

AMHERST INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

AGENDA

5:15 PM

1. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum - Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street
2. Approval of the minutes from the June 7, 2021 meeting-----Chairman
3. Discussion on a possible purchase of property in Brockman Park-----Sara Carter
A local business is interested in purchasing a property in Brockman for the expansion of his business. A closed session has been placed on the agenda in case the IDA wishes to continue the conversation in closed session, per the applicable exemption.
4. Adjourn into Closed Session-----Chairman

Purpose: To consider a sale of a piece of property in Brockman Park.

Suggested Motion:

I move that the Industrial Development Authority go into closed session to discuss the possible disposition of real property in Brockman Park, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, per the exemption at 2.2-3711A.3 of the Code of Virginia.

5. Reconvene in open session (Roll Call vote)-----Chairman
Suggested motion:
I move that the Industrial Development Authority adjourn the closed session and enter open session and certify that to the best of each member’s knowledge that (1) only public business lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Title 2.2, Chapter 37 of the Code of Virginia and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the session.
6. Other Business
7. Adjournment

**Town of Amherst
Industrial Development Authority**

A regular meeting of the Town of Amherst Industrial Development Authority was called to order by Chairman Sharon W. Turner on June 7, 2021, at 5:15 PM in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street. It was noted that a quorum was present as follows:

P	Richard Wydner	P	Sharon W. Turner
P	Jacob Bailey	P	Kim Stein
A	Gary Jennings	P	Clifford Hart
P	C. Manly Rucker, III		

Town Manager Sara E. Carter, in her capacity as Secretary to the Authority, and Clerk of Council Vicki Hunt, were present.

Mr. Bailey made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Rucker to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2021, meeting. There being no discussion, the motion carried 6-0 as follows:

Jacob Bailey	Aye	Kim Stein	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye	Sharon W. Turner	Aye
Gary Jennings	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
C. Manly Rucker	Aye		

At 5:17 P.M. Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Bailey as follows: I move that the Industrial Development Authority go into closed session to discuss the possible acquisition of real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, per the exemption at 2.2-3711A.3 of the Code of Virginia.

The motion carried 6-0 as follows:

Jacob Bailey	Aye	Kim Stein	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye	Sharon W. Turner	Aye
Gary Jennings	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
C. Manly Rucker	Aye		

At 5:36 PM, Mr. Hart made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Bailey as follows: I move that the Industrial Development Authority certify that to the best of each member's knowledge that (1) only public business lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Title 2.2, Chapter 37 of the Code of Virginia and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the session.

The motion via the roll call method carried 6-0 as follows:

Jacob Bailey	Aye	Kim Stein	Aye
Clifford Hart	Aye	Sharon W. Turner	Aye
Gary Jennings	Absent	Richard Wydner	Aye
C. Manly Rucker	Aye		

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Sharon W. Turner, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Secretary

FOR APPROVAL

**AMHERST INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF AMHERST**

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

AGENDA

6:00PM

1. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum - Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street
Industrial Development Authority-----Chairman Sharon Turner
Town Council-----Mayor Dwayne Tuggle

2. Discussion- The Industrial Development Authority requested this joint meeting with the Town Council to hear additional thoughts from the Council regarding the Council’s Strategic Plan. The Council had also wished to have a joint meeting with the IDA, as contemplated in the Strategic Plan. This meeting is set for the two bodies to convene and determine steps forward for the Town’s economic development activities.

From the Strategic Plan:

Strategic Area: Economic Development

- Discuss Brockman Park development with IDA - **ongoing**

 - Explore a Town EDA – role, responsibility, authority, autonomy, scope, oversight
 - Advise the IDA about Council’s interest in exploring an EDA – **now**
 - Bring to Council a plan for a pathway forward for the IDA to become an EDA – within 6 months (**September 1, 2021**)
 - Convene a joint Town Council/IDA meeting
 - Develop a workplan for the IDA/EDA with goals – **March, 1, 2022**

 - Comprehensive Plan Update (also relevant to Downtown Revitalization)
 - Process will be ongoing in **2021/22**
 - Adoption of the revised plan in **2023**
-
3. Other Business

 4. Adjournment

Town of Amherst
Town Council Retreat
February 27, 2021
Work Plan

Strategic Area: Economic Development

- Discuss Brockman Park development with IDA - **ongoing**
- Explore a Town EDA – role, responsibility, authority, autonomy, scope, oversight
 - Advise the IDA about Council’s interest in exploring an EDA – **now**
 - Bring to Council a plan for a pathway forward for the IDA to become an EDA – within 6 months (**September 1, 2021**)
 - Convene a joint Town Council/IDA meeting
 - Develop a workplan for the IDA/EDA with goals – **March, 1, 2022**
- Comprehensive Plan Update (also relevant to Downtown Revitalization)
 - Process will be ongoing in **2021/22**
 - Adoption of the revised plan in **2023**

