PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee Meeting was held on November 12, 2013, at 3:32 p.m. with Chairman Dixon presiding. Members present were Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Perza, Mr. Caldwell, and Mrs. Horsey.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Hutchison moved for approval of the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Perza and unanimously carried.

Benchmarks Established for the Economic Development Office

Mr. Bill Neaton, Economic Development Director, reviewed the benchmarks and results for the Economic Development Office, including information regarding the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP), Downtown Dover Business Growth, and City-Wide Economic Development.

In reviewing the strategic objectives for Fiscal Year 2013-2014, Mr. Neaton advised members that the site development master plan for Garrison Tract had been completed. He stated that the Garrison Tract currently consisted of 15 parcels, with two (2) parcels either under construction or completed (SunPark and Calpine Energy), and a third parcel recently sold to Uzin Utz for a manufacturing facility. He stated that as a result of a recent meeting with Secretary Alan Levin, Delaware Economic Development Office, a secured commitment was made to market the Garrison Tract. He assured members that staff continued to assist Calpine and Kvaerner, the contractor, during the construction phase, noting that conference calls were being held every Monday morning to discuss any outstanding issues that needed to be resolved.

Regarding the infrastructure improvements at the Garrison Tract, Mr. Neaton indicated that the selection process for the water tower had been completed and that negotiations continued with Chesapeake Utilities to provide a four (4) inch gas line service to the remaining 13 parcels. He advised members that a proposal from Chesapeake Utilities was received last week, after several weeks of negotiations, and would be forwarded for legal review. Once reviewed, he planned to present it to City Council for approval. Mr. Neaton stated that staff was working with Becker Morgan Group to complete the construction documents and, once completed, bids would be solicited for the infrastructure, which would include the roadway, sewer line, water line, and storm water system. It was hoped that bids would be solicited by the end of the month with a due date in December for presentation to City Council in January. This would allow for the contracts to be awarded in February and construction to begin soon after.

Mr. Neaton stated that, in an effort to promote City-wide economic development initiatives, a commitment had been made by Uzin Utz to purchase Lot 12 at the Garrison Tract and that discussions were currently taking place with two (2) other prospects for parcels at the Garrison Tract, one (1) a very large utility user and the other a smaller utility user but major employer.

Mr. Neaton assured members that he continued to work with Mr. Jim Waddington, Kent County Economic Development Office and Executive Director of the Kent Economic Partnership. With regard to the Kent County AeroPark, he stated that there was a potential tenant for 150,000 square feet of the SunRoc building. He reminded members that an update of the Job Growth Report for the City's 12 largest employers was being provided to City Council on a regular basis.

Mr. Neaton advised members that a breakfast meeting was held with the City's top employers in May 2013 and that an initial meeting of the Plant Managers Association was held in September 2013 with subsequent meetings to be held quarterly. Regarding the objective to partner with the Kent Economic Partnership to develop a strategy for a Food Innovation District in Dover, he stated that this project was continuing to move forward and that the Executive Director from a Food Innovation District in upstate New York would participate in the next meeting via conference call to explain how they established their Food Innovation District and what their successes and challenges were.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison regarding whether Calpine had adequate acreage to move to Phase II under their current "footprint", Mr. Neaton confirmed that Calpine had enough acreage on Lot 7 to progress to Phase II and had been permitted to proceed to this phase. He noted that Eastern Shore Natural Gas also had all permits and that all related studies had been completed.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding whether the Economic Development Office was informed on the Kent County Economic Development Board's activities related to the air cargo project, Mr. Neaton stated that he met with Secretary Levin to discuss the progress this project. He stated that all studies had been completed and that once a joint use agreement is finalized, bids would be solicited and the project would begin to move forward.

Responding to Mrs. Horsey regarding the concept of a Food Innovation District, Mr. Neaton explained that this would be a partnership with Delaware State University and that attempts were being made to establish an area where companies that process food or conduct innovative studies on food use could be located.

Noting that several of the economic benchmarks related to the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP), Mr. Neaton requested that Mr. Lou Colón, Executive Director, present the advance initiatives of the Partnership.

Mr. Colón advised members that he had been serving as the Executive Director for only eight (8) months and distributed an event calendar for the year, including DDP-sponsored events (indicated by bold font) and other partnerships with non-profit organizations ***(Attachment #1)***. He stated that the DDP was in the process of redoing marketing media in an effort to attract new businesses to the downtown area, as well as updating their marketing brochure and website. He noted that these were ongoing projects.

Mr. Colón indicated that 238 Railroad Street was under demolition and the final inspection was scheduled for Friday, November 15, 2013. He stated that since the City paid for the demolition, there would be a lien on the property for the balance of the costs. With reference to 22-24 West Loockerman Street, he stated that the EZ pass lease had been received, was being reviewed by legal counsel, and would be routed for required signatures. Mr. Colón indicated that renovations for EZ Pass were underway, with an expected completion date of February 2014. He advised members that the DDP continued to share site information developed by the listing agent for the Acme site, explaining that a partnership was being developed with an architect and a group performing construction work in Middletown, Delaware.

