

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE REPORT
JUNE 18, 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 Monday, June 18, 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 2:16 p.m. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Leona Plough were present.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Program Structure/Implementation of the Façade Program on the North Main Corridor

Ms. Tina Herbert, Office of Business Opportunities Director and the Façade Improvement Program Committee provided an update on the Façade Loan Program for the North Main Corridor. The Commercial Façade Improvement Program (CFIP) consists of two programs: they are: (1) Commercial Façade Improvement Loan (CFIL) – traditional forgivable loan, and (2) Commercial Façade Improvement Grant (CFIG) - a full grant. \$150,000 is available for the CFIP with a maximum of up to \$10,000 per project site. 80% OBO/20%-Applicant Project Cost Split. Under the CFIP the Davis Bacon Act and other federal reporting requirements will apply. Under the CFIG, no reporting is required. Paperwork has been minimized. A map was provided of the targeted areas. The City Manager has asked the Façade Improvement Program Committee to meet with the Legal and Permit Departments to ensure that everything is in place once the program is rolled out August 2012.

Businesses will be invited to attend information sessions that will be held in the Business Improvement District. There is no application fee; however, the owner has to remain in their business for five years on the loan side. With the limited funding of \$150,000, only the front of a business will be upgraded.

Chairman Davis said he is pleased that these programs are not only for owners but for tenants who are operating in leased buildings and the reduction of paperwork. He said there have been some businesses waiting for a while. Ms. Herbert said she will make sure that they get their applications first and are treated fairly. Applications will go out on August 1, 2012.

2. Project "Form" and the City and County Incentives

Mr. Jim Gambrell, Economic Development Director was asked by the committee to create a format to present projects to them. He provided a copy of a form and asked for their comments and suggestions on the format. A company (manufacturer) was listed on the form that is looking at locating in Columbia. He said we do not often get a chance to look at manufacturers wanting to locate in the city. They are looking at a Greenfield site and are impressed with Columbia. They will also bring other businesses with them.

The Committee asked that the following information be provided, when possible:

- Salary levels of jobs created?
- Will the people they hire live in the City of Columbia?
- How many jobs will they bring if they locate a corporate headquarters here?

Mr. Gambrell said that what the city does is insignificant when compared to what the County and State does; however, we will have a bigger role in the process by providing water and sewer and business licenses. He said the South Carolina Chamber and the Central SC Alliance has met with the company.

Mr. Gambrell said he will provide an update on the company at the next Economic and Community Development Committee meeting, if possible.

3. Economic Development Toolbox – Local Tax Abatement

Mr. Gambrell has received an opinion from the City Attorney that this incentive can be offered to manufacturers which would include this company. He provided a copy of the ordinance from Charleston addressing this issue.

Chairman Davis is concerned with this being limited to manufacturers only. The city needs to figure out a way to provide this to small businesses. Greenville has an ordinance on this issue and Mr. Gambrell will provide it to the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Jones