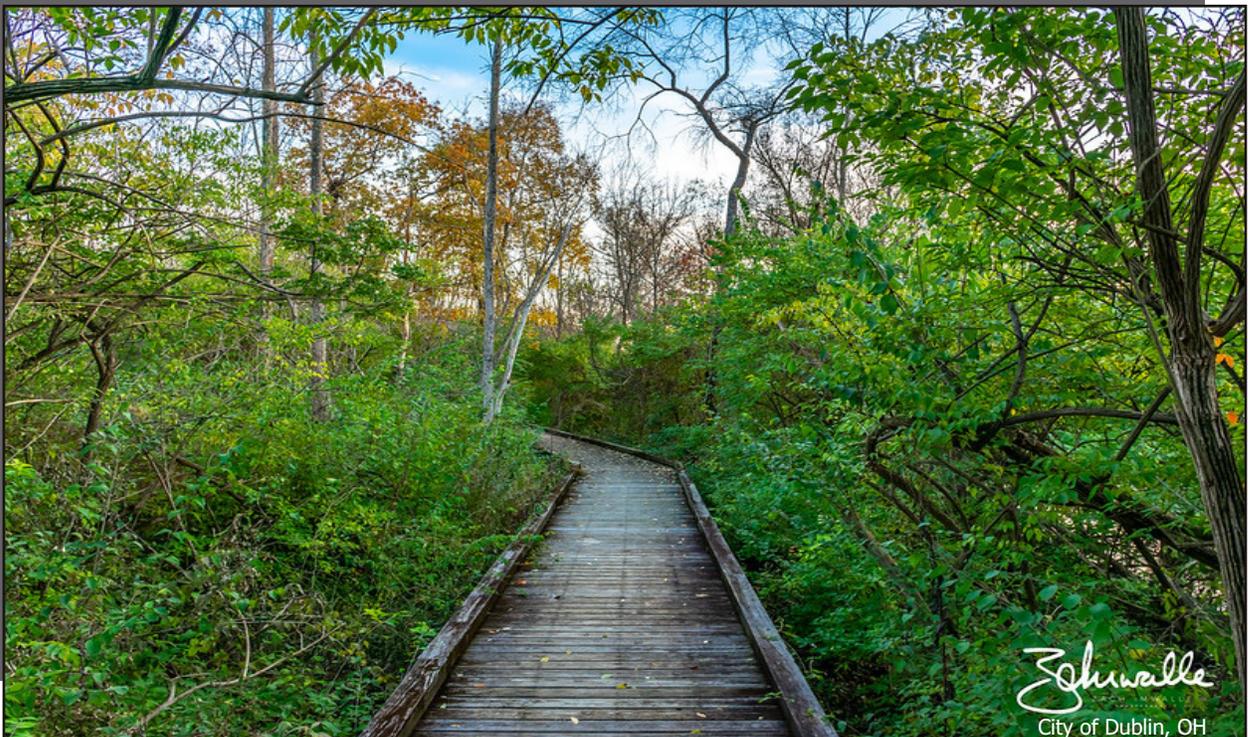
- Encourage shared parking, when possible.
- Investigate alternative parking standards to allow for easier consolidation of parking lots and parking lot upgrades, minimize or eliminate suburban design requirements for a more urban character and material, and landscape that is compatible with the Historic District.
- Investigate and if appropriate, adopt application-based technology to assist in the management of parking.
- Investigate methods to ensure private parking lots are well maintained and incorporate necessary screening and landscaping.



d. OPEN SPACE AND PARKS: Strongly encourage the preservation of natural open space and greenway connections.

- Preserve and maintain existing open spaces and parks.
- Properly identify, demarcate and physically connect the existing parks and open space network that connects to and through the Historic District including; Indian Run Falls Park, the Dublin Veterans Park/Grounds of Remembrance, West Pedestrian Bridge Plaza, Library Plaza, BriHi Plaza, Visit Dublin Plaza, Karrer Barn Park; Dublin Springs Park, Kiwanis Riverway Park and the new Riverside Crossing Park.
- Identify areas for greenway connections throughout the District and in particular, designate a connection from Dublin Springs Park back to High Street.
- Create more designated physical access points to the Scioto River and Riverside Crossing Park.
- Identify the potential for additional open space or park areas south of SR 161. Identify opportunities for a southern anchor and river access on underutilized properties (i.e. Karrer Barn and McDowell property).
- Encourage future redevelopment of 55 S. High Street (L-Shaped Building) to integrate a new public park or plaza with a new, appropriately scaled building or buildings
- Coordinate and collaborate with Dublin Parks and Recreation Department on all open and park space.

Existing Indian Run Falls Park Boardwalk



e. **INDIAN RUN CORRIDOR:** Provide recommendations to ensure the preservation of the Indian Run and adjacent greenway corridor.

