

SMITHVILLE BOARD OF ALDERMAN

WORK SESSION

October 5, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held via teleconference.

The meeting was streamed live on the city's FaceBook page.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Boley, present via Zoom, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present via Zoom meeting: Steve Sarver, Kelly Kobylski, Dan Ulledahl, John Chevalier, Dan Hartman and Marv Atkins.

Staff present via Zoom: Cynthia Wagner, Anna Mitchell, Chuck Soules, Chief Jason Lockridge, Matt Denton, Stephen Larson, Jack Hendrix and Linda Drummond.

2. Discussion of Progress in Completing Comprehensive Plan Implementation Items

Jack Hendrix, Development Director noted that there was a very extensive outline for the Comprehensive Implementation update in the packet. The Comprehensive Plan is laid out over a ten-year period. Through that process, there were three categories of implementation timelines determined, zero-to-three year, three-to-seven year and then the long range seven-to-ten-year action.

Jack explained that the staff report identifies all the items. The appendix in the Comprehensive Plan lays out items in the near-term which are the zero-to-three-year items listed on the first two pages of the staff report. The zero-to-ten-year items are identified in the staff report as well. All the items are listed if completed or if in progress. Jack explained that in the staff report the level of priority is colorized with red for High Priority and blue for Moderate Priority.

Mayor Boley asked for the BE.3 if Jack had any idea what something like that would cost if we hired consultants?

BE.3 Target and Attract Key Industry Niches

BE.3.1 Identify appropriate industry types and priorities/metrics (such as jobs, tax revenue, etc.) for utilizing economic development incentives to attract key industry niches. High Priority. Initial discussions of economic incentives have occurred, with more detailed and in-depth discussions to occur in the coming year.

BE.3.2 Establish a Zoning Overlay in the 169 South Character Area on the west side of Hwy 169 for which commercial uses are allowed if they meet the key priority industry criteria or metrics. Moderate Priority. This item may require outside consultant assistance. Discussion on budgetary priorities is recommended.

Jack explained to have all the drawings and surveying done, his estimated cost would be somewhere in the mid \$20,000 range.

Mayor Boley noted that since it is tied to the BE.3 with the incentives for economic development he believes those can work in parallel, but if we are going to get that done in that zero-to-three-year, timeline the Board might need to look at budgeting it for the next year.

Jack agreed that the sooner we can get this put in the budget, it will give us more time to see what kind of growth happens in that area and what changes may come in and start with the overlay area there.

Mayor Boley noted that the other items listed such as tourism and housing were straightforward. Industrial was the one everyone on this Board could help work on such as getting the Industrial Zone expanded. He suggested that if anyone of the Board member had not driven back to First Park, he recommend they do so. Some work on ED.1 had begun early in the pandemic but not much since.

ED.1 Work with College system to bring higher education opportunity to Smithville

ED.1.1 Work with Metropolitan Community College (MCC) to initiate study of their capacity to provide services meeting Smithville community needs. High Priority. While some initial discussion occurred with MCC prior to its' ballot measure, more in-depth discussion must occur to better coordinate priorities and measures on the ballot.

He added this is one of the only thing Dr. Schutz ever really asked him about early on is trying to get Smithville as part of Metropolitan Community College taxing district. Mayor Boley said that the MCC District was able to put this on the ballot themselves and inquired if staff had heard how the vote went?

Cynthia explained that it did not pass, she noted that she had not discussed it with Dr. Schutz but was meeting with him on Friday and see if it is still a priority for them or the community. If it is not, then we can pull it off the list.

Mayor Boley stated that Alderman Chevalier requested funding for neighborhood grants that would fit in item HN.3. He also noted that this item is in the FY22 budget and, if approved, staff can begin to develop what that grant program will look like soon.

HN.3 Strengthen Neighborhoods Across the City

HN.3.1 Encourage additional residential units near existing residential uses to strengthen the neighborhoods of Smithville. Currently two subdivisions under construction adjacent to existing subdivisions, with one more anticipated shortly. (Eagle Ridge, Diamond Creek, Lakeside Farms)

Mayor Boley noted that funding for the Main Street program is also included in the FY22 budget, if approved.

BE.1 Prioritize a Vibrant Downtown.

BE.1.4 Continue to annually dedicate city funds to support Smithville's Main Street program. Consider earmarking designated funds to enable sustained administration and operations. Consider earmarking additional funds for programmatic activities such as business assistance, events, and placemaking. \$40,000 in 2021 and an additional \$20,000 for 2022.

BE.1.5 Continue to provide Small Business Resources, such as the city's Business Startup Checklist, the Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce, and Main Street programming and assistance.

BE.1.7 Encourage and attract commercial establishments that foster a vibrant Main Street to locate in Smithville's Downtown.

Mayor Boley stated again that BE.3 Target and Attract Key Industry Niches is something the Board could help with. He noted that the Northland Regional Chamber are always advocating for Smithville and trying to get businesses to locate here.

Mayor Boley noted the for RC.1 we have the Parks and Recreation Master Plan started distributing recreation and we have made progress on it.

RC.1 Create a Unified Approach for Parks and Trails

RC.1.3 Continue collaboration between Smithville's Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments to ensure recreational assets, residential areas, and employment centers are well-connected through multimodal paths and trail networks. The Parks Master Plan and the Transportation Master Plan have collaborated on trails network discussions. The departments are currently designing a joint facility at Smith's Fork to ease collaboration options.