Strategic Area: Downtown Revitalization

- Review the previously developed walkability plan – **now**
- Develop a sidewalk plan in priority blocks – within 3 months – **June 1, 2021**
- Explore creating a façade improvement program, with incentives – within 6 months (**September 1, 2021**)
- Include as a component of the Comprehensive Plan – **2021/22**
- Establish a business visitation program with an ongoing, monthly goal and a plan to complete the initial visitation of all businesses within 2 years – **March 1, 2023**

Strategic Area: Relationships

- Town Manager meet with the County Administrator and brief him on Council’s desire to improve relationships with the County – **ASAP**
- Mayor and Chair meeting – ASAP after managers’ meeting (**June 1, 2021**)

- Joint Town Council/Board of Supervisors meeting – ASAP after Mayor and Chair meeting (**September 1, 2021**)
- Then engage Sweet Briar College – revise the utility agreement by **January 2022**

Miscellaneous

- Explore the (additional) resources necessary to implement the workplan and report back within 6 months – **September 1, 2021**
- Develop a plan for a new Council table/dais, including the layout and components, get price quotes, and report back to Council within 3 months – **June 1, 2021**

Consolidated Timeline of Activities

Ongoing or immediate

- Discuss Brockman Park development with IDA
- Advise the IDA about Council's interest in exploring an EDA
- Review the previously developed walkability plan
- Town Manager meet with the County Administrator and brief him on Council's desire to improve relationships with the County

Within three (3) months – by June 1, 2021

- Develop a sidewalk plan in priority blocks downtown
- Mayor and Chair of Amherst County Board of Supervisors meeting
- Develop a business visitation plan and commence visits
- Develop a plan for a new Council table/dais, including the layout and components, get price quotes, and report back to Council

Within six (6) months – by September 1, 2021

- Bring to Council a plan for a pathway forward for the IDA to become an EDA
- Convene a joint Town Council/IDA meeting
- Explore creating a façade improvement program, with incentives
- Joint Town Council/Board of Supervisors meeting
- Explore the (additional) resources necessary to implement the workplan and report back to Council

By January 1, 2022

- Negotiate and approve a revised utility agreement with Sweet Briar College

Within one year – by March 1, 2022

- Develop a workplan for the IDA/EDA with goals
- Comprehensive Plan update, including a Downtown Revitalization Component, underway

Within two (2) years – by March 1, 2023

- Complete initial visitation of town businesses
- Adopt a revised Comprehensive Plan

Amherst Town Council Retreat

February 27, 2021

**Public Meeting Room
Amherst County Administration Building**

Notes

Mayor Tuggle called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. In addition to the Mayor, Council members Bunch, Carton, Turner, Watts, and Wheaton were present, along with Town Manager Sara Carter, Facilitator Kimball Payne, and his colleague, Victoria McNiff.

Mr. Payne welcomed everyone and introduced Ms. McNiff. He reviewed the suggested goals for the retreat and the ground rules.

- Suggested goals for the retreat:
 - Work as a team and develop consensus
 - Identify priorities and develop a workplan for the next two years
 - Understand constraints to progress and identify means to overcome them

- Ground rules
 - Everyone participates
 - Engage
 - Be honest
 - Listen to each other
 - Respect different opinions
 - No idea is too outlandish
 - Seek to understand
 - Ask questions
 - Seek consensus (formal action at a future Council meeting)
 - Use the parking lot for issues that may evade consensus or require more background
 - Have fun
 - We will take breaks when it seems appropriate

Council accepted the suggested goals and ground rules by unanimous consent.

Mr. Payne then projected the summary of Council's last retreat in January 2019 and solicited comments on how things had gone since then.