- Ensure the character of future development minimizes impacts on the corridor (limiting building heights, ensuring building setbacks, etc.).
- Maintain a significant natural buffer along Indian Run Falls and the adjacent corridor to ensure a natural corridor, which could become a city owned linear park/open space.

Schwan Falls at Indian Run



“WE NEED TO RESPECT OUR NATURAL CORRIDORS WITH EMPHASIS ON INDIAN RUN”

-Task Force Member

- Consider a permanent easement or agreement (conservation easements).
- Investigate the inclusion of a multi-use paths and ravine overlook areas along the southern boundary of the Indian Run corridor to provide an east-west connection.



f. SOUTH HIGH STREET VITALITY: Encourage vitality focused in the south side of the District.

- Promoting more event venues for the core district (i.e. uses that encourage more foot traffic, such as; farmers/seasonal markets, holiday festivals, ethnic festivals, small movie theater, outdoor theater, or performing arts theater, etc.).
- Allowing promotional opportunities that announce events such as banners, displays, street/sidewalk art, etc.
- Investigate the opportunity for more family-oriented activities.

g. DIVERSITY OF USES: Encourage mixed-use development that promotes pedestrian movement with a focus on retail and the lack of reliance on vehicular travel.

- Focus on development opportunities that utilize active uses at the ground floor level and encourage retail uses that support local businesses that are unique to the District.
- Encourage service commercial and office uses (law offices, insurance agencies, real estate agents, etc.), as well as residential on the upper levels.
- Investigate incentives or methods to promote/encourage retail uses.

h. PRESERVATION: Highlight the importance of historic preservation as development pressures continue within the District.

- Identify areas where the existing development character will be preserved. Demolition should be considered a last resort when

- health, safety and welfare is at stake.
- Provide information about and funding for programs to assist historic home and business owners to maintain the integrity and character of their properties.
- Conduct rigorous and strict code enforcement on absentee landlords and property owners.
- Purchase derelict historic properties and to renovate for market rate purchase price.



BriHi Development and Plaza



Dublin Link Pedestrian Bridge

i. PROPER SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT: Ensure the proper height, scale and massing of buildings within the Historic District to ensure the quaint nature of the area.

- Enforce design standards that reinforce the established character of the Historic District including building height, scale, massing and materials.
- Recommendations should align with all activities that guide development in the area (Architectural Review Board, Historic District Zoning Code, Historic Design Guidelines, and Historic District Area Plan).

j. CONNECTING THE DISTRICT: Ensuring adequate transition from the east to the west side of the River and embracing the amenities that each has to offer to the District.

- Identify opportunities for synergy throughout the District, connecting and leveraging

the development patterns and activities between the northern and southern end of the District.

- Encourage pedestrian connections and movements crossing Bridge Street.
- Focus on opportunities to provide an anchor in the southern portion of the district to strengthen the connections.
- Explore opportunities for a continuous riverfront open space connection and along existing north/south streets.
- Reinforce connections from the Historic District to the; Bridge Park development; The West Bridge Street Commercial District and Metro Center, the East Bridge Street Commercial Corridor and Sawmill Road; and the adjoining residential neighborhoods of Indian Run Estates, Corbins Mill, Waterford Village, Longview and River Highlands; and the City of Dublin, in general.





City of Dublin, OH
North High Street

k. WAYFINDING: Ensuring that both pedestrian and vehicular movement is easily accessible throughout the District through appropriate signage and wayfinding.

- Explore app based technology to enhance wayfinding and provide historic and cultural information as well as on-going events and other helpful information.

i. ARTS AND CULTURE: Embrace opportunities to provide art and cultural artifacts that represent the history and vitality of the District.

- Encourage art and cultural displays that celebrate the Historic District, the history and culture of Dublin and the creative resources and talents of the community.
- Work with the Dublin Arts Council to coordinate citywide opportunities with Historic District opportunities.
- Continue to engage with the Dublin Historical Society to ensure valuable resources and information are made available to the public in an accessible manner.

“THE DISTRICT NEEDS MORE EVENT SPACE AND GREEN AREAS FOR GATHERINGS”

-Task Force Member

II. CONSIDER MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Historic District Task Force discussed the importance of various groups within the Historic District including the Historic District Business Association, Visit Dublin, the Dublin Historical Society and the Downtown Alliance. The members discussed the importance of each of these groups but felt it was important for a singular entity be identified whose daily purpose is to promote and give guidance to small business owners with any needs they have including financial incentives for improving their properties, assistance with public process by the City of Dublin including the Architectural Review Board, and any other needs to promote their business.

a. MANAGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT:

Consider a management program that oversees the goals and objectives of the Historic District and collaborates with the existing organizations in the District including Visit Dublin, Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Dublin Historical Society, Downtown Alliance, Architectural Review Board, and the Historic District Business Association. This may include:

- Further consideration of Heritage Ohio's Main Street Program or other similar programs.
- In collaboration with existing services including the HDBA and the City of

Dublin Economic and Development, consider a businesses "concierge service" that would assist local business with issues associated with local entrepreneurship.

