Committee Members:
Charles Daily
Bill Poletti
Don Barkley
Robert Triplett
Charles Kassly
Michael Hagen
Samantha Carter
Richard Avdoian
Van Johnson

CITY OF FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS
BUSINESS ALLIANCE COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019 – 1:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM A
FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS CITY HALL
10025 BUNKUM ROAD

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

3. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 20, 2018 MINUTES

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR’S REPORT
   a. Revised Work Schedule for Economic Development Strategy
   b. Feature – Fairview Heights to help older people start businesses [Belleville News-Democrat]
   c. Feature – Fairview Heights continues work on shopping areas big and small [Illinois Business Journal]
   d. Feature – Fairview Heights makes busy intersection safer [Illinois Business Journal]

5. MONTHLY REVENUE REPORTS
   a. 1% MUNICIPAL

6. NEXT MEETING – FEBRUARY 19, 2019

7. ADJOURN
Public Participation
None

Approval of Minutes
Richard Avdoian made a motion to approve the September 18, 2018 and October 16, 2018 minutes. Seconded by Don Barkley. Motion passed on voice vote.

Economic Development Director’s Report
Director Ellis presented his report. The Commission discussed the following:

- Interviews for Economic Development Strategy
- Cloud 9 Hospitality, LLC purchasing the Fountains Center
- Sears will remain at St. Clair Square, 40 more are closing
- Have prospects for Toys R Us and Babies R Us properties
- Fairfield Hotel was sold to Wingate by Windham St. Louis, will close by December 5th
- Directors working together with The Fource Group to prepare applications to St. Louis Business Journal for Building St. Louis Awards 2019 for The Rec and the Market Place Streetscape
- Metro East Incubator – received 60 responses
- Reviewing sales tax receipts from local retailers in comparison to average sales per store nationwide, using top 100 retailers from National Retail Federation and 50 restaurants from QSR Magazine
- Metro East Franchise Fair was held on October 30th, the Director is planning another one for 2019
- Commission reviewed the two articles, US Christmas Sales Predicted to Surpass $1 Trillion and Who are your Entrepreneurs

Commission also discussed supporting small businesses and the demolition of Dandy Inn.
Monthly Revenue Reports
Director Ellis presented the sales tax report. The City is up 13.4%, or $63,756.39 and year to date is up 5.45%, or $17,312.85.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

Adjournment 2:38 p.m.

Submitted By:

__________________________________________
Recorder
TO: Elected Officials
FROM: Paul A. Ellis, Director of Economic Development
DATE: January 11, 2019
SUBJECT: Economic Dev. Dept. - Director’s Report

1. Work has begun on the Economic Development Strategy with the i5 Group partnering with Colliers International, CED-Solutions and the Lochmueller Group; an updated work schedule is attached.

2. The Sears store in St. Clair Square—one of the largest sales tax generators for the City—will close in March regardless of the disposition of other Sears Holdings nationwide; the Director has been working with CBL & Associates Properties and an as yet unnamed potential tenant to redevelop the vacant building (the ground is leased from CBL) once it becomes available.

3. Properties in Fairview Heights owned by the bankrupt Toys ‘R’ Us corporation are under contract, as is the office tower owned by US Bank, and all three sites are likely to have retail users; in all, there is currently almost 400,000 SF of retail or potential retail space under transition in Fairview Heights:
   a. ALDI (Former HH Gregg) – 5905 N. Illinois St. 22,858 SF
   b. Babies ‘R’ Us – 114 Commerce Ln. 22,510 SF
   c. Home Décor Outlet (former) – 104 Commerce Ln. 22,000 SF
   d. Sears – 6600 N. Illinois St. 158,625 SF
   e. Shoe Carnival – 4 Plaza Dr. 16,000 SF
   f. Toys “R” Us – 120 Commerce Ln. 39,530 SF
   g. Urban Air Adventure Park – 55 Ludwig Dr. 31,352 SF
   h. US Bank – 6701 N. Illinois St. 31,400 SF
   i. Vatterot College – 110 Commerce Ln. 44,513 SF

4. The Director and the Director of the Land Use & Development met with the owner and brokers for the 66,000 SF building which formerly housed Vatterot College and Home Décor Outlet; they are working with the City to market that building to potential new tenants.

