

MINUTES

COUNCIL-MANAGER BRIEFING

August 9, 2010

Vice Mayor Terrence Senger called the Council-Manager Briefing to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Municipal Building, 5350 Pleasant Avenue. The following Councilmembers were present: Mike Oler, Tim Meyers, Marty Judd, Mitch Rhodus, Terry Senger, and Mike Snyder. Staff present: Angie Johns, Rick Helsinger, Dennis Stuckey, Tim Bachman, Dave Crouch, Dave Butsch, Art Pizzano, Greg Kathman, Carol Mayhall and John Clemmons. Planning Commission members present: Deborah Rhees, Don Hassler (Parks Board Representative).

Property Maintenance Update

Development Services Director Tim Bachman commented it has been a good year for absorption of existing properties, but it is still a very fragile market. Mr. Bachman discussed in 2010 there has been over 500,000 square feet absorbed into the Fairfield market. Mr. Bachman briefly discussed the signed deals in 2010 including EPAC is a printer taking 60,000 square feet on Port Union Road; Roofing Supply Group is a 40,000 square foot absorption on the corner of LeSaint and North Point; Hyoseong America Corporation is a 33,000 square feet absorption on North Point; Masters Pharmaceutical is a 150,000 square feet absorption on Seward Road; and Accutek Testing Lab is a 50,000 square foot absorption. Economic Development Manager Greg Kathman briefly discussed Masters Pharmaceutical, which is expected to bring 70 new jobs. Mr. Bachman discussed Project Phoenix, which is the food products distributor Keystone Foods L.L.C., which is looking to take 200,000 square feet at Port Union Commerce Park. He further explained this project will be a five to ten million dollar investment with 240 jobs and a 15 year lease with several five year extensions. Mr. Bachman commented this project was broker initiated and the incentive package is 100% for a 10 year building permit abatement. He commented the schools approved this project at their August 5th meeting. Mr. Kathman briefly discussed the project, noting this company is new to the region. Mr. Bachman discussed the largest project in 2009/2010 is the completion of the Liberty Mutual Ohio Casualty remodeling. He stated they will exceed their 1200 employee commitment. He explained this project was a consolidation of various facilities in the Cincinnati area that are coming to Fairfield. Further, it was an investment of over 10 million dollars in remodeling with the only incentive being \$27,000 in building permit exempt. Mr. Bachman commented there are deals in the market place, but competition is fierce. He commented due to more supply than demand, both prices and lease rates have come down. He explained all the supply discourages new construction and financing. He briefly discussed there are not a lot of jobs created with these projects due to the economy. He displayed and discussed the unemployment statistics from 2008 to present for the United States, Fairfield and Ohio. He commented the State unemployment percentage is higher than the United States and the City is tracking lower than the U.S. numbers except for two months. Mr. Bachman discussed through the first six months of 2010, we are 1% greater than last year at this time for building permit values. He noted new housing starts have plummeted. He pointed out everyone is now looking at permit abatement because there are not a lot of tax abatements on existing structures. Mr. Bachman discussed how home values peaked in the spring of 2007 and with the recession hit bottom in the spring of 2009. He further commented for the year over year comparison there was a 9.7% increase in the second quarter. He briefly discussed reasons for property maintenance enforcement. City Manager Pizzano reminded Council that due to a retirement of a zoning inspector earlier this year, they are doing this with fewer people and the building inspectors have been taking up that slack. Mr. Bachman explained the number of inspections for this year is down from last year. Mr. Bachman discussed the number change are due to the retirement not being filled and changes in assignments, Follow-Up Zoning (FUZ) cases were started in April instead of January and they are on target to complete by November/December. Mr. Bachman discussed the Neighborhood Enhancement Action Team (NEAT) in which there were some reassignments and a full deployment in May. He commented as of June 30, we are 30% off mark, but we should make it. He explained inspections and violations are down partially because the court is issuing funds for Heritage Glen, so there has been a re-concentration of inspections. Mr. Clemmons explained fines can become liens against the property if they are not paid. Mr. Clemmons discussed the City has posted some areas as uninhabitable. Building and Zoning Inspector Rick Helsinger commented on the positive feedback from residents when inspectors are out in the field. Mr. Bachman stated the number of violations to inspections is down this year and it is the same number of FUZ inspectors. Mr. Bachman explained the city maintained a total of 73 vacant properties in 2009 and for the first six months of 2010 have maintained 63 separate properties, which is on target to be very close to the 2009 totals. He discussed the redevelopment of Fair Plaza including signing new tenant Planet Fitness, which is taking 14,000 square feet. He explained the center is getting a new fact lift and the senior housing has been delayed, but they are second on the state tax credit waiting list. Mr. Bachman further discussed Patterson Place and the Patterson Drive project. Mr. Bachman discussed the legislation tonight for the streetscape project, which will be funded 100% by the Community Development Block Grant. He updated Council on the Wester JEDD, noting 523,000 dollars were brought into the JEDD and the Fairfield breakdown is about 73,000 dollars. He briefly discussed the need for his reappointment to the board. Mr. Bachman provided an update on the accreditation, which has been sent and a response is expected in the next several weeks. He commented we are the first city in Ohio pursuing national accreditation. Mr. Bachman commented there has been outreach to the former Flowerama, but no information is available at this time. Councilmember Rhodus requested that this meeting be broadcast on TV Fairfield. Mr. Pizzano asked Council to check their calendars and be prepared at the next meeting to schedule the goal setting meeting in September. Councilmember Oler suggested possible scheduling on a Monday evening instead of Saturday for the meeting.

Adjournment

The Council/Manager Briefing adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Johns
Clerk of Council