"THE SCALE OF THE DISTRICT NEEDS TO REMAIN SMALL, DENSE AND URBAN"

-Task Force Member

- Assemble a full-time and designated entity or appointed person to oversee, review, coordinate and collaborate on all planning, design, preservation, and development decisions in Historic Dublin, help residents and small businesses navigate the City of Dublin and other available resources, with the mandate to preserve and maintain the character, quality and experience of the Historic District, as well as to promote the use and enjoyment of the Historic District for all Dublin residents and visitors.



III. SUPPORT EXISTING EFFORTS THAT WILL LEAD TO “SHORT TERM” SUCCESSSES.

The Historic District Task Force stressed the importance of supporting current efforts being completed by the City of Dublin that further the objectives of the Historic District, which are outlined below.

a. Educational Effort:

Provide learning opportunities about the District including historic perspective, cultural diversity and background as well as significant people and places in the District.

- Encourage an educational program that highlights the history, progression and historic amenities of the District. This

could be app based and include using virtual reality or other forms of technology.

- City staff will work with Dublin Historical Society to showcase “The Story” of the Historic District.

b. Processes and Regulations:

Ensure updates to the Historic District Code and Guidelines are compatible with the vision for the District and the development review process is streamlined, clear and fair. Planning staff should finalize and forward these amendments in a timely manner.



**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday May 25, 2021
Virtual**

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Reiner called the May 25, 2021 Community Development Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

Staff present: Ms. O'Callaghan, Ms. Gilger, Mr. Earman, Mr. Stiffler, Mr. Farrar, Ms. Noble, Mr. Fagrell, Mr. Hammersmith, Mr. Brown

Others present: Jamie Greene and Logan Stang, planning NEXT; Russ Balthis and Greg Daniels, Squire Patton Boggs

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Keeler moved to approve the Community Development Committee minutes of April 27, 2021. Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded the motion.

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

- **Historic Dublin Task Force Recommendations**

Staff Presentation

Ms. Noble stated that staff and consultants from the law firm of Squire Patton Boggs have been collaborating on the goal of implementation of the Historic District Task Force Recommendations. This topic was also discussed by the Committee on April 27. As requested at that meeting, staff has provided in tonight's meeting materials a summary of investments that the City has made in the Historic District, divided into one-time investments, annual and re-occurring expenses. The following presentations will focus on the Commercial Façade Improvement Program in the Historic District; Special Improvement Districts; and private and public partnerships.

Commercial Façade Grant Program

Ms. Noble stated that the City implemented this successful grant program in 2018, but it was suspended in 2020 based on the recommendation of Squire, Patton and Boggs. The consultants were concerned the grant program was not being operated through another entity, such as a Community Improvement Corporation ("CIC"), nor was it directly correlated to job retention. The options of partnering with an entity such as the CIC and/or tying the program to job retention would ensure that the program fulfilled a public purpose and improved the economic welfare of the community. Council has expressed interest in re-instating the program. The program is a 50-50 match grant program, requiring that grant applications be reviewed and approved by the City and that the City's matching funds per project be capped at \$15,000. The packet materials provided examples of previous grant projects. Should City Council choose to reinstate a façade enhancement program in Dublin, Squire, Patton and Boggs recommends working with another entity, such as the City's CIC to develop and operate the program. The CIC was created in connection with a 2015 non-tax revenue bond issue and the powers of the CIC were limited for

that purpose. The CIC's bylaws and organizational documents would need to be reviewed and possibly amended to ensure a façade enhancement program would be a proper use of the CIC's authority. The City would also need to appropriate the funds necessary to the CIC to operate the façade improvement program.

An alternative to partnering with the CIC on the grant program, also suggested by Squire, Patton and Boggs, would be to add a job creation and/or retention requirement to the grant. Staff does not recommend tying job creation and/or retention to a façade improvement program as it would not be consistent with the City's economic development strategies. Often, the building owner, not the business or tenant, is making the facade improvements.

Staff recommends the following discussion topics for the committee's consideration:

1. Should Dublin develop and operate a façade enhancement program?
2. Should the façade enhancement program be limited to commercial development or be expanded to include residential development?
3. Should the program be limited to the Historic District or should it be throughout the City?
4. Should the façade enhancement program be limited to building improvements or should routine maintenance also be permitted?
5. What other funding mechanism should be considered to supplement the City's programs?

Committee Questions/Discussion

Mr. Keeler inquired if the other cities with façade improvement programs referred to in the staff report, including Worthington, Delaware and Tiffin, have CICs.

