

HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
CITY HALL, 1115 BROADWAY  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2011  
12:00 PM

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the rescheduled Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:00 pm by Chairman Bellm.

**Roll Call**

Members present: Darell Bellm and Jon Greve.

Also present: Ex-Officio Member Jami Jansen, City Manager Latham, Chief Building & Zoning Official Kevin Limestall, Andrea Enright, and Deputy Clerk Lana Hediger. Commission Member Marilyn Frey was absent.

**Approval of Minutes**

Jon Greve made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2011 Industrial Development Commission meeting; seconded by Darell Bellm. Both members voted in favor; the motion carried.

**Reports**

**Website Development update**

Kevin Limestall reported that the website is going very slowly. There is still some information from staff that needs to be forwarded to them. Voltedge is asking for some obscure info such as labor force history. There is a negative comment on Sperling's Best Places website about Highland. The gist of the comment was that Highland is not a very friendly place to live. He believes this comment was posted to that site in 2009. Kevin is trying to get this removed as this website is going to be a sub-site to ours. Nobody from Sperling's has returned his call. Voltedge is close to completing the actual final layout of the web design. Kevin has talked to them about the mapping system and the content management. Kevin will ask the City Council to approve additional funds for the mapping system and the City of Highland may host the website. Kevin believes that this will be better for us. Darell Bellm asked how this would affect our contact with Bob Ady? Kevin thinks it won't be affected at all, and that this can be worked out and we'll save money at the same time. Kevin believes the website will be up and accessible by the end of March. Kevin has made a contact with Scott Air Force Base so that we can utilize their information for the site as well.

## **Business Inquiries update:**

### Williams Painting

Kevin reported that this company got their building permit today. They paint and stain doors, window trim, stairways, etc. They are located in the old Bottling Works restaurant next to the Police Department (810 Mulberry Street). Darell asked if there would be any problems with drainage from their processing. Kevin indicated that there would not. Most of the paints they use are water based. Their paint booth will have a filter system that it will exhaust through. Darell asked how many employees? Counting the owner, there will be two full-time and one part-time. They have several contracts already with lumber yards and contractors to do all of their painting and staining and he is working with a couple of contractors too.

### Randy's House of BBQ

This is located in Northtown Shopping Center and the owner hopes to have it open by the end of this week. Kevin reported that the final building permit inspection was done today. This will be their third location. He was on taste of St. Louis. They prepare the food elsewhere and bring it here. He will have a party room in the back. This is where the church used to be next to Ace Hardware.

### Huddle House

Planning and Zoning Board reviewed their agreement and had a small issue with the expiration wording. Kevin has already talked to Wal-Mart corporate and they have agreed that if Huddle House discontinues business there, they would be willing to make it available to another private company. Other than that, Kevin has not heard anything new from the developer of this project.

### health/weight/fitness and health food facility

Kevin has heard from another gentleman who wants to locate in the TIF District with a health/weight/fitness and health food facility. Kevin sent him the information but hasn't heard back from him yet. He will follow up with him this week. Kevin indicated that the gentleman is interested in a Commerce Place location.

### Steve Schmitt

Kevin is working with Steve Schmitt. He is planning to put a 4,000 square foot additional shop building up and remodel his showroom, lounge and employee area from floor to ceiling. He has submitted a Business District funding application. He is waiting on his contractor to submit cost estimates for this. Mark Latham indicated that this will be about a \$600,000 or \$700,000 addition/improvement. Darell asked where the new building would be located. Kevin indicated that it would be behind his building at his current location. Mark indicated that this may be due to his need for a shop for electric cars. He may be adding 2 new full time mechanics.

### tential new gas station/ convenience store

Kevin had an inquiry from an out-of-town real estate agent inquiring about two pieces of property for a potential new gas station/convenience store.

#### Another one - Potential new gas station/ convenience store

Kevin had another contact but isn't sure if this one was looking to bring in a new business or just relocate an existing one. He just had this contact yesterday.

#### Tobacco/Liquor store

No new information on tobacco/liquor store that was interested in the old Medicine Shoppe building. He has given them some general information, but has not heard back yet.

#### Miscellaneous

Kevin has also had contact with a couple of different people looking to possibly annex into the City for future developments. Things are starting to move. It's looking good.

Kevin reported that there are some businesses that have already done some work in the Business District that we think might be eligible for some funding. So, we have sent some letters out to them.

#### Cabinet Gallery and Family Dollar

Mark Latham reported that both Cabinet Gallery and Family Dollar have signed their funding agreements. We have finished up surveying the property that we are selling to Paul Ray Capelle for Cabinet Gallery and should have that finished up within the next ten days or so. A lease has been signed for Family Dollar. Those two projects are completed.

