



Minutes
Economic Development Committee
April 4, 2012
8:00 AM
Town Hall Community Room

Committee Members Present

David Purvis, Bob Markli, Jim Nixon, Phil Dangel, David Smoak, R. Knick Myers, Ginny McLain-Tate, Naoko Blue

Committee Members Absent

Jim Holladay

Staff Present

Valerie Millsapps, Gary Palmer, Ruth Hawk

Other

Jeff Winston with Winston & Associates, Bettye Sisco and Tim Williams with the Farragut/West Knox Chamber of Commerce

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Dangel moved to approve the March 7, 2012 minutes. Seconded by Mr. Markli. All voted in favor.

Focus Group Session: Comprehensive Land Use Plan-Jeff Winston

Mr. Winston stated the purpose of the master land use and transportation plan is to get everyone on the same page with regards to the major direction of the community. Mr. Winston engaged the group with questions:

Where Farragut is and going with regards to business development, etc.?

- Mr. Purvis stated Farragut is in a transition state. Turkey Creek is a strong focal point. Hopefully we will fill empty structures and draw business through attending the ICSC and the combined work of the Chamber and the Farragut Business Alliance.

What structural changes are needed to make a difference to key properties around Town that are less than fully utilized?

- Mr. Purvis stated we need to review some ordinances and bring some of those properties up to code. A lot of structural changes need to take place.

Allison, what do you think in general?

- Ms. Sousa stated we are trying to identify what we want Farragut to look like. Ms. Sousa stated we need to pull people into the heart of Farragut and give them a reason to come here. We need to find out what that reason is market it, brand it and work it.
- Mr. Myers stated the Town he grew up in Oklahoma had a similar development to Turkey Creek that was away from the downtown. This drew a lot people out of the downtown for some time and when the movement came to rehab the downtown it was locked in to the area and couldn't expand. Mr. Myers stated we have a similar area modeled after his hometown here in Town with vacant land and infrastructure in place. In time everybody wants a downtown kind of feel or community. You need to have the availability and property to be able to do it. You have to have property locations that are feasible financially.

Where and how big is the downtown Farragut 2025? Is it a couple of blocks? If you had to put your finger on a map and say this is the heart and soul of the future downtown where would that be and how big is it?

- Mr. Markli stated it would be Campbell Station and Kingston Pike intersection.
- Mr. Purvis stated if you are looking at 2025 and traffic flow maybe out near Watt Road. As far as looking at where we are today it would be at Kingston Pike and Campbell Station.
- Mr. Williams stated to make plans for 2025 today and put all your emphasis on putting an anchor here or there it will not work for today. It will work for years to come. If you go to any outlining old city they are just dead.

How do you get those merchants to invest in that new location when it's going to struggle for a while until its gets going?

- Mr. Williams stated the Old Cities are trying to revitalize that hub of Town. There has been grants and programs to help revitalize but they are still old stuff. Downtown Knoxville has tried for years to become that destination location. Turkey Creek has been that destination location.
- Ms. McLain-Tate stated the heart of Farragut is right here in this area. You have some obstacles to making that happen and have some existing structures that maybe or not. If you find someone to invest some money to inhabit those structures we would have a very viable area.

We are struggling with two things: trying to revitalize vacant stores and is there a downtown and where would it be?

- Mr. Nixon stated he wouldn't go to a downtown here. Mr. Nixon stated his business interest is on the interstate. There is no traditional downtown. Creating a downtown is important. The governmental center is right here.
- Mr. Dangel stated this is the center of Farragut. If you look at the corners of Farragut, 75% of them are empty. Mr. Dangel stated if Farragut High School is still in the same location 13 years from now then yes we are in the right location and the right spot.
- Ms. Blue stated the Town Hall should be surrounded by a downtown area.
- Mr. Dangel stated we will see a shift when Costco opens. Mr. Dangel stated whatever will be built out in front of Costco in those outparcels will be meaningful and bring people.

Do we design commercial guidelines in Farragut? Should it be a unified theme? You have Einstein Bagels at the severe end of the design scale and then you have the log cabins at the other end of the design scale. From a commercial perspective would that help create an identity for Farragut?

- Mr. Williams asked would everyone here live in a condo where everybody's house looked the same. Mr. Williams doesn't think so.

Would mixed use work in Farragut? Combining retail, office and residential?

- Ms. Sousa stated you almost need that.

Is the market there?

- Mr. Purvis stated he would hope so. It would be nice to have a place for office and retail and have a place for residential out back.

Do you think Farragut needs a bigger diversity as residential?

- Mr. Purvis stated in reality you need that. We have a different future in front of us of what it takes to buy a home. There needs to be a transition area such as apartments or condos. The Town needs to be involved and show they are supportive of mixed use.
- Mr. Markli stated mixed use can succeed and there is a place for it. We need to have some common design elements in place. As far as the downtown, he doesn't think we will have a downtown. We do have a major shift of our retail core moved out to the interstate. What we need to look at is what this section has going for it. Mr. Markli stated you have the schools, churches and Town hall. Mr. Markli would like to see tying our creek ways together so you can get from one academic corridor to a retail corridor on foot or bicycle.

Should the community step in and try to revitalize? What do the owners' need that is not happening? What is it

going to take for these businesses to re-invent themselves? Is doing nothing okay?

- Mr. Myers states it is money. What we have been trying to do is make the re-development of existing structures not so hard.

What can be done and who should we try to enlist to step up and do it?

- Mr. Dangel stated one of things identified is apartment houses. You have a need for college graduates not able to afford to buy a home and apartments would be an avenue to pursue. Those graduates would soon become home buyers and eventually have kids in our schools. We don't need any more banks or grocery stores. We have the land to do it. One thing is spring fling baseball teams come together and we need to ask do we have adequate amount of fields and hotels in Farragut. Farragut baseball is a strength in this community and maybe an avenue we need to pursue.
- Mr. Markli asked how everyone felt about an apartment center to put 200 new households at the south of Kingston Pike. We identified that as a need. Do we have a place for it?
- Ms. Hawk stated the residential aspect needs to be first. Our current ordinance restricts apartments and Ms. Hawk has spoken with apartment developers to request a zoning amendment.

Discussion of ordinance 12-05 to approve a business privilege license for the TOF

Mr. Smoak stated the first reading of the ordinance will be April 12, 2012

Mr. Purvis made a motion to adjourn at 9:50 AM. Seconded by Mr. Markli. All voted in favor.

Next meeting Wednesday, May 2, 2012 at 8 AM.

X

Ginny McLain-Tate
Chairman