Ms. Noble responded that the City of Worthington has a CIC, but she would need to check regarding the others.

Mr. Keeler stated that if there is a way for Dublin to reinstate this program without having a CIC, he would prefer that. There has been discussion about creating a new entity with its own board. He would suggest that the City provide the grant program funds to that entity, and that entity would award the grants. He would welcome comments from the consultants on this suggestion.

Mayor Amorose Groomes inquired if it might be possible to use the City's existing infrastructure to handle the grant program. For instance, could the grant program be handled by the City's Architectural Review Board, which already reviews applications for building renovations within the Historic District? She is not necessarily opposed to a CIC or the façade improvement program, but she would be interested in determining if it would be possible to utilize the City's existing infrastructure and expertise for this purpose. She believes the grant funds that were issued for façade improvement projects within the Historic District were a good return on investment. She would like to see the City do more of that. She is not concerned whether it is for commercial or residential projects. The goal of the grant program is to enhance the streetscape in the District, and if residential buildings contribute to the streetscape, she would be willing to consider including them in the funding opportunity. The façade program concerns the exterior of a building, not the use within the structure.

Mr. Reiner stated that perhaps the Committee should continue reviewing these grant applications, as that review process worked out well previously. He referred to the Mayor's suggestion about the ARB reviewing them.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she was attempting to identify another entity that could handle the program. However, if the Committee could also handle the CIC component, she would have no objection. The City is creating too many bodies, each of which has their own opinions.

Mr. Reiner requested the committee members to respond to the questions posed by staff.

1. Should Dublin develop and operate a façade enhancement program?

Consensus of committee was that Dublin should develop and operate a façade enhancement program.

2. Should the façade enhancement program be limited to commercial development or be expanded to include residential development?

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she had no objection to including residential development, if the building contributes to the High Street streetscape.

Mr. Keeler and Mr. Reiner expressed agreement.

3. Should the program be limited to the Historic District or should it be throughout the City?

Consensus of the committee was that the program should be limited to the Historic District.

4. Should the façade enhancement program be limited to building improvements or should routine maintenance also be permitted?

Consensus of the committee was that the program should be limited to building improvements.

5. What other funding mechanism should be considered to supplement the City's programs?

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that OSU is adding a grant-writing specialist to MORPC. There are many historical grants available, but the application process is difficult. OSU is attempting to resume a land grant status, and they are tracking all the grants available for that purpose. Perhaps we could engage them at some point in this discussion. It may be possible to provide a link to the grant opportunities to individuals within the Historic District, who might be interested.

Mr. Keeler stated he would prefer to avoid the bureaucracy involved with the creation of another task force or steering committee. However, whether it is the ARB or a new entity, they would be in charge of disseminating funds. The funding component can include grant-writing, but it also could include receipt of donor contributions. Currently, no mechanism exists that permits private residents to make contributions to this program. For that reason, there may need to be a new entity. Whether it is a person or committee, that entity should be wholly invested in preservation efforts within the Historic District. Although Visit Dublin and Historic Business Association are good at their missions, there is a lack of focus on passionate preservation of the character of Historic Dublin. There needs to be a separate entity to handle the funding hierarchy of City funds, other grants and private donations.

Mr. Reiner stated that another missing element is the recognition of individuals who have contributed toward this objective. In regard to a CIC, would it be satisfactory to allow the Committee to run that program, or should ARB do so?

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that it is her understanding that the funds would need to flow through a separate entity from the City. She requested that the consultants respond to the question.

Mr. Balthis stated that Ms. O'Callaghan is correct. If the funds come directly from the City, they would encourage that there be a job retention or creation requirement applied to the application.

That would come with a lengthy list of additional challenges. He has experienced those challenges with other entities with whom he has worked. If residential buildings were included in the façade grant program, it would be more difficult for the City to provide direct funding. Minus a job creation/retention requirement, they would encourage a separate entity, such as a CIC or a non-profit for the Historic District.

Ms. Gilger stated that there cannot be a job requirement connected to the funding. A property owner must be the grant applicant, and typically, they are not the business tenant in the structure. A property owner cannot commit to jobs for a company that they are only housing.

Mayor Amorose Groomes inquired if the HDBA could be used as a pass-through entity, or must a new entity be created.

Ms. O'Callaghan responded that it does not need to be a new entity. The idea of using the CIC was due to the fact that the City currently has a CIC, so it would be necessary only for Council to adopt a resolution expanding its authority. She inquired the consultants' views.

Mr. Balthis inquired if the HDBA was a nonprofit organization.

Ms. O'Callaghan responded affirmatively.

Mr. Balthis stated that he would need to review the HDBA's bylaws and structure, but that option could be explored.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that if there already is a CIC, that entity would be satisfactory, as well. She would prefer not to create a new body, however. The function of this entity would require a certain level of expertise of the members.

