

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
City of Germantown  
December 19, 2024  
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Heidi Grant, Tom Winning, Mark Heistand, Bryce Henson, Mike Kuhn, Ken Tudor, Dave Eshbaugh

Also Present: Will Parsons, Community Relations Manager; Judy Gilleland, City Manager; Keith Brane, City Planner

Visitors Present: Katie Hall, Green Heron

**The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am**

**Approval of minutes**

The November 2024 meeting minutes were approved unanimously

**Recruitment of Downtown Businesses**

Dave distributed a plan for business recruitment for the group (attached to end of minutes). He shared that he has been in contact with Montgomery County on this and looking at ways we can work together. He thinks that it is important to identify what spaces are available for new businesses as well as what sorts of tools are available to entice them, such as tax benefits.

Dave then went through the different objectives listed in the plan:

Objective 1: Business Recruitment – Dave reiterated the idea of working with the Dupps Company to identify which of their more locally located partners could be brought to Germantown.

Objective 2: Leverage MetroParks

Objective 3: Develop AirBNB as a Destination Hub – This has the potential to be a slightly tricky issue as residents often have mixed feelings about AirBNBs. Dave envisions them being placed downtown in the residential above commercial spaces.

Bryce inquired as to the part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan which called for seeing the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories developed. The group shared that individual property owners have been and will be needed to work on this part. Judy also added that the City could potentially provide some incentives.

Mike shared that he is working on creating some AirBNBs at his properties, however he does not currently have any spots that aren't leased. He mentioned a commercial property that he is looking to develop in the future that would need a lot of work.

Judy brought up the possibility of establishing a revolving door fund through the USDA's Rural Development, though it is uncertain just how much money could be obtained. This was discussed previously, though at that time staff did not believe we had the wherewithal to apply for this. Now, it is believed this could be a good possibility.

Objective 4: Community and Stakeholder Engagement – Dave mentioned holding some town halls or public meetings in order to convey the potential benefits of AirBNBs to the community. He is currently looking to create one in town himself. He is making some improvements to the property that are required per AirBNB.

Talking on the plan in general, Dave stressed that this would be a multi-year process. He then went through the implementation plan. He also covered the metrics for success.

Dave then shared that he has been meeting with various shareholders in the area, such as the MetroParks and Steve Roush, in order to find ways that the City can work with them and all move in the same direction. He then spoke a bit more on working with AirBNB and how that partnership works from a property owner's perspective. He also shared how they assist the owners with marketing, which is very helpful.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Dave touched briefly on the ongoing work on 10-minute parking spots in the downtown. Will is currently working on designing a sign.

The group then discussed how the town does not lean into its German heritage very much and how it could be beneficial to do so. Also talked about how to incorporate an "Oktoberfest" in town. Expanding upon the existing Founders' Day event put on by the Historical Society was also discussed. The group then spoke on the Oktoberfest event that is held in Farmersville by the Valley View Athletic Boosters. Circling back to Founders' Day, Mark shared that its date had been set for 2025, and that the Historical Society had decided to move it to a Sunday rather than a Saturday in order to not compete with an event that is held by Miamisburg.

Mike shared that he has some connections in the hot air balloon community, which could be used to create an event. He also shared that he has been working with Amanda Smith and has been getting calls from business owners interested in setting up in Germantown.

The group discussed the current state of the old Opera House and the proposed business going into it. They then spoke of the possibility of reaching out to descendants of Germantown's founders that live in different states to have them come to town for events. Strengthening ties with Germantown's sister city in Germany was also discussed.

Will spoke on the meeting that was held on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> that included Amanda Smith, Heidi Grant, Katie Hall, Dave Eshbaugh, and Ryan Brock (Farmers Market) to discuss potential events in 2025 and 2026. Those present agreed it was a very productive meeting. Many of the events focused on were those that already exist but could be expanded, such as the Farmers Markets and Founders' Day. A bridal expo was also discussed as many of the business types associated with this are present in town.

Will then discussed the online form that has been created for prospective businesses in town. Some of the EDC members had already seen it, but he said that he would send out the link so that all members could explore it and provide feedback. He also shared that a new logo for the downtown had been selected (included below):



Bryce told the group that the Florentine had received approval for 2<sup>nd</sup> floor occupancy in their west room after his meeting with the state fire Marshall. They would like to work on the rest of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the future.

Dave and Mike both shared their ability to get printed materials with logos on them (both shirts and banners).

The group circled back on the 10-minute parking signs and Judy shared she envisioned adding an optional placard at the bottom of the signs where the business could include a phone number. This way the signs themselves would be consistent.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:21 am**