

## Muncie Redevelopment Commission Meeting Memoranda

July 18, 2024

**Video and audio of the meeting is available for review on the City of Muncie, Indiana Facebook page.**

9:01 Isaac Miller calls the meeting to order.

- Attendance is taken. Mr. Bishop was absent. All other members were present.
- Motion to approve the agenda with amendment to include Delaware County Historical Society Approved 4-0.
- Motion to approve May and June Memoranda by Miller second by Prybylla. Motion passes 3-1 with Dale voting no.
- Claims presented by Controller, Craig Wright.
  - Mr. Wright noted that bond payments would be made this month.
  - Mr. Dale asked for explanation on the USI payment. Mr. Wright indicated he would follow up.
  - Motion to approve claims as presented by Dale and second by Prybylla; Approved 4-0
- Report from Jeff Howe
  - Financial Position Update: Mr. Howe provided a brief update on the financial status of the various TIF Districts and the money which must be spent in those districts. Total focused funds are \$2.638 Million. Non-focused funds are \$1.550 Million.
  - Kilgore Place Apartments – groundbreaking took place in the last week and construction will now begin.
  - The Point @ High Street Plaza – demolition is under way and construction of the improvements to the gateway to downtown will begin soon.
  - Responsibilities and Roles – Mr. Howe wanted to clarify the MRC’s role and his role as director. Noted that the MRC is composed of 5 voting members with 3 mayoral appointments and 2 council appointments. The purpose of the MRC is to promote development in Muncie. This involves revitalization of declining areas. The goal being to revitalize and sustain the economic health of the community. This is done through projects that seek to encourage investment by developers and bring new residents to the area. Direct development is not done by MRC. Housing is a major concern for Muncie. Muncie’s housing stock is lower than Muncie’s competitors both in terms of available stock, age, and quality.
  - New Opportunities:
    - High Street Plaza could have a potential developer and discussions are ongoing.
    - Early discussions are ongoing on potential development in the Northeast portion of Muncie and could include multiple developers.
- Other Business
  - Delaware County Historical Society: Working on putting a state historical marker for Benjamin Cohen. He was born in Muncie and became an attorney and worked for President Franklin Roosevelt and was instrumental in many of the administrations achievements. While he didn’t live in Muncie as an adult, he is buried at Beech Grove Cemetery. The application for the marker requires at least 1 suggested location for the

marker. The DCHS would like to suggest the fountain near the 1925 Pub House which is MRC property. Motion by Dale to approve the placement of a marker on the property and for Jeff Howe to work with the DCHS to find the appropriate place. Second by Prybylla. Motion approved 4-0.

- Property Purchase Application: Mr. Howe presented an updated application for the purchase of MRC properties. A form purchase agreement was also presented.
- 2801 S Cowan Road: Garrett Cooper has been making an investment on South Cowan Road including building a structure for their lawn care business and trucking firm. Personal investment is over \$1.2 Million. When complete, they will employ 6 new employees. There is a zoning requirement that the entire parking lot be done in solid surface. Mr. Howe suggested that some money currently allocated to the Southway Plaza could be reallocated to provide funding for the parking lot. A variance has not yet been sought. The total projected cost is \$200,000. The proposal would be that the county redevelopment commission and the MRC contribute equally to pay for the paving. Mr. Dale suggested that a variance from the requirement be sought. The general consensus was that the MRC needs more information but there is interest in a potential investment in the future.
- Innovation Connector: Muncie Innovation Connector was recently certified as a Level 2 program entitling it to the maximum state award of \$250,000 which will be distributed to the MRC as its pass-through organization. Ted Baker requested the release of the funds held by MRC on behalf of the Innovation Connector upon receipt. Motion to release fund upon receipt by Dale and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Wagley. Approved 4-0.
- Funding Strategy for the Muncie Land Bank: Jeff Howe discussed potential funding strategies. This could include using PILOT funds. Also potential grant from READI 2.0 for management funds for the land bank. Also MRC could provide additional direct funding of \$90,000. Additional discussions on future relationship between MRC and MLB and the MLB's annual report. Wagley requested an update on how many houses have been redeveloped and/or sold as a result of the MRC's investment in the MLB. MLB has sold 26 vacant lots received from the MRC out of 30.
- Muncie Land Bank Update: Nate Howard provided an update on the work done by the MLB over the past month.
- Public Comment:
  - Nora Powell: City Council District 2 Rep. Came to talk about grass and weeds at Storer Estates. Noted some are over 6 feet in height. Requested that the property be maintained. Provided pictures of the weeds.
  - Sue Errington: Noted the planned ribbon cutting for the Storer Estates Park and had several questions for the MRC. Ms. Wagley noted that she could help get some answers.
  - Charlize Jaimeson: Noted appreciation for construction ongoing in several areas. Asked several questions about Storer Estates development. Noted that Southway Plaza is a disgrace and was in favor of diverting money to the paving of the property at on S. Cowan Road. Would like the MRC to do whatever possible to save the Friends Church.
  - Holly Yip: Commented on the time of the meetings being during the work day. Noted broken links on the city website. Believes transparency is important. Noted large support

for the MLB by the City Council. Noted hopes for the development of the High Street Point.

- Commissioner Comments:
  - Miller noted that Friends Church is currently listed for private sale and is not currently blighted or abandoned. Appreciates the invite to City Council. Appreciates the work of the Commission. Noted well wishes to Zane Bishop who is suffering from a concussion.
  - Dale mentioned that he and Bishop will update the City Council as needed as their appointments. Notes the requirement for filing a 1 year plan by Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Wagley requested that Mr. Freeman check to see if Ordinance 27-09 applies to construction sites.
- Meeting adjourned without objection at 10:57.
- Next Meeting August 15, 2024.