Ms. O'Callaghan responded that the CIC was created with a narrow scope. That board is limited to City staff and City Council. If the role of the CIC is expanded, it will be important to ensure the Board has the correct composition. It may be necessary to include other individuals in its composition.

Mr. Keeler stated that he does not perceive the CIC as being an extension of the City. It is a completely separate entity, although the composition can include a City staff member or Council member. He sees it as a separate entity, such as the Dublin Arts Council, with which the City collaborates and provides funding. He is not suggesting funding any greater than what is currently provided for the Façade Grant program. Previous experienced City employees who may live in the Historic District might be prime candidates. If the City delegates the grant dollars to that entity, it would determine the grant awards.

Mayor Amorose Groomes inquired if he is suggesting that it be a different CIC, not an expansion of the role of the existing CIC.

Mr. Keeler responded that he was not aware of an existing CIC. The discussion at the previous Committee meeting did not address a CIC; however, if there already is a CIC organization, it could be utilized. He inquired if the Over the Rhine or Short North CICs were connected with the municipality.

Ms. O'Callaghan responded that she believes he is referring to SIDs, Special Improvement Districts.

Mr. Keeler inquired if a SID is a financial tool, but a CIC is more of an entity or organization.

Mr. Balthis responded that a SID is a financial tool for a special assessment process, but it is also possible to create an entity that is a SID. The downtown partnership entities either are SIDs or

are closely associated with nonprofit organizations for which a SID generates the funds supporting that nonprofit organization. A CIC, a Community Improvement Corporation, is a specific creation of state law that is required for certain purposes, such as issuance of certain types of bonds. Some community CICs also can provide loans to small businesses. The City's CIC was created to approve a bond issuance, and it now is inactive. Nonprofit organizations also can be created to focus on a downtown area. It may be, but is not required to be, a CIC. When this topic was discussed before, he was not referring to the City's current CIC.

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that she could provide Mr. Keeler with copies of the legislation that created the existing CIC for the issuance of bonds, if he would like to see those.

Mr. Keeler responded that a CIC for issuance of bonds would have a municipal purpose, and he was not envisioning that type of entity. He was envisioning a nonprofit entity with its own governing body, which collaborates with the City. From that perspective, the City would not write the rules for the nonprofit entity.

Ms. O'Callaghan stated that discussion is the next item on the agenda. The CIC for the Façade Program was suggested, because it would be an existing mechanism through which the grant program funding could occur.

Mr. Reiner inquired the members' recommendation regarding use of the existing CIC.

Mr. Keeler stated that as he envisioned it, the CIC would not be his choice. However, if the consensus of the other members is that the CIC mechanism is the best choice for the Façade Grant funding alone, he has no objection.

Mr. Balthis stated once another entity is created, it would be the appropriate mechanism to handle the Façade Grant Program. However, the reason the existing CIC has been suggested to handle the grant program at this point is that because it already exists and with minor adjustments could be utilized to re-start the grant program more quickly. Depending on Council's decision on the next agenda topics, however, it may not be the best long-term mechanism.

- **SIDS/Non-Profits**

Mr. Balthis stated that this topic relates to private-public partnerships and SIDs. He will provide some examples of public-private partnerships and SIDs. He has provided links to each of their websites, as it would be very helpful to visit those websites and view their projects. Each of the funding mechanisms has been designed for the needs of a particular district. He presented overviews of the following:

- Downtown Columbus SIDS at Capitol Crossroads
- Short North Alliance
- Uptown Westerville, Inc.
- Downtown Cuyahoga Falls Partnership

Mr. Balthis stated that the first steps in creating a SID include consideration of the following elements:

- Steering Committee Recruitment
- Advantages and disadvantages of SIDs
- The Community/District's needs
- Opportunities to incentivize a SID

Mr. Keeler stated that if the existing CIC could be used in the short term to reinstate the Façade Grant Program quickly, he would prefer to explore that option. Evaluating creation of a SID may be the next step. In the long-term, he believes a non-profit entity would be a preferred direction for addressing the needs of the Historic District. There is significant overlap between nonprofits, Visit Dublin and the HDBA; however, currently, something is missing. If one of the existing bodies could be restructured to emphasize preservation within the Historic District and accept grants for preservation purposes, that could be considered. Of the examples shown tonight, the Short North Alliance and Uptown Westerville Alliance reflect the type of entity he would prefer. It does not need to be paired with a SID, but could be.

Mr. Balthis stated that there can be overlap between organizations. They recommend that if there are already some existing organizations in the District that they be included in the Steering Committee for creating a SID. This encourages collaboration versus conflict and competitiveness between organizations.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that historically, fundraising has been difficult in Dublin. Although it would be great to create an entity to accomplish fundraising for a District, it would require significant work to be successful. In the meantime, she agrees with Mr. Keeler in using the existing CIC to reinstate the façade grant program.

