

Business Development Commission (BDC) MEETING MINUTES

APPROVED

MEETING DATE: Thursday, August 23, 2018
LOCATION: City Hall
CALLED TO ORDER: 8:01 AM
MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:52 AM
NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 27, 2018

Name	Present	Absent
Jon Spiesman (Citizen at Large), Chair	X	
Mike Pincus (Citizen at Large)	X	
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Robin McNabb (Yorkshire Business)	X	
Jennifer Starkey (Business Owner Rep.)	X	
Rebecca Now (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Tim Delanty (Old Webster)	X	
Mary Jane Armstrong (Old Orchard)		X
Vacancy		
Frank Janoski, Council Liaison	X	
Joan Jadali, City Manager Designee	X	
Mara Perry, Staff Liaison	X	

Also in Attendance

Jennifer Volk – Creative Entourage

Mayor Gerry Welch – Mayor, City of Webster Groves

Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the June minutes with one change was made by Mike Pincus, seconded by Jennifer Starkey and unanimously approved.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Mara Perry provided a summary of projects and activities taking place in each of the three Special Business Districts. Three new businesses are working on construction of their locations; two moving into Old Webster and one in Old Orchard district.

- **Old Webster Special Business District:** The district is looking into leasing some additional parking lot for employee parking. They also adding five 15-minute on-street parking spots throughout the district for quick grab and go patrons. Last month they had a guest talking about eliminating straws in Webster Groves restaurants. They are gearing up for the Jazz & Blues Festival next month. They have created a new summer banner design and have shared that design with Old Orchard; they are still discussing what the wording on the banner will be. They have vacancies on their commission. Two new businesses are working on construction of their new co-location at the former SanSai location; Firenza Pizza and Ziggy's Frozen Treats.
- **Old Orchard Special Business District:** The summer Gazebo concert series was very well attended; they did have low sponsorship for the series this year however. They are working on rooftop accent LED lighting for the entire district; they put enough money in their budget to get it finished as soon as possible. They will be doing new summer banners using the same design created by Old Webster Groves; the wording will say Webster Groves instead of Old Orchard. Balkan Treat Box is a new business currently working on the construction of their location in the former Stratton's Café location.

- **Crossroads Special Business District:** The district is focused on a streetscape project for their district; they've applied for federal funding. In conjunction with that project, they've been focused on addressing the problematic intersection of Big Bend/Gore/Baker; they are proposing to make Baker Avenue one-way West from Gore to Gray and have been discussing it with the neighbors in the area.

OLD BUSINESS

BDC STRATEGIC PLAN

A copy of the vision and plan was provided for reference; no additional action was taken on this section. (Handout #1 – “Webster Groves Business Development Commission Vision and Plan”)

- **Objective A, Initiative 1 – Webster Groves City Communications**

Gerry Welch put together a summary of “Webster Groves City Communication” mechanisms that are currently occurring; who we reach and who is responsible (Handout #2). The “Explore” piece is devoted to businesses in Webster Groves. The summary is what is taking place today and could be included as part of the Strategic Plan.

- Not reflected in the summary are Facebook pages that focus on the Old Webster and Old Orchard Business Districts.
- Not reflected in the summary is the Twitter account for the Webster Groves Police Department.
- A PR information piece on events and happenings in Webster Groves could be added to the Parks & Rec brochures in a flip-print mechanism. Pam Neihaus offered to look into the idea.

MOTION: Mike Pincus made a motion to adopt the summary of communication pieces as the Communication Plan and add it to the Vision and Plan document potentially also adding any of the items currently not reflected which were discussed as they evolve, seconded by Pam Neihaus and unanimously approved.

- **Objective A & B – Summary of Actions and Metrics**

A “Summary of Actions and Metrics” discussed and approved in multiple BDC meetings was compiled into one document and provided as reference, no additional action taken on this section (Handout #3).

- **Objective B, Initiatives #2 – Review Current and Future Development Planning**

This discussion was tabled. The BDC is looking to City Council to provide guidance on what role they would like the BDC to play in development planning. There are many entities involved in development planning and the BDC needs to know what their mandate is. Frank Janoski shared with members the City Council has recently discussed how the various City Commissions need to interact with the City Council. The City Council will develop a practice of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of City Commissions to come before a Council meeting and interact face to face share what the commission is doing and seek guidance at that time from the Council.

- **Objective B, Initiatives #3 –Listen to the Voice of Businesses and the Community**

A summary of proposed actions to ensure good communication was reviewed and discussed (Handout #4 – “Appendix D: Summary of BDC Reporting and Communications”).

