

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE REPORT
MAY 22, 2012 – 2:00 P.M.
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM – 2ND FLOOR**



The Columbia City Council held an Economic and Community Development Committee Meeting on Tuesday, May 22, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Sam Davis (Chair) called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Leona Plough were present. Non-committee City Council members may be in attendance and participate in the committee discussions. Committee recommendations to Columbia City Council, if any, will be made only by the committee members. There will be no official City Council action or votes taken at the committee meeting.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Annexation Update - Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Development and Planning Services and Mr. Skip Hudson, Planner

They provided an update on current annexation strategy and results. On April 29, 2009, City Council adopted the Primary Area Boundary as part of the Urban Service Area (adopted at the direction of the Annexation Policy). The Urban Service Area delineates the four areas called for by the policy: Donut Holes, Primary, Secondary and Long Range.

The consensus of the committee is to continue with the focus areas that were identified in the Annexation Policy and Urban Service Area. They are: Farrow Road, Clemson Road and the Pontiac/Woodcreek subdivisions with concentration primarily on the donut holes within those areas. They would like to revisit this to discuss resources. Chairman Davis said a date will be established for further discussion.

2. Taxi Cab Recommendation

The discussion concerned the conveyance of another taxi cab company in the Columbia area. Ms. Brenda Kyzer provided a report to the committee that shows the number of cab companies in the Columbia area (25). She also provided a comparison of other cities including: The City of Greenville (2 taxi cab companies), Charleston and North Augusta SC. These cities do not have any issues with the number of cab companies in their cities.

The consensus of the committee is to schedule a date to put this item on City Council's agenda to move forward to issue a business license to a new taxi cab company. The committee asked Ms. Kyzer to form a committee to make future decisions without Council's approval. Chairman Davis said to look at the Taxi Cab-Medallion System and see how it works and come back to the committee with recommendations. Ms. Kyzer said a panel will be formed to discuss this issue and she will come back to the Committee with the results of their discussions.

3. Commercial Revolving Loan Fund

There are two (2) loan requests pending. These are small business owners asking for a second façade loan. Ms. Tina Herbert said currently there is no policy in place to deny these requests. She wanted to meet with the committee to get some guidance before the CRLF committee meeting.

Chairman Davis said he does not have a problem with someone getting multiple loans as long as their credit is good and their loan(s) are paid on time. We need to look at this to be fair and equitable to everyone. He said they also need to look at ways to replenish the loan fund. Ms. Teresa Wilson was asked to assist with this effort.

4. Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool – Mr. Jim Gambrell, Director of Economic Development

Mr. Gambrell gave an update on the Rock Hill Self-Assessment Project. Their self-assessment has been completed; however, all comparisons are based on cities in the Northeast US, which is causing concerns in Rock Hill. This type process is a great opportunity to assess the City of Columbia and to ensure that we are not duplicating efforts of our economic development partners. Mr. Gambrell recommended we look at a consultant to assist us with a self-assessment and a new Economic Development Strategic Plan. He has been in contact with Mr. Mark Williams, a Columbia-based site consultant. The consultant, when selected, will meet with each council member individually and collectively to determine what they want to accomplish – relating to economic development growth.

Chairman Davis said we need to include an inventory of what assets we already have. Ms. Wilson said we can bring back the tool box to show incentives for big businesses and the small person. Mr. Gambrell said we will move forward with the self- assessment and new strategic plan and resources will be identified. He will send the paperwork to Legal for review and bring back to council on June 5, 2012, for approval.

4a. Commercial Building Permit Fee Policy – Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Development and Planning Services

There are some concerns that the general contractor(s) and the subcontractor(s) are being charged separate permit fees. The question was asked; do we eliminate the subcontractor's fee and increase the general contractor's fee? The consensus of the committee is to reevaluate the current policy that has been existence for a long time. Staff was asked to take a look at the policy and come back to the committee with a recommendation.

There were no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Submitted by:

Brenda Jones
Economic Development Office