

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2019, AT 6:00 PM, AT THE FLORENCE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 775 N. MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present: Wheeler, Adam, Smith, Reid, Novotny, Knight, and Michael.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**DISCUSSION/APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL** of the meeting minutes for the regular meeting conducted on September 25, 2019.

**On motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Reid, and carried 7-0, to approve, with changes, the regular meeting minutes of September 25, 2019.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**A. PRESENTATION/APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL of a list of possible uses and activities in the Downtown area.**

Community Development Director Larry Harmer stated the final preparations for the joint meeting between the Historic District Advisory Commission and the Town Council. The suggested changes for Kimber Lanning's proposal have been relayed. Mr. Harmer went through the list of possible uses and activities thought of by Staff and residents of the Town. The uses and activities are meant to stabilize and encourage growth in the Downtown. The list of possible uses including a park on Main street, way-finding signs, ice cream shops, microbreweries, coffee shops, murals, McFarland State Park evening lectures and activities, food truck nights, horse carriage rides, historic home markers and other ideas.

Staff is looking to use the Capital Improvement Budget to help pay for some of these ideas. Vice-Chair Adam asked if these ideas go to the Council Meeting. Mr. Harmer said this list will be part of the work session. Vice-Chair Adam liked the ideas but thought Council members should have background on which ideas worked. Chairman Wheeler said the list had great ideas, but the Council would want to know how to fund these programs. She suggested that Staff include a way to show how to pay for some of these projects.

Vice-Chair Adam described an idea from the Town of Clifton. They took pictures of what old buildings looked like and blew them up to store front size and had a walking museum. Commissioner Reid said the Home Tour once helped pay for the historic home plaques

and suggested the current Home Tour earnings be used towards buying plaques again. Vice-Chair Adam said there are several programs that could go in the future brochure for realtors and new historic property owners. She also heard that Travis and the brown fields program helped sponsor an abatement program. Mr. Harmer said Staff met with Travis and discussed a partnership or a coalition with Casa Grande or Coolidge. Commissioner Reid suggested talking about a walking river tour and partnering with the Casa Grande Ruins. Staff asked for any other ideas to be emailed.

**B. CLG Grant Update: Discussion regarding potential consultants for the preparation on new inventory documents.**

Mr. Harmer said Staff received the grant and has written a Request for Proposal (RFP) and is being looked over by SHPO. He asked about possible consultants on the list that Commissioners would recommend or suggest Staff send this RFP. The Commissioners gave their suggestions on who they recommend from the list.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: Community Survey**

The Town sent out a survey to residents in the five parks area, Anthem, and Old Town. After receiving the surveys, Town Staff distributed the results. Staff has nothing to give the Commissioners, but Staff will email to survey by the end of the week. Some questions were directly related to downtown revitalization, and the general response from residents was support. Vice-Chair Adam asked if this will be released to the Commission. Mr. Harmer said the survey went public after Monday's Council Meeting. Vice-Chair Adam said she was concerned about the survey but was glad it was supported. Council Liaison Cordes discussed the algorithm for the survey and the weight given to survey responses based on certain demographics. She suggested everyone read it to gain a better perspective on residential priorities. The survey points out that residents highly support the Downtown as a high priority for development.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

**A. Code Compliance Update**

Mr. Harmer said the Arizona League of Cities is initiating draft legislation on a vacant and abandoned building registry program and that he has been asked to serve on the initial stakeholder's review group. Mr. Harmer said the program is in a strong first stage. He also stated more local property owners are coming in to clean up their properties. Staff was pleased with the progress. Vice-Chair Adam said this legislation is looking to get a broad spectrum of support and Mr. Harmer said there is also will be a lot of promotion coming from the League of Cities.

**B. Redevelopment Plan Update**

Mr. Harmer stated there was good discussion at the Redevelopment Open House. Commissioner Reid asked if there was any youth representation. A younger couple attended but there was no high school or college age residents. Vice-Chair Adam agreed that there was good discussion at the open house and asked about the recommendation

for the museum to move to different location. Commissioner Smith noted the Town did not want the museum involved twenty years ago, but the perspective is now different.

Commissioner Reid asked about opportunity zones. Mr. Harmer said Staff is still learning about opportunity zones. Vice-Chair asked if Ben Bitters could do a presentation about opportunity zones and how this could impact the downtown. Council Liaison Cordes stated that opportunity zones were a confusing topic, but they are for more large-scale projects. Florence has capitalized on getting an opportunity zone but have not really looked into developing it. Commissioner Reid asked about an opportunity for a large grocery store and she talked about possible growth on South Main Street. Vice-Chair Adam said the opportunity zone goes to Butte and out toward the Windmill. There was discussion on why certain large projects might not happen due to Florence's population.

### **C. Future Agendas**

Next Thursday, a week from tomorrow, there will be a citizen review meeting at 5 PM in the Council Chambers for the updates on the Development Code. This includes changes to the historic district section. Currently, there are no future action items.

### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC/COMMISSION RESPONSE**

Ruth Harrison, Florence, AZ, discussed the Redevelopment Plan Open House and the two opportunity zones in Florence. She stated Mesa was developing cottage courts in their downtown. She explained cottage courts or patio homes could be potential housing for the Town. She discussed the number and of surveys sent out and received. She asked for online advertisement for Town buildings. She asked if Town Staff could paint worn out curbs and parking space lines, and power wash the sidewalks.

### **CALL TO THE COMMISSION-CURRENT EVENTS ONLY**

Commissioner Reid discussed realtors calling to buy her house and asked what this may indicate. Council Liaison Cordes stated that realtors usually make these calls when there is major development foreseen in a certain area.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**On motion by Chairman Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Michael, and carried 7-0, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:20 PM.**

  
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Betty Wheeler

  
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Date