5. Applicant packets for the Hotel/Motel Tax Grant Funding Program are now available from City Hall as well as online; applications are due by Tuesday, February 15.

6. Hotel Equities, on behalf of Cloud 9 Hospitality, LLC has taken over day-to-day management of the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel and the adjoining conference center.

7. During the first quarter of 2019, the Director and staff will be migrating data to new platforms for better tracking of potential retail leads, more robust access to
real estate information and, ultimately, greater transparency for marketing efforts.

8. Efforts to create a Metro East Business Incubator are moving forward with a steering group seeking this month to assemble a broad range of public and private funding sources.

9. The Director will be attending ICSC’s Heartland States Idea Exchange in Kansas City on January 30-31; the City has participated in this trade show for several years and it typically generates good retail leads.

Paul A. Ellis
Director of Economic Development

Attachments:

a. Revised Work Schedule for Economic Development Strategy
b. Feature – Fairview Heights to help older people start businesses [Belleville News-Democrat]
c. Feature – Fairview Heights continues work on shopping areas big and small [Illinois Business Journal]
d. Feature – Fairview Heights makes busy intersection safer [Illinois Business Journal]
Fairview Heights Economic Development Strategy Schedule

*Schedule subject to change.*

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January 8, 2019
Think you’re too old to become an entrepreneur? Not in Fairview Heights.

BY TERI MADDOX

DECEMBER 31, 2018 09:07 AM, UPDATED DECEMBER 31, 2018 11:38 AM

JUDY MARIE KOCINSKI
CANINE TO 5 PET SERVICES

Judy Marie Kocinski, owner of Canine to 5 Pet Services, talks about becoming an entrepreneur in her 60s and operating a business that provides pet-sitting, dog-walking, poop-scooping, grooming and transportation in the St. Louis area.
By Teri Maddox
Perhaps it was fate that Judy Marie Kocinski fell down a set of stairs and broke her leg in 2014. The sales manager for a construction company took four months off, giving her time to heal and do some “soul-searching.” At 63, she wasn’t ready to retire, but she was tired of working for other people.

“In my head, I’ve always been an entrepreneur,” said Kocinski, now 67, of Belleville. “I was always thinking outside the box in how to market things and bring in more business. I thought, ‘If I can do that for other people, I should be able to do it for myself.’”

The following year, Kocinski started her own business, Judy’s Hands for Helping, which she renamed Canine to 5 Pet Services after buying another company in St. Louis. She and her daughter, Jamie Kocinski, of Ballwin, Missouri, offer pet-sitting, dog-walking, feeding, transportation, poop-scooping and grooming on both sides of the river.

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“I love it,” said “Granny Judy” Kocinski, who has 10 employees, two children and six grandchildren. “I’ve always been an animal lover, and to be able to take care of all these animals, it’s wonderful.”

Kocinski is one of a growing number of Americans who are working past traditional retirement age and, in some cases, starting their own businesses later in life.

The trend isn’t lost on Paul Ellis, economic development director for the city of Fairview Heights. He’s making it a priority to create opportunities for “encore entrepreneurs” in the community.

“We need to adjust to the fact that there are a lot of aging workers,” Ellis said. “They have a lot of wisdom and experience that they can bring together, but we haven’t done much to tap that resource.”

Changing face of entrepreneurship

Statistics on new businesses are compiled each year by the Kauffman Foundation, a Kansas City-based non-profit that promotes entrepreneurship through research, grants and education.

Its annual Kauffman Index of Startup Activity reported in 2017 that activity had declined among young people, ages 20 to 34.

“On the other hand, older adults are a growing segment of the U.S. entrepreneurial population,” according to the report. “Individuals ages 55 to 64 have gone from making up 14.8 percent of new entrepreneurs in 1996 to 25.5 percent of all new entrepreneurs in 2016.”

In August, Ellis led a workshop called “Encore Entrepreneur Roundtable” for local residents over 50. About 30 people showed up to learn about resources, ask questions and make suggestions.
In October, Ellis gave a presentation on the topic at the International Economic Development Council Conference in Atlanta. He shared recommendations from a Center for an Urban Future report called “Starting Later: Realizing the Promise of Older Entrepreneurs in New York City.”

“A growing number of New Yorkers over 50 are quietly but purposefully turning to entrepreneurship, boosting the city’s economy and helping scores of older New Yorkers become more financially secure,” it states.