It was decided to change the minutes provided to the BDC from approved minutes to draft minutes and send the BDC those draft minutes as the same time they are sent out to the districts.

Ideally, the BDC would like to have representation from each of the Special Business District Commission as part of the BDC. At the moment, only one district is represented, Old Webster, no one from Old Orchard or Crossroads sits on the BDC or sends a representative on a consistent basis. When a district is not represented providing information falls on the Communications Coordinator or Staff Liaison. It was discussed perhaps members of the BDC should be more involved with the districts at their commission meetings, share information that way, sell the benefits of the BDC so they can see the value for coming to BDC meetings and representation will then be filled. Tim Delanty is a Commission Member for Old Webster, so he can represent the BDC at the next Old Webster meeting. Mike Pincus will attend the next Old Orchard meeting. Jon Spiesman will attend the next Crossroads meeting.

MOTION: Robin McNabb made a motion to approve the proposed summary of reporting items with the one change, Jennifer Starkey seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- **BDC Holiday Sub-Committee** – Commission Members interested in participating on the BDC Holiday Sub-Committee should email Joan Jadali. Joan suggested this year; the sub-committee should meet with the business districts to share and get buy in for the holiday plans the sub-committee is working on.
- **Explore Webster Groves Facebook Page** – Jennifer Volk with Creative Entourage provided information about Facebook algorithm changes and performance reports on the Explore Webster Groves Facebook page for the first and second quarters of this year.

Facebook is putting more focus on people vs. businesses and the emphasis is on engagement. They made changes in February on how they calculated reach and impressions, paid vs. organic. How paid ads can target different audiences has also changed.

The reports show the Explore Webster Groves page overall has seen growth over last year; increased page likes and impressions for example. Well performing ads and engagement were highlighted in the reports.

The results of the reports reflect how important people-focused content is, humanizing the story; it is the content that is shared and engaged. It also reflects how important sharing content by the business pages increases its exposure and engagement.

(See Handout #5 [which is a large pdf document] Attachment #1; 2018 1Q & 2Q Explore Webster Groves Facebook Report BDC.pdf and Handout #6; Webster Groves Facebook Business Mentions.)

NEXT MEETING

September 27th at 8:00 AM at City Hall.

HANDOUT #1

Webster Groves Business Development Commission Vision and Plan

Context:

The Webster Groves City Council approved on 12/20/2016 a set of six goals including “Foster a Strong Business Community.”

Webster Groves city code, Article X creates the Business Development Commission (BDC) for the following purpose (Section 4.6.10): There is hereby created a Business Development Commission of the City of Webster Groves. The purpose of the BDC is to bring various business-related interests together to foster policies and programs that will create a welcoming, dynamic, and prosperous business community in Webster Groves.

The City of Webster Groves contains three formal business districts:

1. Old Webster Business District
2. Old Orchard Business District
3. Crossroads Business District

There are also business corridors or areas of commerce not included in these business districts but within the city of Webster Groves. These include but are not limited to: Yorkshire – Watson Rd corridor and the Kirkham/Brentwood corridor.

Each Business district is an independent financial entity with taxing authority and annual budgets on top of normal sales taxes, fees, and utility rates. Businesses outside formal Business Districts contribute only through sales tax, fees, and utilities.

BDC Vision and Plan Discernment

Throughout 2017, the BDC underwent a process of determining a vision and goals. This process began with a city-wide business survey, follow-up meetings with business owners and at individual Business District meetings, a facilitator led BDC visioning process, and discussion in several BDC meetings. This process culminated with a January 25, 2018 review of that Vision and key goal areas with the BDC and representatives of the community and all Business Districts. This document attempts to tie together this BDC Vision to the Webster Groves City Council Goals and create a Business Development Plan for City Council consideration to guide the City and BDC priorities going forward.

Webster Groves City Council Goal:

Foster a Strong Business Community

BDC Vision Statement:

Unify the business community to create thriving and growing businesses with an authentic and sustainable community character.

Objective A: Market the City of Webster Groves

Initiatives and Actions:

1. Create a year-round City marketing and communications plan and a calendar of community/business events

Responsible: City Manager/Staff

How: Leverage existing Business District, Chamber of Commerce, and new or other activities to create a plan and evergreen calendar. Define communication/promotion plan, gain budget approval/agreement from City and Business Districts, and inform BDC and Business Districts.

Why: Magnify efforts of individual businesses and business districts and make Webster a more attractive business community. Create an image of Webster's business community consistent with its community character.

When: October 2018 for first plan with new plans annually according to budget cycle.

