



September 10, 2024

## Management Team Updates

### ***Community Development – Zach Higgins, Community Development Director***

- Gesin Lot RFP – Staff has met with the DOLA Main Street Program to discuss upcoming projects. DOLA Main Street has provided the Town with ten (10) hours of professional RFP development services with one of their consultants to establish an RFP for the Gesin Lot. Staff has coordinated with the Historic Advisory Board, Main Street Board, and Board of Trustees to create a draft RFP. The RFP has been distributed on BidNet and received good feedback thus far.
- Staff is working with Elizabeth Parks and Recreation District and Elizabeth School District on a joint Planning and Capacity Grant for a Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. Town Staff is working with the Elizabeth School District and Elizabeth Parks and Recreation District to find a consultant so that the official Master Planning process can begin in September. RFP has closed on BidNET.
- Main Street Monument Sign. DHM has provided the Town with a 60% design set fulfilling their contract obligation. The Town Staff is working on an RFP to finish the design and construct the archway.
- Town of Elizabeth Façade Improvement Grant. The BOT has approved the resolution creating the program and has funded the project at \$40,000 for the first year. All committee members for 2024 have been appointed. Barb McGinn (BOT), Dennis Rodriguez (HAB), and Michael Hussey (MSBOD). Three (3) projects were presented to the HAB in anticipation of full applications. Evaluation of the projects has completed and award notices have been distributed in August.
- Community Development Staff has chosen two (2) Main Street Interns from Elizabeth High School to work with the Town for the 2024 summer and 2024/2025 school year.
- The HAB has started their Oral History program. Bob Rasmussen is leading this effort and is making great progress.
- The HAB has obtained 15 title reports from historic properties in Town and is working on creating full reports which can be shared with property owners and used to further their preservation efforts.
- Main Street Streetscape construction contract was approved on 08/13/2024 to low bidder Triple M Construction. Construction is anticipated to begin mid-September 2024.
- CDOT has processed the deeds for remnant parcels of land to the Town adjacent to the CR-13 realignment. Staff will now work to annex and zone said parcels.
- The Town's Volunteer program has been launched and is live on the Town's website and volunteersignup.com.
- The Town has received confirmation of award from CDOT's Revitalizing Main Street Grant for the Main Street Streetscape Project of \$250,000.00.
- The Town has received confirmation of award from DOLA's EIAF Tier II Grant for the Main Street Streetscape Project of \$1,000,000.00.

- The Neighborhood Block Parties have all been completed. An estimated 15-20% of the Town’s population attended these events and gave generally positive feedback about the current direction of the Town.
- The Planning Commission had a *Strong Towns* workshop on 08/20/2024 and will continue the discussion at their 09/03/2024 workshop. More information can be found on the Town’s website under Community Development and Planning Commission.
  - Key Takeaways include:
    - Cities/Towns, like businesses must run a profit to effectively serve the community
    - It is hard to break even on infrastructure projects (streets, sidewalks, water, sewer, etc) unless the adjacent properties contribute enough/significantly in property and/or sales tax (general rule of thumb is 30:1 private to public investment)(\$1million in public improvements should generate \$30million in private investment)
    - Cash infusions from large development projects create the illusion of solvency but generally don’t cover long term maintenance of additional infrastructure (infinite timeframe/life of a Town)
    - Suburban development pattern tends to be a larger scale with less productivity when compared to pre-WWII development pattern
    - Towns, Cities, human settlements have developed in similar ways over thousands of years until post WWII suburban expansion
    - The Federal and some State approaches to development, in particular in response to the Great Depression, were top down and provided fuel for accelerated growth (New Deal)
    - The pre WWII development pattern Town/City were complex organisms that could adapt with changing variables vs the suburban development pattern is largely a complicated system which is less adaptable to different inputs (resilient vs fragile)(rainforest vs monocrop)
    - Incremental development patterns or “little bets” create flexibility in the system versus large scale developments that are completed to a finished state all at once. (Historic Main Streets versus new outdoor shopping malls on the outskirts of a Town/City)
    - Incremental development allows for feedback and adaptation during the maturation and thickening up of the community
- The Planning Commission had a second *Strong Towns* workshop on 09/03/2024 and will continue the discussion at their 09/17/2024 workshop. More information can be found on the Town’s website under Community Development and Planning Commission.
  - Key Takeaways include:
    - Financial Solvency is ESSENTIAL for long-term prosperity
    - Land must NOT be squandered (non-renewable resource)
    - Job creation and economic growth are the results of a healthy local economy, not substitutes for one
    - Local government is the highest level of collaboration (some of the biggest impacts can be made at local level, not state or national for day-to-day life in your Town)

- Incremental investments or “little bets” are ideal way to see sustainable development occur (small local investments versus top-down large scale investment projects)
- Resiliency is key to Strong Towns over efficiency (may be more cost effective to build extra mile of infrastructure because of economies of scale but you ultimately have to pay to maintain that added infrastructure before you need it) Smaller development scale projects and blocks/neighborhoods with many owners and uses can withstand economic impacts better than large scale projects with single or fewer owners and uses
- Adaptability is key to complex system survival (Towns with the ability to adapt to changing wants and needs over time are more resilient than those that are unable to change with varying conditions) Future and current generations may want or need different working, shopping, or living environments than in 1900, 1950, or 2000. Are we allowing for adaptability?