

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
ST. CHARLES CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION
September 6, 2017**

Members Present: Chair English, Vice Chair Schuetz, Potts, Hauser and Nelson

Members Absent: Kane, Shimkus

City Staff Present: Matthew O'Rourke – Economic Development Division Manager

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was convened by Chair English at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Vice Chair Schuetz and seconded by Ms. Potts to approve the September 6, 2017 Corridor Improvement Commission Meeting Agenda with one amendment made to remove Discussion Item 4 A - Potential CIC Grant – 423 S. Second Street.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Kane, Shimkus
Motion Carried.

3. Approval of July 5, 2017 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Potts and seconded by Vice Chair Schuetz to approve the July 5, 2017 Corridor Improvement Commission Meeting Minutes.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Kane, Shimkus

Motion Carried.

4. Discussion Item

A. Curbie Award Presentation

Mr. O'Rourke provided an update on the Curbie Award for Yurs Funeral Home. The presentation will be on one of the two City Council Agendas in October. He stated he would like a photo of the plants along with their business sign if possible and Ms. Potts agreed to take a few photographs. Chairman English encouraged everyone to attend the presentation if at all possible. Mr. O'Rourke said the meeting would be the first or third Monday in October.

B. Program Discussion and Work Planning

Mr. O'Rourke said he had a discussion about this program with his supervisor, Rita Tungare. They discussed the history of the program, what is working well and also if they would like to propose any amendments. Back in 2013, a change was made to allow a zoning ordinance situation to become part of the grants that are awarded. The program has always evolved as the needs of the community have evolved and many people, who would have taken advantage of this program, have already done so. Mr. O'Rourke presented an aerial photo displaying City owned properties. During a year, when grant requests are light, he suggested that they amend the program to fix or update these properties. Many of the areas highlighted are in the right-of-way and in front of City owned parking lots. One area in need of attention is the walk-way between Shakou and the dentist office next door – this leads to one of the City owned lots. Ms. Potts stated that she really likes the idea of having a sign and some lighting along a walkway area. In addition, she asked how they feel about paint on the walls. Mr. O'Rourke said that has always been a little touchier – it would be best to present these items within this project to Council as being long term, visible improvements that will last awhile. The other side of the building could also be considered – maybe under a partnering agreement or Shakou could come in for a landscape improvement grant. Other areas to consider are the East and West Gateways as well as the median strips along some of the main corridors in town.

Vice Chair Schuetz said he liked the idea as it represented areas all over town. Mr. O'Rourke stated that what he was proposing would not include one property owner – it would work similar to when they worked on the Thompson Project – obtaining contractors for various tasks and it may involve proposals being submitted to do some of the work. Vice Chair Schuetz asked if there would be a conflict of interest financially and Mr. O'Rourke said he has not run this past the powers that be and Council yet - they would also have to check with Public Works too. Vice Chair Schuetz said he really liked what was done on Rt. 31 prior to America in Bloom visiting St.Charles. Mr. O'Rourke said this could be similar to that. This is a way that we can affect some change and not have to wait on a property owner. Members of the Commission felt that the use of large pots may not be in their best interest as they need repotting each year and would require constant watering and maintenance.

Ms. Potts stated that in the past, they tried to do something that was on City property and it was said that they could not put their money into City property. The reason for this was because it was City money being used for the City's purpose and the project had to be stopped. In 2013, before the amendment, the Ordinance was very specific - it had to be on private owned property - that was one of the items that was amended to extend into the right-of-way, however, said Mr. O'Rourke, he would look into it. In addition, he would present this to Council at some point, before going to the public forum, to see if they are OK with it. If a program is written, and the Council approves that program, authorization would be in hand to move forward. Chair English added that they could have it approved as part of their Ordinance.

Another area to consider sprucing up is a small triangular section of grass by Jalapeno Grille on Route 31.