Metrics/Success Measures: Approved Plan, publication of calendar

Resources: See Appendix A - Webster Groves City Communications; an outline of current communications marking plan

Objective B: Sustain a Thriving Business Community and Attract New Businesses

Initiatives and Actions:

1. Maintain healthy vacancy rates, identify and solve stubborn commercial vacancies

Responsible: City Planner, City Staff

How: Simple and transparent processes for businesses, connect landlords and business prospects, coordinate planning/zoning with business development.

Why: Make Webster attractive to new businesses, maintain thriving business community, increase attractiveness to new investment/development.

When: Ongoing

Metrics/Success Measures: Vacancy rate, Revenue collection, resolving stubborn vacancies

Resources: See Appendix B - Summary of Actions and Metrics agreed to by BDC through July 2018

2. Integrate current and future development planning

Responsible: City Planner

How: Review and update the Development Foundation Plan (DFP). Coordinate planning and zoning plans with DFP and incorporate the aims of the DFP into business development activities. Identify options to address major business barriers or issues such as parking and other infrastructure through creating a long-range plan.

Why: Ensure consistency of business planning and development with overall community development planning to maintain Webster community character. Increase attractiveness to development and new business by creating an infrastructure plan.

When: 2019

Metrics/Success Measures: Refreshed DFP, long range investment/infrastructure plan

3. Listen to the Voice of Businesses and the Community

Responsible: BDC, City Staff

How: Effective communication and collaboration between Business Districts, BDC, and City Council. BDC activities and oversight aligned with City Council Goals and Strategic objectives. BDC is well connected to and represents the Business Districts and the community at-large.

Why: Maintain the unique character of each business district while collaborating and communicating to elevate all efforts.

When: Ongoing

Metrics/Success Measures: BDC report annually to City Council on key measures, successes, opportunities, and barriers.

Appendix D – Summary of BDC Reporting and Communications; approved _____

HANDOUT #2

Webster Groves City Communications

Webster Groves City Website and Facebook

www.webstergroves.org

www.facebook.com/webstergrovescity

The website is continuously updated with city government information, events, and items of general interest. It includes meeting notices and agendas, city codes, specialized pages such as sustainability, senior resources, art, historic preservation, and parks and recreation. In 2017, there were 281,403 visits to the city website and currently the Facebook has 1,048 followers. Jennifer Conrad, deputy city clerk, is responsible for the website.

Community Connection

This is a monthly page of City news in the *Webster-Kirkwood Times* with a circulation of 40,369 copies each month. Coverage includes updates on city decisions, newsworthy activities, board and commission vacancies, meeting dates, and more. Robbi Courtaway is responsible for writing and creating this page with input from the city.

INSIDE Webster Groves

This is a quarterly newsletter that is delivered by mail to every address in Webster Groves. This four-page newsletter serves as an informational and educational communications tool for the City. Articles are created to inform the public about city-related matters from the budget to sustainable efforts. A City Quiz has become a popular item in the newsletter. Joan Jadali oversees INSIDE.

Specialized Communications Tools

Business

www.ExploreWebsterGroves.com

www.facebook.com/ExploreWebsterGroves

A website and Facebook page feature local businesses and events. Responsibility for these is with Mara Perry, Joan Jadali, and Jennifer Fowles of Creative Entourage.

Fire Department

The Fire Department maintains a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/webstergrovesfd.

Police Department

The Police Department maintains a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WGPDMO.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Department publishes a brochure detailing its activities twice a year. The brochure is mailed to every residence in Webster Groves.

The Department also maintains a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/webster.Parks.RecreationDepartment.

Additional communication tools

CVC magazine and website

The Civic and Visitor Center publishes a magazine annually that is available in hotel rooms, visitor centers, and other venues. It publishes about 300,000 – 400,000 each year. Webster Groves' businesses have the opportunity to be listed and with a large enough listing the City can be featured more prominently.

Their website is also available to the city for updates and inclusion.