#### Update on Retail Market and Data Center Notifications

Andrea reported that the letters are ready to go out prospective data centers. They will not be sent until the growhighland.com website is up and running. We will also put together a marketing packet so they will have information on our economic incentives, the TIF District and Business District, to thumb through when they get the initial letter. It will also include a brochure on Highland Communications Services.

#### **New Business**

##### Presentation and Discussion on Business Attraction Plan

Andrea provided an example of a business attraction plan from a community in Ontario, Canada. This particular example was done for this municipality by an outside consulting firm. Basically, it is an extremely in-depth S.W.A.T. analysis (strengths, weaknesses, and threats) of the municipality and also talks about the cluster and the region and what kinds of caustics and current businesses they have there. It also talks about exact percentages on employment rates and how those have fluctuated over the past decade. This is the same type of information that Voltedge is asking Kevin for. Andrea encouraged the commission members to review this example and bring questions back to the next meeting. She also offered to go ahead and look into some consulting firms or what it would take for this to be done in-house.

Darell asked Andrea if she knows anything about WCM and she indicated that she does not. What she found by reading through this example is that, when looking into setting up an incubator program, you have to conduct a feasibility study first to

determine how the City would benefit from it and what types of businesses you would have to have to make the incubator program successful. The feasibility study would provide all the employment figures that you would need to have.

Darell, noticing the areas of concern listed in this plan, commented that if these were their areas of concern in 2001, what would they be today?

Andrea indicated that she liked the tables of advantages and disadvantages, and that another plus to this business attraction plan is that it is impartial.

#### Presentation on Development of Incubator Program

Andrea also handed out a business plan for an incubator program which includes an outline for all the things that would need to be included in a business plan but also talks about the importance of doing a feasibility study first.

Darell asked if there was any follow up done with either of these example communities. One is from 2000 and one is from 2004. Andrea indicated that she did not but will do that for the next meeting. She stated that part of setting up the incubator program is putting together a time-line. How long will a company be allowed to remain in the program or will it become a permanent home? We would also need to determine what length of time we will use to measure the success of an incubator business.

Darell stated that this example had a job description for an executive director and noting that Scottsburg, IN, had a similar position, wondered if one community could afford such a position, or if it should be spread over an area or a region. Andrea indicated that often a community will partner with a university in establishing an incubator program. Darell stated that's how Scottsburg managed it. They partnered with two universities, the University of Indiana and Louisville. Darell indicated that Madison County has said that they like to be associated with any growth that takes place in the county. Perhaps they would be receptive to partnering with Highland on ours.

#### Other Bits of Information

- Kevin reviewed hand-outs that he distributed. These are information sheets from the Illinois Department Commerce and Economic Opportunity on potential grants for employer training programs. One is for one business and the other is for multiple businesses. Cities cannot apply for these. We received them late and the deadlines are fast-approaching.

Jon Greve asked if this information was shared with the Wall Street Journal. Mark indicated that Wall Street Journal has received their building permit and their work has been started. Their estimated cost of improvements is a little under \$2 million. Jon stated that depending on their plans they may benefit from some of the training issues that are outlined here. Jon also thought that Steve Schmitt may be interested in this for his mechanics. Darell added that Paul Ray Capelle might also benefit from this. Mark asked if Jami could send this out to all the Chamber members in the Friday Fast Facts. She indicated that she would and asked Kevin to send it to her electronically.

- Darell indicated that the commission members should review the information provided by Andrea before the next meeting. Mark asked if they could have some kind of idea of what they want to do before the next meeting. That way, if any funding is needed, the budget will be in process.

Mark reiterated that by next meeting Andrea is to follow up with the incubator program communities to get an idea of how successful their programs have been.

- Mark announced that Rick Frey sold the Highland Recycling business to Luke Harris.

#### Fiber Update

Mark reported that seven businesses are on the fiber internet and we are testing both the internet and phone systems. They are hooking up Dr. Rehberger's office next door right now while we are in this meeting. The commission members will be invited to a ribbon cutting at 11:00 a.m. on April 21, 2011.

Jon Greve asked when the first commercial customers were brought on-line and Mark indicated that the initial connection was made at about 1:30 a.m. last Thursday. Mark stated that Flanigan's is using it now for their credit card transactions. Mark added that by April 30, 2012 we hope to have 400 customers on, which should include some residential customers from Phase II. Mark stated that if that happens, we should be in the black.

The City Council passed a contract with AT&T for an additional feed which will provide the redundancy that we needed. The connection that Cogent brought in from 900 Walnut in St. Louis is the primary. The AT&T connection will likely, eventually, be the primary feed because it is cheaper. It is also the one that will provide for ICN. It will come in through Collinsville all the way to the school's administration building. ICN is buying that internet bandwidth for their purposes.

#### Next Meeting

This next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, March 2, 2011 at 12:00 pm at City Hall.

#### Adjournment

Jon Greve made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chairman Bellm. Both in favor, meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.