Ms. Potts said they had discussed a section right around there and had considered putting some grasses in that area. Mr. O'Rourke said that was on their parking lot - this is a different section that is pretty small and may be a good area for a "Welcome to Downtown" sign. Vice Chair Schuetz said that when looking at the aerial, the area may be larger than what they realize – it could be 10 or 20 feet when comparing it to the parking spots.

Ms. Potts said there are two large spaces right along the west side of the river where the River Corridor Foundation has put in prairie grasses as part of their restoration project. Mr. O'Rourke said he would be cautious with that – he would not want to cross into their area. Ms. Potts suggested having a mass of grasses and have something along the front, which would be a nice way to tie it in.

Mr. O'Rourke said he would like to continue giving the priority to the business owners until January or February and then if there is no one, pursue one of these areas. Chair English said he likes this idea and even though efforts have been made in the past, he would still like to have interest from the car dealerships. One thing they have not done since the Ordinance was changed, is resurface their parking lots, stated Mr. O'Rourke. When one of the dealerships is ready to do that, the opportunity would present itself to address additional landscape improvements – just like Bosa Donuts and Jersey Mike's. Dealerships do not want anything obstructing the view of automobiles that they have on display.

Chair English is also in favor of Mr. O'Rourke's idea. We should come up with another option in case that this does not get approved, said Vice Chair Schuetz. Mr. O'Rourke said that he will discuss this internally to get feedback and if this is something to present to the Council. Ms. Potts stated that this may have been discussed in Geneva too as many of the areas are tended by non-profit organizations or families. The Commission would still have the medians on East Main and Kirk Road that they could work on, said Chair English.

As a second or third option Vice Chair Schuetz suggested resurrecting the tree program. This program was conducted during the fall planting season and trees would be planted in front of different commercial buildings after permission was received from the business or property owner. Mr. O'Rourke said if there would be interest in the tree program that they should be able to go forward and do it.

During the next month, he asked members to provide other examples of public businesses and areas in town for landscape improvements. If they are comfortable speaking with a business, they should feel free to do so. These examples would be in addition to what is already displayed on the map he provided during the meeting.

Mr. O'Rourke would also like to amend the verbiage regarding landscape improvement eligibility and replace it with a map to clearly demonstrate which properties are eligible to participate in the program.

Ms. Nelson said everything is looking pretty good with regards to the beautification in the downtown. Mr. O'Rourke stated that the City's pursuit of America in Bloom ties in with that as well as what they are currently discussing at this meeting. Ms. Nelson asked if there may be a

future opportunity at the former Valley Shopping Center. Mr. O'Rourke said this Commission had assisted with that property already.

In terms of a timeline and program amendment – if everyone is OK with it - we would take this through the process this fall and wrap it up by the end of the year. More than likely, any sort of budget item would wait until the next fiscal year, said Mr. O'Rourke. At this time, there is \$19,050 in the budget and if this money is not committed by May 1, 2018, it will be gone. The potential CIC Grant that was going to be discussed at this meeting is still a viable option for a future award. Chair English asked if this new program is approved by this winter, can they use this money for this program and Mr. O'Rourke replied that he would have to verify that since the money was not budgeted for this purpose.

Ms. Potts asked if a tri-fold information piece that was used some years ago, was still available. The tri-fold explained what the Corridor Improvement Commission was about and how the grants were awarded. Mr. O'Rourke said he would check on that and in the meantime, if they talk with anyone who is interested, just have them call his office.

5. Additional Business from Corridor Commission Members, Public or Staff

Ms. Potts asked if the Mendel location on West Main would be a possible candidate and Mr. O'Rourke said yes they would.

6. Announcements

There were none.

7. Up Coming Meeting Dates

A. Next Corridor Improvement Commission Meeting is October 4, 2017

A motion was made by Ms. Hauser and seconded by Ms. Nelson to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: Unanimous; Nays: None; Members Absent: Kane, Shimkus