Mr. Reiner concurred with using the existing CIC in the short-term, and perhaps a SID, if that can be created, in the long-term.

Mr. Reiner inquired if a 50-50% matching grant program, capped at \$15,000 for City funds would be the same financing structure the Committee would recommend.

Committee consensus was to utilize the same financing structure.

- **Building Standards Update**

Brad Fagrell, Director of Building Standards, provided an overview of Building Standards operations, which fall within two categories, Inspections and Review Services. He described the division's operations and reviewed the progress accomplished over the past few years. He is proud of the very impressive City projects that their team has reviewed in minute detail. He is proud, as well, of the fact that new processes have enabled them to reduce significantly the turn-around times for plan reviews.

Committee members thanked Mr. Fagrell for the impressive presentation.

- **Dublin 2035 Framework**

Mr. Greene stated that as an update, all four Council committees have met once to discuss big ideas for the Framework 2035 Plan, and after tonight, three committees will have met twice. In the discussions, approximately 80 big ideas have been generated. Those ideas have been consolidated, and the Committee will attempt to refine 39 of the ideas tonight. The committees' refined ideas will be compiled for the June 21 Council work session. At that meeting, a futurist will present innovative ideas for cities. After that meeting, a public process will be launched to allow City residents to present their big ideas for the future of Dublin. Tonight, this Committee will review the 39 ideas on the list and identify which ideas should be (1) elevated to a big idea for the Dublin 2035 Framework; (2) clarify why it should be elevated – what is the anticipated outcome of that idea; and (3) consider what type of community the ideas would be creating.

Mr. Green stated that the four committees were each assigned a focus topic. The Community Development Committee focused on land use. On the chart being displayed by Mr. Stang, the land use topics are shown in dark blue. However, as the chart shows, on many ideas, all four committees were aligned. Some smaller ideas could be grouped together as one. Some ideas should be elevated for the Dublin 2035 Framework. Committee members and staff members present reviewed the 39 consolidated ideas reflected on the chart and discussed which ideas should be elevated.

Mr. Reiner recommended elevating the following ideas: specific roadway connectors; resident ID cards; interactive digital events in public gathering spaces; creating "micro city" nodes within the City; achieving gold status as a Bicycle Friendly community; land acquisition to facilitate City growth; becoming a Blue Zone city, increasing resident health and safety.

Mayor Amorose Groomes recommended elevating: the regional partnership complex for supporting community sport services; a non-automotive super greenway; a high-speed multimodal terminal; becoming an energy self-sufficient city; provide a toolkit supporting investment and revitalization; adoption of financial structures supporting local land development; land acquisition and annexation.

Mr. Earman recommended elevating the regional sports complex and strategizing the City's land mass.

Ms. Gilger concurred on the regional sports complex and land mass strategy. Land acquisition and redevelopment of buildings for economic development purposes is important.

Mr. Greene stated that some cities have conducted extensive analysis of the capacity of all their land assets.

Mayor Amorose Groomes noted that a capacity study was conducted several years ago for the entire Bridge Street District.

Mr. Stiffler concurred on the regional sports complex idea. It could transform not only the area, but also the community's reputation and economy. Big ideas that would create a place worth going to should be elevated.

Mr. Farrar stated that the future trend is to move away from fossil fuels. Devices are increasingly becoming powered by electricity. Having a vast electricity storage infrastructure to support the increasing electrical elements in a city should be a key focus. Renewal energy sources, such as solar or wind-generated, could also contribute toward a blue zone city. Several recharging points within a city would be essential in delivering the new technologies.

Ms. O'Callaghan recommended elevating: sustainability opportunities, which include mobility and wellness; land acquisition; a super greenway; creating mini cities/nodes within the City, which would address economic development, housing options and mobility elements.

Mr. Greene noted that there is also a dimension to sustainability that is about emotion. No place can be sustainable if the residents do not care about it. Having an attachment to place is fundamental. Dublin has that element, but it should not be taken for granted.

Mr. Hammersmith stated that he believes the City's evolving transportation system is an idea that should be elevated in the 2035 Plan. It is essential that transportation be in harmony with a City's

land uses. Maintaining a balance as mobility evolves and providing key connections/links within the community will be critical. The success of Dublin depends on how well its transportation functions.

Mr. Greene noted that going forward, it may be important to “tell the story” about Dublin’s transportation goals more comprehensively. Having graphic descriptions of new transportation ideas would be helpful.

Mr. Reiner agreed with the need to focus on the City’s transportation system, connections and links. Dublin is a well-planned community and must continue to be.

Mr. Green invited participants to describe the future 2035 Dublin community with one or two words.

Meeting participants offered the following: community of choice; unique; different; distinctive; pride in community; home; well planned, well dressed and well funded; idealistic; a benchmark community; creative; innovative; special.

