

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE (CDSC)

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Carnegie Training Room

08:30 AM

Present:

Commissioner Bill Collins

Commissioner Randy Quick

Commissioner Craig McDaniel

Doug Walker- City- Public Information and Marketing- Public Information Officer

Aundi Lesley- City- Downtown Development Authority- Director

James Martin- Rome-Floyd County Building Inspection- Chief Building Official

Cindy Reed- City- Finance- Accountant, Grants/Internal Auditor

Meredith Ulmer- City Manager's Office- Assistant City Manager

Bekki Fox- City- Community Development- Director

Logan Drake- City- Community Development- Administrative Program Assistant

Robin Drazich- Tallatoona CAP, Inc. - Floyd Human Resource Development Center - Services Administrator

Hannah Phillips- Northwest Georgia Housing Authority (NWGHA) - Development Coordinator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 08:31 AM. Commissioner Bill Collins asked for any corrections to the minutes from the March 2022 meeting. Not hearing any, the minutes were approved by common consent.

INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Collins asked two individuals, who had never attended a CDSC regular meeting before, to introduce themselves. Robin Drazich works for Tallatoona Community Action Partnership, Inc. as the Services Administrator of their Floyd Human Resource Development Office. Hannah Phillips is the Development Coordinator for NWGHA. Commissioner Collins thanked them both for their presence and the work they do for the community.

TALLATOONA CAP (COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP) PROGRAM UPDATE

Drazich stated she would be happy to give any information to those unfamiliar with the specifics of the following Tallatoona CAP programs: Head Start, Early Head Start, Community Services, Weatherization. Options include, but are not limited to, the following: heating assistance, cooling assistance, energy assistance, self-sufficiency, work incidentals, education incidentals, etc. Funding options vary from Community Services Block Grants (CSBG) to CSBG-CARES. Drazich gave out her contact information for those interested.

BUILDING INSPECTION/CODE ENFORCEMENT

James Martin

- Martin distributed a Building Inspections/Code Enforcement Report detailing MTD and YTD data amongst both the City and County. He led a discussion concerning the following Building Inspections categories: single-family dwellings, single-family additions/remodels, mobile homes, multifamily dwellings, commercial/industrial, commercial/industrial additions/remodels, signs, business licenses, other permits, and inspections. Martin led an additional discussion concerning the following Code Enforcement categories: citations, court, notices of violation, demo, and finals.
- Discussion was had on upcoming development. Martin believed that single-family development is going to

increase in the next couple of months with three large, commercial buildings coming soon too. Commissioner Quick explained that 411's industrial property density is projected to increase. Commissioner McDaniel informed everyone that around 19,000 people work in Rome and Floyd County but live elsewhere. He added that the community could potentially see an addition of 5,000 housing units within the next 18-24 months. All agreed that handling the housing shortage will be challenging but rewarding.

- As requested at the previous meeting, Martin provided numbers detailing a cost estimate of both hiring one new Code Enforcement Inspector and ten demolitions for one calendar year. The ideal number would be three new Code Enforcement Inspectors comprised of one for each City Ward. The following year cost would be \$169,006.12. Meredith Ulmer suggested that whatever the CDSC decides, these numbers should be presented to the Joint City/County Development Oversight Committee as the cost will be on both the City and County. If the Committee were to approve the cost, the current number would go down for the City. Discussion was had on the recruitment process and job qualifications for a Code Enforcement Inspector. The employee goes through the process with the City Human Resources Department. With benefits, the salary would be \$52,869.12. Every previously hired candidate has been able to become "property maintenance certified" within a year. Martin added that the local recruitment process, qualifications and pay rate are all typical of what happens nationwide. After discussion, it was recommended that Martin present these numbers to the Committee for review and approval. Ulmer stated she would put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

NWGHA

Hannah Phillips

- Phillips stated that NWGHA is working diligently on the multistep process of transforming East Rome Crossing. The John Graham Homes Development needs to be demolished and rebuilt. This is NWGHA's largest, and one of the oldest, public housing developments. NWGHA and the City of Rome won a Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant to create a redevelopment plan for both that area and the entire footprint. Multiple duplexes and single-family housing units have been built along Maple, East Twelfth, and East Fourteenth Streets. There are 66 new construction units at Sandra D. Hudson Villas. NWGHA is applying for 09% tax credits this round, due by May 20th. While they were not awarded for John Graham the last two rounds, the application does score well this year. Additionally, Commissioner Nunn from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs will tour with NWGHA today.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bekki Fox:

- Fox brought up the 2022 HOME Trust Build mentioned at last month's meeting. The idea was to build, utilizing program income obtained from selling the homes from previous grants. As expected though, the bids unfortunately came in too high. The exact same building plan carried out in 2018-2019 for \$97k is now priced at \$162k. A smaller cottage-style home was bid out and came back at \$150k. While the price is around market rate, it is still unfeasible as Community Development's income caps dictate who they can sell to. The project is on hold for now. Community Development staff is reviewing other approved uses of the HUD HOME funds to meet the timely expenditure imposed by DCA.
- Discussion was had on what can be done to assist people with housing. Commissioners McDaniel and Collins are interested in hosting a housing summit and inviting the Floyd County Commission to participate. They would like information presented by staff on the number of housing units and developments being proposed for our area (that have been voted on/approved) including single family housing and multi-family housing. They are interested in discussing the growth for our community and want everyone to be on the same page as to what could happen over the next 24 months. They also want information provided on price points planned for these housing units for sale

or rent. As a part of this event, they also want more information on what housing programs are available to assist people in this community. They would like a better understanding of HUD issued income limits that are attached to these programs and what services are available to assist people with the following: fixing credit issues, requirements for mortgage loans, down payment assistance, etc. They are hoping to learn more about public housing requirements, Low Income Housing Tax Credit property requirements, Section 8 vouchers, etc. Commissioner Collins requested that Fox draft an agenda by the next regular meeting. The CDSC will review, discuss, and plan before the Summit.

- The Maple Ave Phase 3 sidewalk project from Maple at E. 12th and south to E. 14th is currently under construction. Much progress has been made. This will be the last sidewalk repair this year as funds will be moved to Banty Jones Park.
- The Rome/Floyd Land Bank Authority is holding their first ever planning session on April 21 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in the Sam King Room. Experts from the Center for Community Progress will be facilitating the meeting and offering training. The LBA anticipates being able to prepare a 3-to-5-year strategic plan derived from the information gathered during the session.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Aundi Leslie:

- Leslie brought up “Rome’s Small Business Incubator.” She stated that Fox and herself will be meeting with the contractor tomorrow morning. Further updates will be given at the May CDSC regular meeting.
- Leslie provided copies of the Downtown Development Authority’s March 2022 progress report. Leslie detailed the following data for March 2022: three new businesses, two new retailers coming soon and three private rehabilitations.
- DDA is highlighting businesses in the River District through a new marketing campaign, which includes a separate Facebook page and logo.
- Leslie updated everyone on Parking Services:
 - There are over 1,000 active permits, which is the highest ever for the Department. Leslie explained that the Parking Committee is working hard to incentivize and encourage people to park in the decks instead of on Broad Street. The Committee is crafting a guide for businesses detailing why the Parking Program is necessary and useful. This will help smooth over the transition process instead of them collecting parking tickets in the meantime. A new business opening Downtown would be able to automatically receive their permit.
 - A walkthrough in the parking lots and decks is scheduled for next month.
 - DDA should have a new Parking Services Manager in place by May 2nd. As this position has been vacant for a couple of months, DDA Assistant Jennifer Bailey has taken on related duties. Bailey is a valuable asset to the team as she has not only maintained but even improved the Parking Program.
- Leslie mentioned that DDA Marketing and Special Events Coordinator Megan Otwell has been working on the following events: Downtown Loft Tours, ArtsFest, First Friday Series, Small Business Clean-Up, and KRFB/TRED Clean-Up.
- Commissioner Quick asked Leslie for a brief update on the Mobilize Main Street event held on March 29th. DDA successfully hosted around 40 downtown development professionals from across Georgia. Leslie has received multiple emails, calls and Facebook comments from those praising DDA’s efforts towards downtown residential living and upper-story residential development.
- Leslie and Commissioner Quick confirmed that the “2022 Merchant Mornings” events are still successful.

OTHER

- Commissioner Collins suggested that CDSC host a summer luncheon at the Rome-Floyd E.C.O. Center in Ridge Ferry Park. The event would be open to the public with food and fellowship provided. Information booths would be set up so community members could learn more about the work CDSC Departments do for them. Former Commissioners would be invited as well. The event can take place later in the day to accommodate a scheduling conflict involving Ben Winkelman and Hannah Bagley from E.C.O./Keep Rome-Floyd Beautiful (KRFB).
- Fox stated that she emailed everyone KRB's YTD Report since Winkelman and Bagley were unable to attend.
- Drazich distributed flyers for those present to take with them.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 09:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Logan Drake".

Logan Drake, Recording Secretary