Referring to vacancies in the downtown area, Mr. Colón stated that several conversations had been held with individuals interested in the Loockerman Exchange building for a possible restaurant and that he continued to have discussions with representatives of Starbucks, as well as individuals interested in bringing a Jazz Club and Yoga Studio to the downtown area.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the EZ Pass Project, Mr. Colón stated that the project was approximately $50,000 under budget and 60% complete. The initial lease agreement was for three (3) years with a renewal for an additional three (3) years.

Mr. Colón indicated that the signage in the parking lots would be replaced with blue and white signs to match other signage and provide uniformity throughout the City.

No further action was taken by the Committee.

UPDATE - CDBG PROGRAM

Members were provided an Update of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, including the status of FY-2013 CDBG Projects - October 2013. In addition, members were provided an update on the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP).

No further action was taken by the Committee.

Future Use of the Dover Park Recreation Center

During their Regular Meeting of October 28, 2013, members of City Council considered the Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee Report of October 14, 2013. After much discussion regarding the Committee's recommendations for the future use of the Dover Park Recreation Center, City Council postponed the demolition of the Center and referred the item back to the Committee to consider programming a new building and its possible configuration, whether it be a splash park, gym, or other proposal, for a recommendation to Council, employing special meetings and experts in the community, within 60 days.

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, advised members that after the last City Council Meeting, she met with Mr. George Krupanski, President and CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, and a "walk through" of the building was done. In addition, she stated that a "walk through" was scheduled with Mr. Darrell Tingle from the Greater Dover Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Krupanski felt that there could be a possibility for partnership; however, he felt that a needs assessment would be necessary to determine if there was a need for programming to be offered at the facility and if the building would meet those needs. She explained that all discussions led back to a needs assessment. She felt that similar discussions could be held with representatives of the YMCA, who had utilized the facility for their camp this past summer and liked the facility; however, they were aware that the building was in need of a lot of work. It was her opinion that any organization, before investing any significant funds into renovating the facility, would require a needs assessment.

At this time, Mrs. Townshend felt that a City-wide needs assessment for recreation should be conducted and should include a lot of public involvement. Considering that the building was beyond its functional life, if a need for indoor recreation at this location was identified, she questioned if the

current building could be utilized. By the time these needs are determined, she noted that the building would have deteriorated further. She advised members that the building was recently broken into and that it was currently serving as a nuisance attraction.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Townshend stated that the YMCA enjoyed using the center as a temporary facility for their summer camp; however, she indicated that the YMCA recently completed a major capital project on State Street and had acquired the Kent Swim Club, which was now considered a major capital project. She stated that the new Executive Director had not visited the Dover Park site and that she would invite her and other members of the Board to visit the Center for a "walk through"; however, she advised members that the YMCA was aware of this issue and had not approached staff with any interest.

Understanding staff's position and recommendations regarding the Center, Mr. Caldwell explained his concerns regarding the public's objections to demolishing the building due to their concerns regarding a specific area of the community. He indicated assurance that the children were of great concern for members but that consideration must be given to the entire City and not just a particular area of the community. He felt that the Center could not be used as a recreation center and, although the numbers dictated that the building should be demolished, if the City should choose to keep the building in operation, he suggested that it be utilized as a learning center or small library. It was his feeling that children were not in need of additional recreation programs but rather more learning activities, such as learning to read, write, and do math, and that volunteers could be used so that there would not be any costs to the City. Although he understood the objections to demolishing the building, he also understood the safety issues and suggested the use of cameras to monitor the activities around the building.

Since this matter had been discussed at length and considering all issues and public testimony, Mr. Perza relayed his support for staff's recommendation for the demolition of the building. It was his opinion that the building represented the "wants" of the community rather than the "needs." He explained that the City was in the process of determining how to best spend the resources available to develop the park systems City-wide. He indicated that investing in the White Oak Park area would be a good idea, reflecting the needs of the community and helping the youth; however, his concern was that the expenditures required to renovate the building ($110,000) would not be the best use of City funds. He supported the $30,000 expense to demolish the building and suggested that the City earmark the $80,000 that would have otherwise been spent to repair the building, to be committed to Dover Park and addressing the needs of the community. He noted that there had been various ideas, such as a splash park, soccer fields, etc.

Concurring with Mr. Perza, Mrs. Horsey relayed support for investing in Dover Park, but not necessarily the building. She suggested that staff conduct a survey of those that had attended the last Committee meeting and relayed objections to the demolition of the building to determine if they would use the building versus just wanting it to be kept. She indicated that demolition of the building would go against her support for preservation; however, she relayed support for staff's original recommendation for the demolition of the building.

Mrs. Townshend reminded members that there were several other ideas for improvements at Dover Park, such as providing electricity at the pavilions, installing public restrooms, etc. In addition, she felt that it would be important to develop a strong vegetative management plan that would promote visibility in order to address safety issues and concerns. She stated that limiting the number of concealed areas in the park would allow users of the park to feel safer.