Mr. Greene stated that the group’s input will be incorporated into refinement of the list of big ideas. He noted that staff will be collaborating with the futurist on a program for the upcoming June 21 Council work session.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Assistant Clerk of Council

- 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

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Monday, March 1, 2021**

Minutes

Call to Order

Mr. Reiner called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Mr. Reiner, Mayor Amorose Groomes, Mr. Keeler

Staff Present: Ms. Noble, Ms. Rauch, Ms. O'Callaghan, Ms. Gilger, Mr. McDaniel

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Keeler moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 Community Development Committee meeting.

Mayor Amorose Groomes seconded.

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

Staff Update

Economic Development

Ms. Gilger provided a presentation of a high-level overview of job creation and commercial real estate: office, industrial, medical office and retail (attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit A).

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about the high demand on industrial space and what is causing the push back. Ms. Gilger stated that it has a lot to do with one story buildings and green space land costs. This product gets priced out when Dublin's land costs are considered. Mr. Reiner asked Ms. Gilger about the shift from corporate housing for executives to providing affordable housing for the workforce. Ms. Gilger stated that COVID-19 exacerbated the work from home dynamic, and technology companies are specifically subject to working from home. How do we get the employees to live in Dublin and work from home? She believes the answer is in diversifying the housing market. She also noted that the City's fiber initiatives will make a difference in keeping Dublin competitive as people continue to work from home. Mr. Reiner shared some of the history in development and the philosophy Dublin used. He suggested looking again at some of the ideas for multi-family designs to create the housing that the market is dictating is desirable. Ms. Gilger stated that this will be important discussion as we work through the Dublin 2035 Framework Plan.

Historic District Task Force Recommendations/Implementation

Ms. O'Callaghan provided a brief introduction to this discussion. Ms. Noble briefly summarized the update that was provided to the Committee at their January 20, 2021 meeting. She stated that the Committee wanted more information regarding:

- Current resources that are being focused on the Historic District;
- More information about management programs in the region; and
- Other options for providing structure to the current groups focused on the Historic District.

She stated that the City invests in aesthetic improvements, such as landscaping, holiday décor, mowing and litter removal, wood fences and bike paths, and other items considered general upkeep. The Commercial Façade Program provides improvements in the Historic District as well. In addition to the aesthetic improvements, the City makes financial investments in the Historic District such as:

- Visit Dublin Ohio (35% of the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund);
- Historic Dublin Business Association (HDBA); and
- Chamber of Commerce support for operations and staff.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she was more interested in things like church parking lot rental, expenses related to planter boxes, etc. What are we spending in that district that we aren't spending anywhere else in the City? She stated she would like to see the funding provided by the City that is expended in the District. Referring to the Tax Increment Funding that provides revenue to the District, Mayor Amorose Groomes asked what the \$73,600 in the 2021 Operating Budget is attributed to and what that is spent on.

Mr. Keeler stated that it would be helpful to understand what money is going to the district right now, and what other mechanisms are potentially available now or in the future such as Federal Historic Preservation Credit, Community Reinvestment Act funding, Ohio Historic Pipeline Initiatives or any other applicable grant programs.

Ms. Noble shared that the first group that staff engaged with in looking at District Management Strategies was Heritage Ohio due to their Main Street Program. They are very focused on preservation. Another management organization group staff engaged is 3CDC. 3CDC is a group that assisted the City of Cincinnati in the revitalization of Over the Rhine. They are more of an investment group and they provide different mechanisms for revitalization.

Ms. Noble stated that at the January meeting of the Committee, the City Manager highlighted the importance of providing structure to the existing organizations that are focused on the Historic District. This group of stakeholders could have representation on a committee or task force with the goal of improving communication and decision making amongst the groups.

Ms. Noble asked the Committee to comment on the following:

- What additional information is needed regarding current City resources in the District?
Ms. Noble stated that this topic has been covered by earlier discussion.
- Would the Committee wish to have additional information/presentations regarding management and organization strategies?
- Are there other funding mechanisms or financial structures that should be considered for revitalization?
- What role does the Community Development Committee see themselves taking in these efforts moving forward?

Mayor Amorose Groomes thanked staff for putting the information together. She stated that as far as additional information, she would like to get a clear picture on what the City is

spending now in the District. She would like to have additional information/presentations regarding management and organization strategies. She would like to have a professional that has done this type of work somewhere. The Community Development Committee would take the gathered information to Council for consideration. The Historic District Task Force came forward with some great ideas that have been in existence for a while. She expressed that she was hoping to see funding mechanisms as suggestions from the Task Force, but they probably ran out of time to include those.