Items “still to do” were captured on Flip Charts #1 & #2 as follows:

- Zoning & Subdivision Ordinance Review and Revision
- Brockman Park – site planning and grading; site plan for the former ACP site
- Town park – vision and plan
- Amherst Town Square
- Ambriar-Sweet Briar Trail (\$200-300K)
- Downtown
- Sweet Briar Utilities (agreement expires 2022)
- Documents/Records Management

The discussion resulted in the following report card:

Recodification

- Town Code Recodification – **Completed**
- All Code in Municode – **Completed**
- Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Recodification – **Not completed**

Pay Policies and Practices

- Career Development Policy and COLA – **Completed**
- Policies and Practices Implemented – **Completed**

Brockman Park

- Marketing Materials updated via Sweet Briar Partnership – **Completed** [*Council asked that the new marketing materials be share with it.*]
- Implement New Marketing plan – **Completed**
- Full Capacity at Brockman Park – **Not completed**
- Future work: additional grading and groundwork – grant opportunities and planning for the former ACP site

Town Park

- Park available for “initial” public use – **Completed**
- Formulate vision of park and implement vision – **Not completed**
- Create park and trail master plan – **Not completed**
- Implement park master plan – **Not completed**

Amherst Town Square – Not completed

- Resurrect the project, work with stakeholders
- Work with CVPDC to identify grant funding for the project
- Project implementation
- Implement Town Square

Ambriar-Sweet Briar Trail – Not completed

- Complete Project Scope for the Ambriar Water and Sewer Relocation – Have all the data on the engineering side, it is just a funding issue (\$200-300,000)
- Relocate Water and Sewer
- Construct the pedestrian/bike trail to Sweet Briar College
- Provide recreational opportunities

Downtown – Not completed

- Create a vision for downtown
- Identify strategies to implement the vision
- Implementation of vision
- Effect downtown revitalization

Sweet Briar Utilities – Not completed

- Sweet Briar Committee to reconvene and start new negotiations
- Implement new arrangement re water service to Sweet Briar College
- Implement new arrangements re sewer service to Sweet Briar College

Police Department Building Renovation – Completed

- Determine Space Utilization and Develop RFP
- Construction Project out for bid, complete construction
- Garage access – **Needs to be resolved**

Various Items

- Move to paperless agendas; utilize tablets – **Completed**
- YMCA: Complete Market Analysis – **Analysis completed**; project dormant without a major donor stepping up (\$12-20 million)
- Improved CIP – **Completed**
- Celebrate Amherst Day – **Completed**
- July 4th Community Event – **Completed**
- Christmas Parade – **Completed**
- Add attractions for young adults, new businesses and housing options (i.e. for senior citizens) – **Not Completed**
- More downtown events – **Not completed**

Budget Priorities 19/20

- Funding for Town events – **Completed**
- Document/Records Management Systems – **Not completed** (getting quotes)
- Renewal of Trash Contract – **Completed**

Mr. Payne asked if there were any surprises during the two-year period, events that weren't anticipated but needed to be responded to. The following were listed on Flip Chart #2:

- Pandemic; Cares Act Funding
- Staff Accident
- Pump Station Leak on 60 East
- Roof damage over Council Chambers
- The need to pivot on the budget; all agreed that the results were good

In response to the question, "Were there any missed opportunities," only two were mentioned (Flip Chart #3): the easement at the Police Department and the Dominion/ACP project and the proposed trailer park.

There was then a discussion about what challenges, threats, or opportunities were facing the town. The discussion was captured on Flip Charts #3 & #4.

- Town Park (an opportunity) – bridges, amenities, address soggy areas
- Pending lawsuits (two are active; noise about a 3rd)
- Brockman Park – an opportunity to develop a list of target industries [Economic Development in general]
- Downtown (an opportunity and a challenge)
- Town Square (an opportunity and a challenge)
- Relations with the County (a challenge)
- Unknowns, particularly from the State and Federal governments
- Police governance and oversight – regulations and/or limitations; accreditation seen as an opportunity
- New or increased water and wastewater treatment standards (dealing with PFAS & PFOS)
- The Sewer Fund in the years 2023-2030; challenges to the reserves in 2023-2028, possibly requiring a subsidy from the General Fund

Mr. Payne then asked Council to describe what the future of the town looked like, either what it was probably going to look like or what Council members wanted it to look like. The responses were captured on Flip Charts #5-7.

- Sidewalks – pedestrian friendly
- More restaurants & small businesses in general
- Parking
- Comprehensive Plan Update
 - Downtown element, possibly with design standards
 - Parks & Trails
- Address vacant and underutilized buildings
- Services to the elderly
- A park with a water feature

- Patio homes (density) – need to find a developer and assist with reducing risk
- Another grocery store
- Good relationship with Sweet Briar College
- Partnerships/collaboration (unity, recognized value, relationships, positive communications), between the following:
 - County
 - College
 - Town
 - Region
 - State (VDOT)
- Litter free
- Street signs (well-maintained) – a County responsibility
- Culverts and drains cleared and maintained (VDOT)

Because some of the desired activities might be implemented through the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), Mr. Payne reviewed with Council the CIP proposal that was under review by the Planning Commission and asked about the capacity of the Town to fund capital projects. Ms. Carter responded (Flip Chart #7) that the Town had a healthy General Fund Reserve of \$1.8 million (compared to an annual budget of \$1.2 million) and that she felt the Town could address a project in the range of \$200,000 every year without negatively impacting the General Fund. She added that the Town could tackle a \$500,000 project every five (5) years, and a \$1 million project every ten (10) years without having to borrow.

