

**City of Washington**  
Economic Development Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, June 30, 2020 – Minutes  
Wilmor Road Fire Station

Present: Chairman Kristy Howell, Planning & Development Director Jon Oliphant, Troy Reed, Barbara Plata, Randy McGuire, and Audrey Miller

Not Present: City Administrator Ray Forsythe, Elizabeth Heider, Brad Mahoney, Joe Russell

**AGENDA**

1. **Call to order:** Chairman Howell called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Barbara Plata made a motion to approve the minutes. Troy Reed seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried and minutes were approved.
3. **Business Items:**
  - A. **COVID-19 Update:** Planning & Development Director Jon Oliphant discussed how last Friday, the state went into stage 4 and preparing to move to stage 5. Barbara commented that she has received very little pushback from customers regarding wearing masks. Chairman Howell commented that she was surprised that more patrons have not flocked to eat in the restaurants. Barbara commented she is very reluctant to eat in during this time. Director Oliphant commented what he saw while on vacation in another state. Chairman Howell commented on the various responses from individuals and business owners regarding the masks being required or not required. Troy commented on their requirements at his place of business at Ellis. Evelyn at the Tazwell County Health Dept stated tables need to be 6 feet apart and no more than 10 at a table. The question was discussed about how to get people comfortable with going back in to restaurants and other businesses. Randy questioned if the City is fully on the Governor's schedule and plan. That was confirmed.
  - B. **Empty Structures:** Troy commented on the places he visited and some were empty as a result of the tornado, Georgetown Road and lot in front of LaGondola. He would like to know if any of the incentives for tornado relief were still available. There was a discussion regarding the possibilities including a residential development tied into the golf course along with a retail area that would include a small grocery store, hairdresser and barber shop, and corner restaurant. Director Oliphant commented on a potential business considering the LaGondola area, the impact of developing the golf course area and the impact of the 2020 Census. Randy brought up the Route 24 development and there was a discussion regarding examples from other areas and the need to have a positive and inviting entrance into Washington. Barbara commented regarding the Square spruce up for the Walldogs visit and the snowball effect. There was a discussion regarding bringing businesses into the empty places on the Square such as a wine bar, tea time café, or an eat fresh establishment.
  - C. **Business Opportunities:** Chairman Howell stated her thoughts which included a brewery, fresh food eateries, the need for outdoor dining spaces and the impact of the

medians. Kristy will be reaching out to a developer friend in Huntsville, Alabama and will have a discussion regarding the Plantation-style developments.

4. **Other Business:** Jon stated they are waiting on an announcement from IDOT regarding the awards for the Route 24 development. The announcement will determine the kickoff of the developments. The committee discussed the next meeting and decided on Thursday, July 30, 2020 at 4:30 pm.
5. **Member Comments:** *None needed.*
6. **Adjournment:** Randy McGuire made a motion to adjourn. Troy Reed seconded the motion. All approved. Meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm.