

# **Mount Pulaski Economic Development and Planning**

Square Revitalization Community Meeting

January 3, 2019

## **Opening**

The special meeting of the Mount Pulaski Economic Development and Planning was called to order at 7:01 p.m. on January 3, 2019 in the Hilltop Club Office by Tom Martin.

## **Present**

Board Members present: Tom Martin, Shaun Tyson, Renee Martin and Mayor Matt Bobell, city alderman, Andrew Neaville, and approximately 40 members of the community attended, Dave Leonetti- architect.

## **Open Issues**

Tom Martin led the meeting discussions. He informed the guests of the town square renovation project and how the business district was set up. He also explained why the city formed the Economic Development and Planning Board and the monies that will be received by the Hilltopper Wind Farm.

Hilltopper Wind Farm monies will not be controlled by the city of Mount Pulaski, but only by the EDPB. EDPB will receive a \$250,000 one-time payment and will get \$115,000 payments annually.

The purpose of the meeting today is to get ideas on how to create an atmosphere in our community around the square that will spark Economic Development and an overall comprehensive plan before we move forward.

Martin introduced the architect, Dave Leonetti. Leonetti has been in this business for over 40 years. He has done small city planning. He is from Carlinville, but resides in Springfield now. Dave has worked on 20 National Historic Registry Sites, including the Mount Pulaski Courthouse. Dave has worked on the stained glass at the Dana Thomas house and done work at Lincoln's Tomb.

It would be nice to have a concept for building renovations on the square. Two to Three options could be available, so they all coincide.

Lighting on the square would be updated and all wires underground. The retaining wall needs work.

There is a possibility that we can work with Rural Development and match money to grant money.

The comprehensive plan would consist of a 1-2-year plan, 2-5 year plan, etc.

Phyllis Beccue suggested getting rid of the Courthouse retaining wall and re-landscaping.

Would redo the square in increments/phases.

The square needs infrastructure to attract new business, for example, DSL internet.

Rick Volle said that a fiber optic line will be on the square behind the Farmers Bank by Comcast and will run 50 gigs.

Wind Farm- Daniel Sheehan talked about microcell service.

Deanna Howard said the stairs on the square needed redone.

Dave Leonetti talked about ADA accessibility on all sides of the square.

Volle said it would be nice if the property on the corner of Cooke and Lafayette would be great for an amphitheater. This would be a great addition to the Fall Festival.

How do we find the needs of the community? Survey? SurveyMonkey.

What's going to draw the younger generation to town? School

Lighting- uplighting?

What kind of businesses do we want to attract to town?

Phyllis Beccue had a lot of ideas for the square such as: a grant fund for just painting buildings, more planters, grant program for awnings, replace retaining wall, grant program with a low interest loan to bring businesses to town, nice to have a tea room, more variety of shops, encourage clubs to fill empty windows, older community-need to reach out to them(maybe send a calendar out via the water bill), remove ugly pipes on buildings, need to do tv commercials, and old fashioned flyers, need to spot light certain businesses.

Other discussions included: Grant from EPA, food grant, main street, newspaper (monthly), update sign on 121 to digital, buildings need re-tuck pointed.

Sheehan talked about anchoring certain events on the square to draw people to town.

Casey McCormick talked about having a park on the square and being able to utilize businesses for bathrooms and drinks. Suggested something like ergadoozy, which is an indoor play place, that would bring people to town.

Michele Hagenbaugh said we need to remember our youth and have something for them to do.

Public restrooms on the square that at ADA compliant would be nice.

Tom Martin needs a steering committee of 5-10 people to help with the square reno.

March 13 is the next community meeting.

The meeting was turned over to Shaun Tyson to talk about a grocery store.

We will never have a grocery store as we knew it, but could possibly have a co-op. A co-op is the only model that we could have in our town that will work.

Would need community support.

Tyson needs a steering committee also with 5-10 people to get that ball rolling.

Meeting concluded at 8:34 p.m.

Upcoming Board Meetings: January 14, 21, February 4, 18 and March 4, 18.

Minutes submitted by: Renee Martin