

June 23, 2012 – Board of Aldermen Retreat at Stone House in Mebane, NC.

Notes from the meeting

- Jobs- the Board would like to cultivate a positive environment for businesses that have more professional career ladder oriented positions with opportunities for growth in salaries.
- Are there interesting companies in Carrboro that we are not aware of?
- Consider holding an event at the Century Center for home based business or those that are under the radar – provide a networking opportunity – group questioned what the benefit would be to the Town to host and put resources into providing a forum for these folks.
 - Locally grown tech business – “the Unconference”
 - Knowledge about the local “geek economy” will be a tool to other businesses – ***Develop the Cluster***
- Cultivate the “Second Wave” by providing support and encouragement.
- Second Wave includes businesses and owners – there was a discussion that any recruitment or encouragement would be geared toward locally owned and operated business opportunities.
- Think Local First Campaign engage the community as citizens and as consumers.
 - ✚ An action item is to create local va-cation or even staycation packages to let folks know what they can do in a day or two in Carrboro.
- Messaging/branding
 - ✚ Mayor’s idea **The Left of the Tracks!**
- Are we targeting tourist or a specific business sector? – there was a discussion where the board agreed there is an overall identify the Town needs to develop as a umbrella campaign and have other specific more focused campaigns for various sectors, business, arts, etc. From the notes – All of this / these are building blocks – part of the strategy.
- Development is not just in the Downtown.
- The Board discussed opportunities to seek out locations outside the downtown – focused in the northern area - that could be rezoned and targeted for commercial development – at an appropriate neighborhood scale – without such dramatic impacts to surrounding neighbors.
 - ✚ East 54 or Meadowmont – are they thriving? Do these models work?
 - ✚ What tools do we have to incentivize local business development?
 - ✚ Guiding document for potential changes in zoning
 - Don’t have to start with changing zoning on large parcels
 - Prime the pump- identify small parcel and what we would like on it
 - Consider a Co-op style space
 - Focus development near/at places where there is public transportation

ACTION ITEMS

- Focus Areas for Economic Development Support
 - Entertainment venues
 - Local Living Economy Network – Follow BALLE Guidelines for Starting a Local First Campaign
 - Commercial Development in Non-Downtown Areas
 - Second Wave
 - Arts
- Entertainment Venues – high value to the Town’s identify and character – support them!
 - Continue to work with the visitors bureau
 - Follow through on the various next steps for implementing the hotel tax
 - Development of a Carrboro Arts and Entertainment Mobile Application
 - Mobile Application with details on locally owned and locally made goods in goods
 - Maybe develop a certification for locally owned stores? Something they can display in a window or use in an ad?
- Local Economy Initiatives
 - Branding and Messaging for the Local First Campaign
 - Start with the food and entertainment sectors
 - Use BALLE Toolkit
 - Focus on businesses as sectors – hold separate meetings for them?
 - Get Board members a copy of the BALLE Manual on Local First Campaigns
 - Look into re-initiating the Town’s BALLE Membership
 - Again, what is the benefit to local businesses to be identified as “locally grown”
 - Find ways to use larger businesses (i.e. hotel) to benefit local business?
 - Not Marin? What are our needs? Is there a way for local government to facilitate/cultivate local businesses that supply those things at a low cost?
 - Consider a flea market for variety of goods.
- Commercial Development in Non-Downtown areas
 - Identify locations – small parcel ripe for re-zoning and involve stakeholders engage early on
 - Facilitate a cooperative development for businesses
 - If there is a small parcel available, explore an open space concept – for truck rodeo and flea market
 - Schedule a work session within the next 6 to 12 months to discuss redevelopment of existing commercial spaces i.e. Willow Creek, Carrboro Plaza, Estes Drive etc.
 - Develop a long term vision town wide (Comprehensive Planning) given constraints on development
- Second Wave Businesses (i.e. RTS, Blog Ads, etc.)
 - Identify Sectors and bring businesses to together to network

- Survey – why did you locate here? What makes you stay? Would they be willing to urge others to come?
 - Inventory Second Wave businesses
 - Deploy Broadband to attract more tech businesses.
- Arts!
 - Leverage annual arts tour to draw tourist to Town of Carrboro
 - Hold networking meeting
 - Set up mentor relationships for artist with businesses
 - Appendix 4.2 – 4.3 – explore micro-fund investment idea to determine utility