

Economic Development Committee Update

July, 2019

1. Jesse, Rick Ferrell and I attended a meeting on June 19th with the State Planning board in Dover. The meeting was to discuss all the Downtown Development District (DDD) applications. We were allowed a 5 minute presentation (given by Rick Ferrell) with 5 minutes of questions from their committee. After hearing from all applicants, the committee voted and did not approve our application, stating that they felt it did not meet the intent of the DDD program and relied too much on property not directly downtown but bordering HWY 13. Jesse had explained to them that once the State created the Bridgeville bypass, much of the traffic was diverted around Bridgeville and our inclusion of the Hwy 13 property was an attempt to capture drive-by traffic into downtown. This exercise was fruitful for the town in that it helps solidify some forward plans but it also pointed out that the town needs to spend time in Dover working with the State.
2. The first Fabulous Fourth Friday of the year was June 28th and had more vendors than last year and attendance even in the heat was good. The committee engaged more with social media and did some additional advertising this year to draw in more vendors and people. Aliceanne Zaras was on the Jim Wheeler and Dan Gaffney shows to publicize the event. July's event will have Charlie and the Cooltones (think T.S. Smith's), a local favorite band.
3. Still waiting on DelDot for one of the new town entry signs that has been delayed due to the ground being too wet. Jesse is having Rick look for other locations near the intended installation area to see if a better suited location can be found for installation.
4. Continuing to work with CGI Communications for the town's online video. The draft will be reviewed and modified where necessary. The film crew was rescheduled to be here for the July Fabulous Fourth Friday to film some segments of the video.
5. Inquiries are starting to come in for the Christmas Parade so we will have to begin planning for that also.
6. Approved three Ongoing Grant Applications. Bridgeville Thrift Store; JB Salon and Downtown Alley.
7. Aliceanne had attended this year's Main Street Conference and presented two areas we will try and focus on; Creation of a Business packet for new businesses and developers (this helps support our DDD efforts); and considering a 100% Façade Grant program for specific purposes (i.e., investment by the town in downtown businesses with no matching funds need by the business). We have noticed a number of businesses who really need a facelift but who don't apply for matching grants and these are the businesses the committee would consider helping.

Richard Grinnell

Chairperson, Economic Development Committee