

HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
CITY HALL, 1115 BROADWAY  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2011  
12:00 PM

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the rescheduled Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:00 pm by Chairman Bellm.

**Roll Call**

Members present: Darell Bellm

Members absent: Marilyn Frey and Jon Greve (*no quorum was present*).

Also present: City Manager Mark Latham, Chief Building & Zoning Official Kevin Limestall, Andrea Enright, Dennis Rinderer, and Deputy Clerk Lana Hediger.

Ex-Officio Member Jami Jansen was absent.

*DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM, NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING. ITEMS DISCUSSED ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY.*

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the March 2, 2011 IDC meeting were not approved due to lack of quorum.

**Reports**

Website update:

First draft of information and the mapping points was handed out. Kevin indicated that the labor information has still not been obtained. The mapping points are the items that will be shown on the map on the website. They include major employers, airports, universities and schools, medical facilities, and attractions and cultural information. The final product should be forwarded to the City by the end of this week or early next week for our review and comment before going live.

Testimonials: We have one from Rob Bowman and one from St. Joseph's Hospital. A survey was sent out to the industries asking pointed questions and letting them know that the information would be compiled generically. So far the only response has been from St. Joseph's Hospital. Kevin indicated that a challenge letter has been sent to Sperlings about the negative comment that they have posted on their website.

Business Inquiries Update:

Williams Painting They have installed their paint booth and are getting ready to request an inspection of it.

Huddle House The owners are verifying the survey of the lot and finalizing their information to keep moving forward with their project.

Weight / Fitness / Health Food Store Kevin hasn't heard anything more from them.

Steve Schmitt Auto Dealership They are going to do their remodeling project first before they move forward with their addition.

Family Dollar. We are waiting on Mr. Rankin to get his permit to have the metal roof installed. Kevin believes that Mr. Rankin was confused and thinking that they didn't need a permit for the new roof. Their permit fees are being waved but they still need a permit. Family Dollar's architect has submitted plans and an application for the interior work. We got it yesterday.

Banquet Facility Kevin met with them on their project and gave them some more information on their site and what they were looking for and what the process is.

Annexations Kevin has not had any inquiries on commercial but had one inquiry yesterday on a residential property.

EDA Grant for Infrastructure Kevin met with Kevin Trevear of SIMAPC. It's for public works projects. We have to coordinate all those through them before we submit anything to EDA. Kevin has the paperwork to get on their five-year list. Our projects have to be on that list for EDA to even consider funding any of them.

Cabinet Gallery They are closing on their land today. Paul Ray Capelle's financing (small business loan) has been approved and he is ready to start his construction project in the next 20-30 days.

Feasibility Study Update: Andrea Enright, after calling six people about a feasibility study, has heard back from only one...James White of the Buckley Co. Andrea found him because he gave a presentation at the IL Municipal League Conference. She spoke with him for about ten minutes on the phone. He would come to Highland to give a free consultation of what it would cost to do a feasibility study. Typically they cost \$10,000 - \$20,000 but that they will work with our budget. Rockford, IL, did an incubator that didn't go well, so they are helping them re-do it and only charging them \$9,000. They will let us know when they will be in the area.

Land options: Denny Rinderer reported that he received a call from Mrs. Steiner. The Collier appraisal came in at anywhere from \$29,000 - \$32,000 / acre. He had some good comparables (the hospital purchase and the property north of Augusta Estates). Denny recommends asking Donna Howard to update her appraisal because it was done before the last two big land sales.

Darell wondered if it hasn't become feasible to begin looking toward the Trenton Road if we're going to do something. The highway access to that isn't nearly as good and he isn't sure how much difference it would make in price to go that direction. The other part of this is whether or not the City Council has given any kind of direction on whether the IDC should proceed with the land purchase idea. Mark indicated that he updates

the council weekly by way of his Friday summary report, which includes what the IDC has been doing. Mark has included in that report that the IDC has been looking at some land, no prices have been discussed, based on the fact that we have very little site ready property. That is the only information he has conveyed to the council.

