



Bath County EDA Meeting - October 10, 2023

Chairman Bruce McWilliams opened the scheduled meeting in the Bacova Warehouse at 9:00 A.M.

Members Attending: Joe Wood, Pat Haynes, Bruce McWilliams, Stephen Hiner, Emily Ellis, William Perry,

Members Absent: Jonah Ford

Staff Attending: EDA Attorney Chris Singleton

Guests: Jim Cherney and 6+ Members of the public

Pledge of Allegiance: N/A **Public Comment:** Available after new business discussed.

Agenda:

- Have a work session among the members of the EDA members regarding the proposed Millboro housing project.

Approval of Agenda:

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the September meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report:

Bruce framed this meeting to be an open discussion, with the intent to learn more about the proposed housing development.

Legal Council Report:

- N/A

Treasurer Report:

- All going as normal.

Board/Guest Comments and Discussion:

- The discussion began with Jim Cherney establishing the next steps behind the proposed development
 - Approvals - Abiding by the rules & regulations of the county
 - Housing Study:
 - Bath Faces some risk by funding this study - may determine housing development is not viable.
 - Study can potentially be used for other purposes.
 - Establishing the capacity for utility connections and hook ups will be stated in assessment.
 - New information was mentioned including a 10 year tax abatement, County-funded hookup costs, and an increased budget for the Housing Study. Jim Cherney mentioned these incentives were essential to make the project a reality.
- Pat Haynes, who owns apartments in Bath County, stated he gets multiple rental inquiries a week. Reinforcing the present demand for apartment-style housing.

- Stephen Hiner mentioned, Valley School approached him about filling a teaching position. The lack of teachers in the area can be related to the limited number of housing options for this working class. Stephen noted Bath county has an aging population. Stephen also mentioned County gives the PSA no capital for improvements.
- While discussing the utility hook up costs for the Millboro development, Mike Bender noted the significant cost it would put on the city. While costs have yet to be determined, it is essential to know how much money Bath County will put towards the creation of this housing development.
 - The conversation continued discussing the need for additional business to be in the area, find where people will spend money, where they will be working, etc.. Many of these questions will be answered in Jim Cherney's proposed Housing Study.
- Discussion about the housing development furthered:
 - Prospected land: 35 Acres
 - Zoned: Industrial - Has not been appraised.
 - Expected cost per dwelling unit: \$200,000
 - Expected cost of Housing Study: \$75,000-\$100,000 (originally \$65,000)
- Jack Lindey mentioned there is a Trailer Park "Cedar Creek" that has been installing a modular house community. All of the units have already been reserved. Sounded like there was a lot of community interest.
 - Would be useful to see if this would be something beneficial to the community. Also underlines the benefits of communication among the community. Learning more about the endeavors people in the county are exploring can help the EDA make the most of its funds.
- A general consensus was established that Bath County lacks the housing for someone who just moved to the area and is looking to build their career. The matter at hand is finding the right location for this community with the tools we have at hand.
- The discussion of hiring a part-time worker for the EDA to research grants and other funding opportunities was well received by everyone attending. More research will be provided at the next meeting, however, if done properly, this endeavor will pay for itself.
- The housing discussion will be removed from the agenda until the 01-10-2024 meeting. This is in effort to collect community thought and refine the project scope to better understand the projected burden and reward.

Adjournment and Next Meeting: A motion to adjourn was made at approximately 10:14 pm by Bruce and seconded by William. The vote was unanimous. The next EDA meeting will be at 5:00 PM on November 8th, 2023, or sooner if needed.

Respectfully Submitted,

William Perry, Secretary

x William Perry

Bruce McWilliams, Chairman

x Bruce McWilliams