Some of the recommendations Ellis hopes to implement locally include:

- Encouraging older adults to consider entrepreneurship.
- Holding start-up competitions for encore entrepreneurs.
- Launching a public small-business incubator.
- Increasing business-focused tech training for older adults.
- Developing mentoring opportunities, including intergenerational.
- Promoting networking opportunities in the community.
- Supporting and scaling up home-based businesses.
- Compiling better data on older entrepreneurs.
- Helping people transition from workplace to self-employment.
- Creating a succession-planning system for existing businesses.

**Small-business incubator in the works**

For months, Ellis has been working with the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, which has a Fairview Heights office, to launch an entrepreneurial incubator that focuses on women, other minorities and older adults who want to start businesses.

Officials have developed goals, identified possible funding sources and recruited partners in the community. They expect the incubator to be up and running by next spring.

“There are people out there who would like to own their own business, but they don’t have a business plan,” Urban League Regional Vice president of Workforce Development and Strategy Michael K. Holmes said in August.

“They don’t have financing. They don’t even have an office. Maybe they have a business in their home, but they’d like to get out in the community.”

The incubator could help with everything from conceptual planning and financing to comparing health-care plans and finding affordable spaces to lease.

Kathy Wagner, 56, of Fairview Heights, attended Ellis’s workshop in August. She recently founded a non-profit organization after working more than 20 years as a police officer, detective, investigator and, most recently, diversity outreach coordinator for the Court Appointed Special Advocates program.

“When you’re 50-something years old, you can’t chase people like you used to,” she said. “It’s time to sit down.”
Wagner’s organization is called the Rosie Kerr Foundation. She helps caregivers of Alzheimer’s and other terminally ill patients, drawing on her experiences caring for her mother, Rosie Kerr, who died in 2015.

Wagner leads support groups at Faith Family Church in Shiloh and Mount Zion Mission East in East St. Louis. She works out of her home, but hopes to move into an office and hire other staff someday.

“I’m not looking to become a billionaire,” she said. “I’m looking to start a business that helps people.”

Teri Maddox has been a reporter for 34 years, joining the Belleville News-Democrat in 1990. She also teaches journalism at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park. She holds degrees from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Kathy Wagner, left, poses with her mother, Rosie Kerr, who died in 2015 of complications from Alzheimer’s. Wagner recently formed an organization to help caregivers.
Teri Maddox
Fairview Heights continues work on shopping areas big and small

By DENNIS GRUBAUGH

The first part of a major streetscape, and other improvements, have Fairview Heights driving into the new year in fine fashion. State and local leaders gathered in November to mark the completion of the Phase I of Fairview Heights’ new cityscape project.

The nearly $5 million project is designed to create a more distinctive streetscape to Market Place and Commerce Lane, the two perpendicular common roads serving shopping centers on the east side of Illinois 159, across from St. Clair Square.

The city added curb, gutter and sidewalks as well as median treatments, street trees, plantings, additional lighting, signage and entry wall treatments.

Construction on Phase I made improvements along Market Place from Illinois Route 159 to the rear of parcels for Petco and DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse.

The second phase will construct a roundabout at the intersection of Market Place and Commerce Lane and is set to begin in 2019. Subsequent phases of this project will complete improvements between the roundabout and the end of Phase I, as well as north and south along Commerce Lane.

Paul Ellis, economic development director of Fairview Heights, said the city has focused much attention on its smaller shopping complexes.

One is Fairview Heights Plaza, the center on the north side of Interstate 64 where Gordman’s and Red Lobster are located.

“To say it was on life support this time last year would be generous,” Ellis said. “The city brought in the Urban Land Institute, talked to property owners, and made some recommendations. From a variety of factors, it’s really turned around. The restaurants are now filled. We’ve seen some revitalization of properties.”

Among other things there, the old Houlihan’s became TBD Social. And the former Sports Authority space has been leased to Urban Air Adventure Park, an anchor that will be opening in May.

“That center has been there for four years without an anchor. It’s still in receivership, but I predict it will go back o auction and be bought by someone, and we’ll see even more improvements after that,” Ellis said.

He also feels good about initial steps taken in the Lincoln Trail District where the city is now working with property owners to build momentum. He cited improvements to McKay NAPA Auto Parts, Perfect Finish Inc., a car detailing business, and the Meineke store, among others.

