

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

August 19, 2014
Meeting Summary

Chair Beard called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM. All members were present except Lawless.

1. **May 13, 2014 Committee Summary**

On a motion by Clarke, second Ellinger the summary of the May 13, 2014 Economic Development Committee of the Whole meeting as amended was approved unanimously.

2. **Food Coordinator Presentation**

Ashton Wright, the Local Food Coordinator provided an update on her efforts to date. She stated that the overall goals of her efforts are to

1. Develop a strategic plan for food related economic and agricultural development;
2. Improve nutritional health in the region;
3. Increase coordination and collaboration within the food community.

She discussed relationship building efforts that should form the basis for the strategic plan and increased coordination. She identified numerous connections she has made in the community. She also discussed the Food Advisory Committee that is overseeing her work on a policy level.

Ms. Wright stated that she is working on several related initiatives including new market opportunities for increasing farm income; facilitating grower meetings; coordinating with and between KY Proud efforts and local restaurateurs.

Ms. Wright discussed efforts to market the "Bluegrass Farm to Table" initiative. She identified other projects including producing a map of Lexington restaurants who source local food; local food procurement efforts; winterizing the 5/3 Pavilion; and coordination with the upcoming American Farmland Trust Conference.

She discussed efforts to market locally grown and raised foods to consumers with an emphasis on underserved populations. She also discussed the launch of a social media campaign and a website.

Councilmember Lane discussed the agricultural areas within the 12th District and the tremendous impact agriculture has on Lexington.

Councilmember Clarke discussed the tremendous benefits this effort will have for all of Lexington in terms of nutrition for families and a more income for the farm community.

In response to a question from Councilmember Ellinger, Ms. Wright discussed the status of the mobile food outreach program.

Councilmember Myers discussed utilizing Wright's work into the Gainesway Small Area Planning process. He also discussed the food desert initiative as well as efforts to source more local food procurement for Community Corrections; Parks; the Family Care Center; and the Day Treatment Center. In response to a question from Myers, Ms. Wright discussed efforts to increase local sourced foods for the Fayette County School District procurement.

Councilmember Stinnett asked about outcomes and performance measures. In response Ms. Wright addressed the challenges of quantifying results. She stated that the Louisville program attempts to quantify relationship building efforts rather than attempting to quantify economic impacts.

Councilmember Stinnett and Kevin Atkins discussed where the Food Coordinator office should be housed.

Councilmember Ford discussed the availability of healthy nutritious foods for families particularly within the inner city.

In response to a question from Councilmember Mossotti, Ms. Wright stated that the most needed priority is local food production and processing facilities.

Councilmember Scutchfield discussed nutrition programs in schools and in the after school centers. Ms. Wright stated that starting on a small-scale in an after school program would be advantageous for many of the smaller family farms.

In response to questions from Councilmember Akers, Ms. Wright discussed methods to increase farm capacity as well as efforts to increase urban farming viability. Councilmember Akers discussed increasing urban farming capacity initiatives.

Councilmember Beard discussed the economics of locally sourced food sales. In response to a question from Councilmember Beard, Ms. Wright discussed distribution opportunities of locally sourced food at large food chains.

No action was taken on this presentation.

3. Downtown Development Authority

Jeff Fugate, President of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) gave this presentation. He stated that the mission of the DDA is to promote physical and economic development to strengthen downtown Lexington as the cultural and economic heart of Central Kentucky.

Mr. Fugate stated that the DDA drives investment into the Central Business District and surrounding neighborhoods by providing actionable urban design and real estate analysis for both the public and private sectors. Mr. Fugate stated that the DDA is involved in community outreach, education and public involvement.

Mr. Fugate discussed several initiative including the Old Courthouse Redevelopment Plan, as well as various trails, parks and streetscape projects. He also discussed the recently updated website with reliable and creditable information and community data.

He discussed the need to update the Downtown Master plan, support provided to affordable housing initiatives; and support given to leasing & development efforts. Mr. Fugate also discussed the Limestone commercial corridor study and a 10 year downtown capital plan.

Councilmember Mossotti asked for examples of recent work of the DDA pertaining to redevelopment and leasing opportunities. In response Mr. Fugate stated that he could not give an example of a completed project yet. Mr. Fugate did discuss efforts to redevelop downtown commercial properties as well as to promote affordable housing projects throughout the community.

Councilmember Stinnett asked about the need to update Downtown Master Plan as it was not fully supported by the Council, nor was it ever adopted by the Council. In response, Mr. Fugate stated that t was the goal of the DDA to bring a plan that will be fully embraced by the Council, the Mayor and the community.

In response to a question from Councilmember Stinnett, Mr. Fugate discussed the current plans for the stabilization of the Old Courthouse. Mr. Fugate indicated that he would come back to the Council this winter with specific recommendations including a financing package.

