



**CITY OF FOREST PARK
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at 5:30 PM
City Hall-Council Chambers, Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
Phone Number: (404) 363.2454

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

MINUTES

Lois Wright, Chairwoman
Pamela Lake, Vice Chairwoman
Eliot Lawrence, Secretary
Hector Gutierrez, Member
Alvin Patton, Member
Trudy Smith, Member
Felicia Davis, Member

MEETING NOTICE:

*This meeting is accessible to the public or media via web.
For in person attendance, CDC requirements of Masks and Social Distancing will be adhered.*

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chairwoman, Lois Wright, called the Regular Meeting for the Development Authority to order at 5:30 PM

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Lois Wright, Chairwoman
Eliot Lawrence, Secretary
Hector Gutierrez, Member
Alvin Patton, Member
Trudy Smith, Member
Felicia Davis, Member

Absent:

Pamela Lake

Also Present:

Bruce Abraham, Economic Development Director
Kirby Glaze, DA Attorney
Kisha Bundridge, Board Coordinator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Alvin Patton made a motion to approve the Development Authority Regular Meeting Minutes from September 29, 2021, as is.
Eliot Lawrence seconded.
Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously

OLD BUSINESS:

2. Economic Development Department Update

Bruce Abraham, Economic Development Director explained that Zaxby's is still struggling with their ever-changing architectural plans. They are in discussions with James Shelby, Planning, Building & Zoning Director to work out some of the specifics. Zaxby's is committed to closing soon.

Mr. Abraham also shared that the Development Authority is the supporting agency for the REBA grant, which has been gotten \$600,000 from the city and \$300,000 from the Department of Transportation for the Rateree Road extension. The Rateree Road extension will open into Forest Parkway and will be a great relief for that area. It is expected to be completed by Thanksgiving. We will conduct a traffic study to keep the area safe.

Lois asked if MARTA would be increasing their presence due to the expansion in Ft. Gillem. Bruce Abraham explained that we are in discussions with MARTA to convince them about the new growth in the area, the new jobs, the road expansion and the need for them in the area.

Bruce Abraham then explained that the Façade Grant is still underway. We should have two new proposals to bring before the board soon, but we have learned that there is a lot of resistance to apply for the Façade Grant because some business owners find it difficult to come up with upfront money to retain a contractor.

The Façade Grant is currently set up as an 80% / 20% matching grant. The DA pays 80% of the project cost, up to \$25,000.00, and the business owner pays %20. Lois Wright said she didn't recall that the grant program was set up that way, and she would have wanted to make the grant more accessible to business owners by not making them have to pay to receive a grant. Bruce Abraham proposed that we offer half of the total project cost, up to \$12,500 up front after the project is approved to cover retaining a contractor and getting the project started.

Felicia Davis wanted to explore having business owners contribute their part up front as opposed to receiving grant money first or imposing a nominal fee to those who require upfront money so that they are investing something into the project.

Trudy Smith suggested making the business owner responsible for half of their portion up front and then the balance of their portion at the end of the project.

Bruce explained that there are a lot of reasons people are hesitant to pursue applying for the grant. There are always strings attached that are not always so easy to overcome. Many people are not accustomed to dealing with contractors, finding and managing contractors, some don't have the out of pocket money to invest, some don't know

what they would want to do or how to go about doing it, while others are suspicious about the government wanting to help. It has been a real effort to get this started.

Kirby Glaze, DA Attorney, suggested that we change the policy to say that we can loan up to half of the grant at outset, and as long as they comply with everything, the loan is forgiven. If not, we've now got a promissory note for the loan amount. It can be added as a provision.

Felicia Davis said that if the money being offered wasn't enough, isn't there another way to incentivize people to beautify their property, for example by creating ordinances they must comply with.

Bruce Abraham and Kirby Glaze explained that the city has a code of ordinances and an overlay that is very restrictive, but we cannot impose new ordinances on existing businesses. Lois explained that we want the city to evolve and raise up. She said we want to help the community.

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to allow the Façade Grant recipients to get half of the granted money up front to get their project started.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.

Roll call for approval.

Trudy Smith was opposed.

Motion approved.

Felicia Davis suggested the information about the Façade Grant opportunity be shared in a group setting. Lois Wright said we could invite the business owners and contractors and Bruce Abraham to present the Facade Grant.

3. RFP Update

At the September 23, 2021, Development Authority meeting, Bruce Abraham made a recommendation to the board that they use Haddow Company for the Requests for Proposals for the Main Street property development. The board voted to move forward with that recommendation. Once they started the process, it became evident that Haddow Company intended to go about the work using a long proposition that was contrary to what they described in their proposal. This process would be much more timely and costly.

Trudy Smith made a motion to table the RFP discussion until Dr. Cooper was asked about using the city's procurement department.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

Felicia Davis made a motion to amend the motion to include authorizing the Economic Development Department to proceed with the RFP process.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Update and Changes on 771- 775 Main Street Remodel

Bruce Abraham shared that the final piece, the deck for the food pavilion is still causing a problem. The contractors have not been able to locate any good solid ground to put the posts in, even after digging 6 feet down. Lois asked if this was something we could have known ahead of time. Bruce Abraham explained that this issue was not foreseeable. They are working diligently to come up with a solution.

We should expect some change orders as the contractors try different things to make the pavilion possible.

5. Demolition Estimates

Bruce Abraham shared that he had asked Procurement Director, Girard Jeter for five demolition experts to get proposals from. Two of those demolition experts responded with proposals. One proposed \$169,000 and the other, \$79,000. The difference between the two is that the company proposing \$169,000 would be contracting the job out to someone else.

Felicia Davis added that she was familiar with the second company, Kissberg Construction, and they do excellent work.

Trudy Smith asked about debris removal as she did not see it listed in the proposal. Bruce Abraham explained that debris removal would be in the scope of work and that he would of course confirm that before going not contract.

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to accept the contract from Kissberg Construction.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.

Roll call for approval.

Felicia Davis recused.

Trudy Smith opposed.

Motion approved.

6. By Laws

Lois Wright said that she was very pleased with the job Mr. Glaze did on the Bylaws.

Mr. Glaze said that he hadn't gotten any questions on the proposed Bylaws, so he recommends they be approved as distributed.

Alvin Patton made a motion to accept the proposed Bylaws.

Felicia Davis seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate)

Trudy Smith made a motion to enter Executive Session at 7:02 PM.

Felicia Davis seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

Trudy Smith made a motion to end Executive Session and resume the Regular Meeting at 7:08 PM.

Felicia Davis seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Trudy Smith made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting for the Development Authority at 7:08 PM.

Felicia Davis seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 404-366-1555.