Mr. Dixon suggested that the City establish a task force to consist of volunteers from the community and allow them to develop a recommendation for Dover Park.

Mr. Perza moved to recommend acceptance of staff's recommendation to demolish the Dover Park Recreation Center and that the City Manager be authorized to earmark the balance of the construction/demolition project up to $80,000 for future capital improvements, in the City's future budgets, to Dover Park after a needs assessment is accomplished. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hutchison and unanimously carried.

For clarification, Mr. Perza stated that since the costs for the minimal renovations to the building were estimated at $110,000 and demolition would cost approximately $30,000, there would be a balance of $80,000 which would be committed to Dover Park once it is determined how that money would be best spent. He stated that this expenditure would not have to be done in any specific fiscal year; however, these funds would be reserved and earmarked to improve Dover Park once the needs were determined.

Mr. Dixon encouraged staff to include the community in determining the needs.

Mr. Hutchison moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Perza and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Wallace R. Dixon
Chairman

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Attachment
Attachment #1 - Activity/Event Schedule - DDP

July' 14 Activity/Event Schedule		
Activity/Event	**Date/Time**	**Location**
*Dover 4th of July http://www.dover4thofjuly.com/	Thursday, July 4th 1PM – 9PM	Legislative Mall
First Friday in July FIDO FRIENDLY http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/	**Friday, July 5th 5PM – 8PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
First Friday in August BEACH PARTY **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, August 2nd 5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
African Urban Music Festival	**Sunday August 25**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
First Friday in September Friends of Folk "Pick-In" **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Sept. 6 5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*Fall into Jazz http://www.schwartzcenter.com/	Friday, Sept. 6 7PM	Schwartz Center
*Amish Country Bike Tour http://www.visitdover.com/	Saturday, Sept. 7th 7AM – 5PM	Legislative Mall
Downtown Dover Merchant's Second Saturday Sidewalk Sale **Delaware Volunteer Firefighters Assn. Parade** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Saturday, Sept. 14th 9AM – 2PM** **1 PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor** **State Street**
*NASCAR Race Weekend	Sat., Sept 28th – Sun. 29th 7AM 7PM	Dover Downs
*Center for Mental Wellness Suicide Prevention Walk http://www.visitdover.com/	Sat., Sept 28th 11AM – 1PM	Downtown Dover Corridor
First Friday in October Harvest Fest **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Oct. 4th 5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*Wesley College Homecoming Parade http://www.wesley.edu/	Saturday, Oct. 5th 10AM – 12PM	Downtown Dover Corridor

*Delaware State Homecoming Parade http://www.desu.edu/homecoming	Saturday, Oct. 12th 10AM – 12PM	Downtown Dover Corridor
Downtown Dover Merchant's Second Saturday Sidewalk Sale http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/	**Saturday, Oct. 12th 9AM – 2PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*Dover High School Homecoming Parade http://www.doverhigh.capital.k12.de.us/	Friday, Oct. 25th 5PM – 7PM	Downtown Dover Corridor
Safe, Spooky Halloween Parade http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/	**Saturday, Oct. 26th 11AM – 1PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*Dover Art League Push for the Arts	**Saturday, Oct. 26**	Downtown Dover Corridor
First Friday in November **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Nov. 1st 5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*18th Century Market Faire 1st State Heritage Park	Saturday, Nov. 2	Location???
WINTER WONDERLAND	**Wednesday, 11/27 to 1/13/14**	**Loockerman Way**
Shop Small Business Saturday Holiday Basket Raffle	Saturday, Nov. 30	Downtown Dover Corridor
2013 CAPITAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Wednesday, Dec. 4th 6PM – 7:30PM**	**Loockerman Way**
First Friday in December **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Dec. 6th 5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
*Artful Santa	Friday, Dec. 6 5PM – 7PM	Dover Art League
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS PARADE **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Saturday, Dec. 7th 11AM – 4PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**

Fraturday in January **Dover Capitol School** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Jan. 3rd** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
Frigid Fraturday in February Plunge **PolyTech- Go Red** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, Feb. 7th** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
Fraturday in March **Caesar Rodney School** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, March 7th** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
St. Patrick's Day Parade **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Saturday, March 15, 2014** **Noon to 3 PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
First Friday in April **Communities in School, April Fools &** **National Humor Month** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, April 4th** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
Easter	**Sunday April 20**	
First Friday in May **National Military Appreciation Month** **ROTC, DSU Drumline, Aero** **5 K Walk\Run Series** **1 of 3** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, May 2nd** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**
Dover Days **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	Friday, May 2nd to Sunday May 4th All Day See Program Schedule	Legislative Mall
First Friday in June **5 K Walk\Run Series** **2 of 3** **http://www.downtowndoverpartnership.com/**	**Friday, June 6** **5PM – 7PM**	**Downtown Dover Corridor**