Mr. Keeler stated that he agrees with Mayor Amorose Groomes. He added that the Historic District Task Force brought forward some great tactics or action steps, and the Committee now must discuss who will be the manager to make those things happen. He does want a manager for the District. He would like clarification on the funding that is currently going into the District. He stated that this is not just about preservation, but about revitalization, preservation and economic development.

Mr. Reiner stated that what was in agreement that the funding was being spent on needs to be identified and then decisions can be made about whether or not the funding needs to be reallocated, increased, decreased, etc. He is open to a manager in the District.

Mr. Keeler stated that he is in agreement that all the invested parties need to come together and be involved in some way, but a manager that will be focused on the revitalization of the District is needed.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that there is a long list of costs that are going into the District. Ms. O'Callaghan stated that staff will provide the incremental costs that go into the District.

Mr. Reiner suggested sharing the parking study that was done in the District for the Committee.

Adjournment

With no other business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Acting Clerk of Council

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that she believes expanding the water and sewer service was a smart decision by past Council's to deal with the unsafe water conditions and septic system failures.

Mr. Keeler stated that he agrees with keeping the definitions somewhat vague as it will be reviewed by Council regardless. He asked how hardship is currently defined?

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that all the homes along the river could claim hardship due to the rock that is in the area.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the burden is on the resident to define and prove the hardship. He stated that hardship is likely to fall in one of two buckets: financial hardship or system failure. He agreed that it should be kept vague.

Mr. Hammersmith stated that Franklin County Public Health will require people suffering from a system failure to connect if the water and sewer is available to them. Mr. McDaniel stated he wanted to make sure to not confuse annexation policy fee waiver with water and sewer extension policy.

In response to Mr. Keeler's question, claiming hardship isn't that easy, there is a permitting process and records can be checked.

Mr. Reiner stated that there was a group of residents that did not want water and sewer connection.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked if there would be a way for residents to appeal on the grounds of hardship if hardship were excluded from the criteria in the policy. She would rather not have hardship in the policy because it is so difficult to quantify.

Mr. McDaniel stated that in order to claim hardship, the person would have to come forward with proof to demonstrate the hardship.

Mr. Keeler asked if financial hardship, instead of just hardship should be added. Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that it is more likely to be an environmental hardship than a financial hardship.

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to recommend to City Council that the criteria in the annexation fee waiver policy should read, "hardship, removing islands within the City, economic development and the incorporation of public property."

Mr. Reiner seconded.

Mr. Boggs asked that "relating to annexations" be added to the public property criteria.

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

Therefore, the annexation fee waiver policy would reflect the following criteria: hardship, removing islands of township, economic development and incorporation of public property relating to annexations.

Historic District Task Force

Mr. McDaniel stated that this topic was brought to this Committee to discuss how to proceed on the recommendations provided by the Task Force.

Ms. Noble stated that staff would like to begin implementing policies from the Historic District Task Force presented on January 4. She stated that of particular interest is managing the

Historic District. She stated that staff wanted the Committee's input in formulating the implementation strategy. Ms. Noble stated that she has been researching and reaching out to other communities, but was seeking some direction from the Committee.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that it would be helpful to inform Council of what is currently being spent in the District at present. It is important to understand the spend as it is today versus what the costs would be to have someone else manage the District. Additional considerations would be comparing what we are getting for the money we are currently spending; and what we would be getting for designated management of the District.

Mr. Keeler stated he supports change. He added that whatever organizations that are in place currently, that are supposed to be keeping the Historic District from being blighted are not working. He supports evaluating the financial side but also being open to refiguring how the District would operate. He would like to see something change quickly. He considers South High Street to be blighted. He stated that some of the recommendations can easily fit into the 2035 Framework, but he would like to see the financials of the management of the District, he would like to explore it very soon.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the façade program has brought some help to the District. What if we triple the money that is currently put into that program rather than having a management model? She agrees it should be swift, but the financials need to be studied.

Mr. Reiner stated that Council has been financing several initiatives in the District over the years. The South end wasn't as dynamic with restaurants. He stated that people in these buildings are tenants, not the owners. He would like to explore how the money contributed to the District can be redirected to make the biggest impact.

Mr. Keeler stated that he agrees with increasing the façade program. He would like to have more focus on the Historic District as a holistic approach.

Mr. McDaniel stated that sometimes what we lack is structure. He stated staff will research and come back with some thoughts regarding structure first and then possibly staffing after that. He would like to see something that would continue to evolve over time. Mr. McDaniel stated that the façade program needs additional thought and how that program should work.

Mr. Reiner stated that years ago the City resolved the sewer-water problem on Blacksmith. He recalled trying to get landowners involved in projects to improve the back of their buildings so that during the evening hours, it could be much needed public parking. He recalled there being resistance from business owners.

Mr. McDaniel stated that the City has attempted to work that out at least three times, but coordination was never achieved with the landowners.

Adjournment

With no other business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.


Acting Clerk of Council