Mr. Payne declared a break and asked Council members to come back from the break with three suggested priorities for Council and staff to address in the next two years. The suggestions were captured on Flip Charts # 8-10.

Priorities

- Facilitate conversation with the County; encourage citizen participation
- Clean up the Town – street signs, culverts, trash
- Economic Development – create a vision/strategic plan for the Industrial Development Authority (IDA); develop a business plan; consider changing the name to EDA (Economic Development Authority) but first understand the scope of an EDA versus an IDA; may need to change mindset
- New businesses downtown
- Relationships – County, college, town, businesses
- Utility infrastructure improvements; lines and capacities
- Economic Development
- Making the Town a destination – restaurants, recreation, amenities [identified by 3 Council members]
- Sidewalk improvements, Downtown Revitalization, improved aesthetics [identified by 3 Council members]

- Existing businesses relationships and new business attraction [identified by 2 Council members]
- County/Town collaboration
- Brockman Park and an IDA initiative; EDA?
- Continued improvements in Town Park
- A new park [not mentioned by any Council member but general agreement with mentioned by the facilitator]

Mr. Payne suggested that Council had identified three main areas of priority, what he termed the “Big Rocks” – Economic Development, Downtown Revitalization, Relationships (Flip Chart #11).

After lunch, Council focused on specific activities within each of the three areas of priority with a goal of developing a workplan for the next two years.

Actions in each of the three “Big Rock” areas were listed on Flip Charts #12 - #14.

Economic Development

- Discuss Brockman Park
- Explore a Town EDA – role, responsibility, authority, autonomy, scope, oversight
 1. Bring to Council a plan for a pathway forward for the IDA to become an EDA – within 6 months
 2. Advise the IDA about Council’s interest in exploring an EDA – now
 3. Convene a joint Town Council/IDA meeting
 4. Develop a workplan for the IDA/EDA with goals
- Comprehensive Plan Update (also relevant to Downtown Revitalization)
 - Process will be ongoing in 2021/22
 - Adoption of the revised plan in 2023

Downtown

- A component of the Comprehensive Plan
- Explore creating a façade improvement program, with incentives – within 6 months
- Review the previously developed walkability plan – now
- Develop a sidewalk plan in priority blocks – within 3 months
- Establish a business visitation program with an ongoing, monthly goal and a plan to complete the initial visitation of all businesses within 2 years

Relationships

1. Town Manager meet with the County Administrator and brief him on Council’s desire to improve relationships with the County – ASAP

2. Mayor and Chair meeting
3. Joint Town Council/Board of Supervisors meeting
4. Then engage Sweet Briar College – revise the utility agreement by January 2022

Mr. Payne then asked if there were enough resources in staff, time, and money to implement the workplan. This led into a discussion on the possible need, value, and cost of an assistant town manager to focus on activities such as downtown revitalization, the comprehensive plan, and capital projects. There was some reluctance expressed regarding the additional staff given concerns about the pandemic and the economy. Mr. Payne pointed out that some of Council's priorities had been priorities two years previously, at the last retreat, but had not been addressed due to the press of other activities. He suggested that, without additional resources, Council might find that its hopes regarding economic development, downtown revitalization, and sidewalks might still be unrealized at the next retreat in 2023.

After further discussion, Council asked that the Town Manager explore the (additional) resources necessary to implement the workplan and report back within 6 months. (Flip Chart #15)

Since there was still some time left, Ms. Carter asked Council to consider replacing or restoring the table and chairs in Council Chambers that had been damaged by water from the roof leak. She was directed to develop a plan for the layout and components, to get price quotes, and to report back to Council within 3 months.

Mr. Payne thanked the Council members for their active engagement and advised that, in the near future, he would have notes sent to Ms. Carter for review and distribution to Council.

Mayor Tuggle asked for a motion of adjournment and, on a motion by Ms. Carton, seconded by Ms. Wheaton and approved unanimously, the retreat was concluded at 2:00 p.m.