Mayor Boley indicated that ED.2 goes along to ED.1.

ED.2 Coordinate funding and planning activities between School and City

ED.2.1 Smaller action group of both Boards work to identify guiding principles that both entities agree upon, and work toward achievement of mutual plans and goals.

Mayor Boley noted that the Board needs to get feedback from the Economic Development Committee on their recommendations on the incentives before the Board retreat. That way some of these items can be planned and budgeted for next year if the overlay is really a priority.

Jack explained that he and Anna Mitchell, Assistant City Administrator, are anticipating coordinating some of the Economic Development Committee's conversations over the next six months. To help them understand and work on their recommendations for the incentives and have them ready in time for the Board retreat.

Mayor Boley noted that the staff reports for the Progress in Completing Comprehensive Plan Implementation Items would be a good tool for the Economic Development Committee to use. He explained that it is a good list of Board priorities and should help them work through the recommendations for the incentives.

Cynthia explained that she and Jack had met trying to figure out the best way to address this. Staff would like to be able to put together the information in a dashboard format so that we can very quickly see where we are on target, where we have changed priorities, etc.

Jack added that they would also make the format more user friendly for our residents to understand.

Cynthia added that she and Jack had another conversation today related to the Comprehensive Plan and our Strategic Plan and the movement we are making in the community. She noted that the ICMA, the International City/County Management Association conference is being held this week in Portland, OR and they also have a virtual platform so others can attend the sessions and keynotes. Some staff members have been viewing a number of the sessions and keynotes. This morning's keynote title was "Downtownification of America" and it focused on some of those places where suburbia is not necessarily preferred. The stereotypical suburban area of strip malls and sprawling neighborhoods that are not inviting. The presenter presented information and the kind of desires for the future. Cynthia noted that it was really interesting in how the presenter talked about providing spaces even in suburban areas and more rural areas that have an urban feel to them. Places where the streets that are narrow tree-lined streets, more traffic control, a higher density in some areas, entertainment and other options closer to the residential. Cynthia explained that it is very similar to a lot of what we have talked about for our downtown area. Our Comprehensive Plan really reinforces a lot of the information that was discussed in that presentation. We have more traditional opportunities for suburban and rural housing in our northern part of town. Our interior oasis is more of a metropolitan feel and then our linkage to the Kansas City area. Cynthia and Jack are excited that our Comprehensive and Strategic Plans really seem to align with what we see is the future and that it seems to be desired by a lot of people.

Alderman Hartman thanked Jack for a job well done for putting this together. He said he thinks that we have a lot of vision for the City and as a governing body we get the opportunity to help see the visions happen. He noted that when it comes to housing and commercial, he could not be more excited about what we have in front of us for the future of the City.

Alderman Hartman shared that last week we had the state director's meeting. This year the meeting was in Kansas City. This is where the Missouri Realtor's Association gets together with thirty-one different board association. This meeting they had a macro-level view with economist.

Mayor Boley noted that Alderman Hartman discussed the meeting with him and one of the interesting things was the reshoring of companies. That the pandemic has shown that we cannot always depend on offshore manufacturing.

That the Midwest exist of wide-open spaces exist and not on the coast. That in some of the states like Texas they are getting a lot of strain from people and those people are starting to move more towards our area. Here we have the infrastructure, electricity, water and the land that they do not have in some of those other areas.

Alderman Hartman continued that during the meeting they really talked about our industrial growth, our population growth and the return of agriculture. Missouri is very big in agriculture. He explained that we just hit global food shortages and prices that rival those in the 1970's. The growing food insecurity will make United States farm product demand a critical need as with machinery technology sustainable growing technologies.

They talked a lot about the 69% likely or extremely likely to reach shortages in the future. This means more companies from the coast inward, and Missouri is going to be a key player in this over the next few years. There is no one solution but Missouri is really becoming that distribution hub because of our interstates and our location in the country. Alderman Hartman explained that 78-80% of Midwest can reach most of the United States in a day or two for shipping. With that high number we are really a prime area for growth.

Mayor Boley spoke with past Alderman and now current state representative Josh Hulbert last week and that is one of things the state is really focused on. This is one of the reasons they supported the two and a half percent gas tax that went into effect October 1. They mention that is the Missouri is drivable to almost every state. Mayor Boley noted that some those hubs need to be located here in Smithville. He clarified that right now Smithville's industrial area is almost full.

Jack explained that there are only four lots available in First Park for industrial. The thirty acres south of there could be the next phase for that developer. We have plenty of land around that area that would be primed for the Comprehensive Plan for additional industrial growth. Jack also noted that at this time we are almost out of residential lots.

Mayor Boley noted that the Comprehensive Plan calls for 100 acres for industrial and that is the citizens request not just a number we came up, based on the surveys.

Jack noted that he has conversations with developers on a weekly basis for different types of projects. The developers are showing an interest in Smithville.

3. Adjourn

Alderman Hartman moved to adjourn. Alderman Atkins seconded the motion.

Ayes – 6, Noes – 0, motion carries. Mayor Boley declared the Work Session adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Linda Drummond, City Clerk

Damien Boley, Mayor