The city is also looking forward in 2019 to the spring opening of the new Fairview Heights Recreation Complex on Bunkum Road.

“It’s a game changer in our town for a lot of reasons, especially if you just look at the impression it’s making by seeing it along I-64.”

Ellis is also looking ahead to the opening of an Aldi’s store in the Lincoln Place shopping area and an H&M anchor store in St. Clair Square.
Fairview Heights makes busy intersection safer

By DENNIS GRUBAUGH

For years, drivers turning into the shopping centers across Illinois Route 159 from St. Clair Square in Fairview Heights played bumper cars as they tried to meander across several lanes of traffic to get to their destination.

Now, the city has reduced the operator error factor from the motorists’ options. Several hundred feet of new, decorative median barrier prevent drivers from shifting lanes quite so easily. The result is being enjoyed by police and businesses alike, who were tired of the number of crashes.

“We've rebuilt the western portion of the intersection of Market Place (road) and Illinois Route 159, which is the busiest surface intersection in Illinois south of Interstate 80,” said Paul Ellis, the city’s director of economic development.

The median barrier is a natural extension of a $5 million, multiple-phase streetscape program involving Market Place and Commerce Lane, the two perpendicular common roads serving shopping centers on the east side of Illinois 159, across from the mall. The various destinations include places like Taco Bell and Petco on one side of Market Place and businesses like DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse and Bed Bath & Beyond on the opposite side of Market Place.

The city added curb, gutter and sidewalks as well as median treatments, street trees, plantings, additional lighting, signage and entry wall treatments.

Construction on Phase I made improvements along Market Place from Illinois Route 159 west to the rear of parcels for Petco and DSW.

The second phase will construct a roundabout at the intersection of Market Place and Commerce Lane and is set to begin in 2019.

Subsequent phases of this project will complete improvements between the roundabout and the end of Phase I, as well as north and south along Commerce Lane.

The previous problem basically came down to this: Drivers coming off Interstate 64, heading south on Illinois Route 159, would turn right (or west) on Market Place. Almost immediately some of them wanted to turn left, across four lanes of traffic.

“The way the road was configured there was a possibility to make a left turn but it was pretty dangerous. There were multiple crashes — 47 crashes in that corridor in a five-year period,” Ellis said. “That’s incredibly high for that short of a stretch where people can’t go very fast.”

The new barriers take away the possibility of left turns. In addition, at the end of the stretch is now a controlled intersection — a four-way stop — that was not there before. The four-way is located on Market Place between the DSW and Petco stores.

Many of the turning drivers were heading to the Taco Bell restaurant, which has told the city it is glad to see the safety improvements, Ellis said.

“Now, drivers will have to go about another 600 to 700 feet before they can turn, but they can see where they want to go the whole time,” he said.
The city’s Public Works Department addressed the issue with design help from Noel Fehr, of Planning Design Studio in St. Louis. The state Department of Transportation and the public also had input.

The city began the project in the spring and wrapped it up in November.

Ellis was recently in a Missouri suburb where a similar issue exists at another large shopping development.

“They have an almost identical section of road to what we have. I’ve been out there a couple of times before and there are always three cop cars in the intersection. I finally figured out they have cop cars there every day to prevent people from making a left turn and causing an accident,” Ellis said.

Fairview Heights was proactive on the issue, he said.

“Instead of letting it become more of a traffic nightmare, we sought and received state and federal grants that have enabled us to reduce the congestion, the pollution, eliminated a whole lot of the accident potential plus the area benefited from a really nice aesthetic improvement.”

State Rep Katie Stuart, D-Edwardsville, commented on the issue when the city cut a ribbon marketing the new streetscape.

“With the increase in the amount of people shopping during the busy holiday season, it is important that we ensure they have a safe and functional way to get where they need to go,” said Stuart. “When we are able to combine local, state, and federal resources to get road projects done, it improves the lives of residents in the community by giving them an easier path to get to work or take advantage of the many restaurants and retail stores the area offers.”

In 2013, the city of Fairview Heights adopted a Complete Streets policy to ensure that the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders are considered along with those of motorists in planning transportation corridors. This project is an example of the Complete Streets approach.

Complete streets is a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of whether they travel on foot, on a bicycle, via transit or in a private car.