Holiday Advertising

Each year the BDC coordinates an ad campaign that features Webster Groves businesses. In the past this has included radio spots, television coverage, additional WKT ads, and mailers. Contributions from the business districts and the city fund this campaign

HANDOUT #3

Appendix B:

Summary of Actions and Metrics agreed to by BDC through July:

Objective B

- Retail Vacancy rate reporting – For Old Webster and Old Orchard minimum
 - Frequency – Twice annual, January and August
 - Responsible – City Planner
- Business District Revenue Reporting
 - Frequency – Twice Annual in July and January
 - Responsible – Assistant City Manager

Objective A

- Business Opening/Closing report to BDC
 - Frequency – Monthly
 - Responsible – City Planner
- Facebook Page Traffic and demographics report to BDC
 - Frequency – Quarterly
 - Responsible – Social Media Consultant
- New Business Entrance Survey summary to BDC
 - Frequency – Quarterly
 - Responsible – City Planner
- Inside Webster Groves Newsletter
 - Frequency – Quarterly
 - Responsible –
- Community Connection in Webster-Kirkwood Times
 - Frequency – Monthly
 - Responsible –
- ***Online Packet for Starting a Business***-provided on City's website along with the opportunity to complete many of the forms online via fillable forms.
- ***Planning Director or City Planner sets up meetings*** with aspiring businesses to discuss the steps in opening a business and shares the online packet of resources.

HANDOUT #4

Appendix D:

Summary of BDC Reporting and Communications – Approved on _____

- BDC Receives a copy of approved Special Business District Commissions' meeting minutes
 - Frequency – monthly
 - Responsible – Communications Coordinator
- BDC Receives summary of recent Special Business District Commissions' meetings
 - Frequency – each BDC meeting
 - Responsible – Staff Liaison
- BDC Minutes Posted on Webster Groves City Website
 - Frequency – after each BDC meeting
 - Responsible – Deputy City Clerk
- BDC report status/progress to City Council
 - Frequency – at least 3X per year
 - Responsible – BDC Chairperson and City Council Liaison
- BDC reports to City Council – summary sent to BDC and Business Districts
 - Frequency – following report to City Council
 - Responsible – BDC Chairperson
- BDC membership includes representation from each Special Business District Commission
 - Responsible – Joint BDC and Business Districts

HANDOUT #5

2018 1Q & 2Q Explore Webster Groves Facebook Report BDC.pdf

Attachment #1

HANDOUT #6

Webster Groves Facebook Business Mentions

Creative Entourage Agency

A 306A N. Euclid Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63108
P 314.608.8424
E jennifer@creative-entourage.com

Company Representative
Jennifer Volk, Principal



EXPLORE WEBSTER GROVES FACEBOOK BUSINESS MENTIONS SEPT. 13, 2017 - JULY 31, 2018

ONE MENTION			
Big Lots Boardwalk Café Brazen Bring Me A Book Cantrell Eye Center Cast Paper Art Castlewood Cecille R. Hunt Gallery Cravings David's Guitar Loft Delve MIY Dynamic Personal Fitness Einstein Brothers	Embroider the Occasion Euclid Records FroYo Gateway Optical Service Gerber Chapel Imo's Pizza Jets Jimmy John's Kenary Florist Lark Skin Co. Les Bouquets Old Mountains Gear Exchange	Old Webster Animal Hospital Paradowski Creative Perspective Cabinetry & Design Pinot's Palette Pro-Am Golf USA Racanelli's Radio63119 Red Lamore Body Reperatory Theater San Jose SkyStone Conservatory	Steak n Shake Studio Rue Tei Too The Boulevard The Crimson Petal The Hub Bicycle Company The Novel Neighbor Webster Eye Care Webster Groves Subaru Webster Wok WG Animal Hospital Zoey's Attic
TWO MENTIONS	THREE MENTIONS	FOUR MENTIONS	FIVE MENTIONS
Big Bend Yoga Center Dairy Queen Dvin Restaurant Green Door Gallery Green Goose Hotshots Lindwedel Jewelers My Shabby Cottage Roger's Produce Rolling Ridge Nursery St. Louis Bread Company St. Louis Gym Centre Starbucks The Exercise Coach The Initial Design Tuxedo Park STL Bed & Breakfast Vitality Unlimited Spa Webster Kirkwood Times	Boardwalk Café Freddie's Fuzzy's Kind Soap Leopard Boutique Milagro Never Enough Schnuck's Stratton's Straub's The Frisco Barroom The Sushi Station Weber's Front Row	Boardwalk Café Dewey's Pizza Olive + Oak / The Clover and The Bee Yucandu Summit Jewelers Webster Groves Garden Café Paisley Boutique The Block Naked Boot & Shoe	Big Sky Café CJ Muggs Cyranos Opera Theatre The Art of Entertaining
SEVEN MENTIONS	EIGHT MENTIONS	TEN MENTIONS	ELEVEN MENTIONS
Maypop Coffee & Garden Shop Robust Wine Bar	Olive + Oak Serendipity The Novel Neighbor	Civil Alchemy Hwy. 61 Llywelyn's Pub The Clover and The Bee	Half & Half