Mark will ask Donna Howard to update her appraisal of Mrs. Steiner's property. Mark believes that once we have a firm price for Mrs. Steiner's property, the council, coming from a financial standpoint, will want to know what funding is available. He doesn't think the time is right yet to approach the council until we come up with what we want and some options to offer them for funding the purchase.

Mark indicated that with the feasibility study being done on the I-70 / State Route 160 interchange, and the traffic study, this Steiner property is going to become much more of a prime location.

Denny Rinderer doesn't believe that there won't be a very big difference in land prices between north of Highland and south of Highland, but the access will be way better on the north side due to the interchange. In addition, all of the City's utilities would have to be extended to the south along SR 160, adding a cost that would need to be taken into consideration.

Darell asked if the school has been approached about what they think about industry being located on the Steiner property. Kevin indicated that it might offer an opportunity for learning.

City Manager Latham recapped the direction on the Steiner property...1) ask Donna Howard to update her appraisal; and then, 2) try to get an option on Steiner property (discuss this at the next IDC meeting then take it to the Council for approval), then 3) obtain the option, then 4) work on funding options. Mark Latham directed Denny Rinderer to notify Mrs. Steiner that the City will likely be making an offer for an option to buy.

St. Patrick Center visit: City Manager reported that he, Andrea Enright, and Kevin spent a half-day at their facility on Tucker. It consists of one floor of a building. Their incubator facility is full. They have a full-fledged commercial kitchen that 17 different companies are using around the clock. Jan of the St. Patrick Center has invited the commission members to tour four other facilities. It would be a day-long trip for the IDC.

Part of the mission of the St. Patrick Center was to create jobs for some of the homeless people in that area. The incubator program basically just offers offices to the entrepreneurs. One of them had a silk screening business in it. Another business that just moved on was created by Mike Martin. He makes commercials and works for Washington University's business school. A lot of the businesses are "green" type businesses, because the businesses that St. Patrick Center takes in have to match their mission. Darell asked if St. Patrick Center was at all associated with the Junior Achievement program.

ML reported that he attended the Rural IL Economic Development Conference in Peoria and saw Sheila Simon, Lt. Gov of IL. She spoke on the gap in IL schools between the students who are prepared to go to college and the ones that actually do. We are no longer teaching our youngsters about entrepreneurship. Highland is all about entrepreneurship. Now there is a new trend in the U.S. and in Illinois that fits perfectly into the history of Highland. At the St. Patrick Center they are helping kids develop a business and any money raised goes back to the kids to either start a business or go to college.

Mark asked if the commission would be interested in going to tour the St. Patrick Center facilities. Darell indicated that it would be great. Mark asked Andrea to set something up with them for after the IDC's May meeting.

Mark indicated that the most successful incubator program in the world, located in Toronto, Canada, is located in an old hospital facility. Darell thinks the old St. Joseph's Hospital facility would be a good site for something like this.

Mark also reported speaking with Michelle Dieters, who operates the Legacy Place. She used to work for a company in Indiana that built buildings to rent out to entrepreneurs. If they were successful, then they would move up to a bldg that was made specifically for their business.

Mark and Andrea indicated that the St. Patrick Center people are very interested in partnering with Highland. We would have to be mindful of whether or not our mission matches their mission. Andrea indicated that their board of directors reviews applications of entrepreneurs and has turned away more applicants than they have accepted into the program. Kevin added that they also hold their entrepreneurs accountable.

Mark believes that this would go over very well if we could tie it into the school system and that the people of the City of Highland would embrace this. Denny indicated that there are a lot of kids that just aren't college material. We need more young people to work into the skilled labor type jobs such as pipe fitters, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, etc. We need people in these jobs to work at these types of jobs and live here and raise their families here.

With regard to the hospital building, two floors could be used for data centers in order to generate enough revenue to sustain the entrepreneurship program (incubator). Andrea says that Madison County is still interested in helping Highland with an incubator program.

IL Rural Economic Development Conference Update: City Manager Latham reported that the Federal government is looking for some clusters that they would be willing to support. He believes this is one of the financial incentives that we need to dig into a little bit. They are developing an entrepreneurship program that could be integrated into the high school curriculum.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4, 2011 at 12:00 pm at City Hall.

**Adjournment**

Chairman Bellm adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.