In response to a question about parks, Mr. Fugate gave examples of how parks in other cities have revitalized their respective downtowns. Mr. Fugate stated that by the end of the year he will be providing to Council a feasibility study with financing recommendations by the end of 2014.

Councilmember Clarke stated that he very supportive of efforts to revitalize downtown. In response to questions from Clarke, Mr. Fugate discussed the linkages between the DDA and the Design Excellence effort as well as the JOBS fund program.

Councilmember Clarke discussed the need for the DDA to develop and utilize specific strategic goals with estimated timetables for implementation. Councilmember Clarke also addressed plans by the develop a10 year downtown capital plan.

In response to a question from Councilmember Scutchfield, Mr. Fugate summarized the DDA FY 14 budget. He stated that about half of the \$ 750,000 annual budget was from local public funds. In response to a question from Councilmember Scutchfield, Mr.

Fugate discussed the relationship with and the differences between the DDA and the Downtown Lexington Corporation. In response to a question from Councilmember Scutchfield, Mr. Fugate attempted to describe a typical day at the DDA.

Councilmember Scutchfield discussed her concerns about the City allowing the Old Courthouse to fall into disrepair. Councilmember Scutchfield discussed the need for the DDA to be more project specific regarding the assistance it offers to redevelop the downtown area.

Councilmember Myers discussed plans for the DDA to engage in developments throughout the entire County. He also discussed plans to engage the DDA regarding the Gainesway Small Area Plan process. He also discussed the DDA strategy of driving private investment in neighborhoods. In response Mr. Fugate discussed DDA efforts to support affordable housing developments throughout the community.

Councilmember Ellinger discussed the 21c Hotel project and the potential for linking that project with the old Courthouse development. In response Mr. Fugate stated that he had had similar conversations with the 21c development team and will continue to engage that process. Mr. Fugate discussed the role DDA had regarding the HUD loan to the 21c project.

Councilmember Ford discussed the DDA priorities. In response to a question from Councilmember Ford about suspending the Rupp Arena project, Mr. Fugate stated that interest in the Town Branch trail and park is still very high.

Councilmember Ford discussed the need for the DDA and the City to concentrate efforts to stabilize the old Courthouse. In response Mr. Fugate stated that the DDA will bring specific plans back to the Council early this winter. He discussed its immediate, short term and long term rehabilitation efforts.

Jamshid Baradaran discussed plans for the Courthouse stabilization and the assessment of the facility presenting being completed.

Councilmember Lane discussed the lack of preventative maintenance at the old Courthouse and the lack of planning for the building's re use. He said it was an iconic building with tremendous importance.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Gorton, Mr. Fugate discussed the long and short term maintenance and capital needs at the Old Courthouse. He discussed the physical assessment of the structure. Vice Mayor Gorton discussed the need for community support before the renovation can be realized.

Councilmember Kay discussed the problem of deferred maintenance at the Courthouse and other public facilities.

Councilmember Akers discussed the DDA input into the Distillery District project. In response to a question from Councilmember Akers, Mr. Fugate addressed infrastructure improvements needed for the Distillery District project.

Councilmember Lane stated that the old Courthouse had tremendous redevelopment potential. He stated that while the facility needs immediate attention, an investment in the Courthouse would benefit the entire community. He stated that the Courthouse had tremendous commercial redevelopment potential.

No action was taken on this presentation.

4. Kentucky World Trade Center

Edwin Webb, President of the Kentucky World Trade Center (KWTC) gave this presentation. He discussed the importance of world trade on the Kentucky and specifically the central Kentucky economy. He discussed the mission of the World Trade Center to expand global trade through education, networking and trade services.

Mr. Webb discussed some of the clients of the World Trade Center as well as services offered by the KWTC, including the Trade Navigation Services; the International MBA program available through the UK Gatton School; the WTC Trade Certification program; the Small Business Trade Readiness Assessment; and the numerous trade missions offered by the KWTC.

Mr. Webb stated that the US had a negative trade deficit from 2008-2010 of .69%, while Kentucky had a positive trade growth of 1.18% in the same time period. From 2011-2013 it grew in Kentucky by 25.9%, while the US grew at a rate of 6.7% in the same time period.

Mr. Webb stated that exports account for \$ 11.3 billion in gross domestic product, generating \$ 1 billion in State and local taxes in Kentucky. Webb also stated that exports support 125,000 jobs in Kentucky.

Councilmember Lane discussed the bright forecast for advanced manufacturing needs in the region.

Vice Mayor Gorton encouraged the Council and the Administration to identify local businesses that could benefit from assistance from the World Trade Center.

No action was taken on this presentation.

5. FY 15 Partner Agency Reporting Measures

Deferred until the November meeting

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6. JOBS Fund Update

Deferred until the November meeting

7. **Items Referred to Committee**

Deferred until the November meeting

The meeting adjourned at 2:53 PM

PAS 8.25.14