

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Summary

Under Indiana Code 36-7—14-13, the Redevelopment Commission must prepare an annual Report outlining the activities of the Commission, the members, and the expenditures made during 2009. The following is a summary of the year and then a recap of each month. A list of members, the dates of all meetings, and the budget/expenditures for the year follows.

Major projects for 2009 included the approval by the Redevelopment Commission, Plan Commission and Town Council of the Architectural and Design Standards and Guidelines (Supplement to the Highland Municipal Code Section 214.180: RD-Redevelopment District). In addition the establishment of the Design Advisory Committee (DAC) to evaluate proposed developments within the Redevelopment Area for compliance with the Design Standards and to meet with an applicant at the beginning of a potential project to help reach compliance with the Standards was organized.

The Commission also received approval of the Riverfront Development District from the Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission. The Town Council appointed the Commission as the body to receive and review applications for restaurants interested in a three-way liquor license. The application process has been approved and marketing of the District is now underway.

Several events were sponsored by the Commission during 2009. A Commercial Realtor Luncheon was held in April and a meeting of the owners in the largest light industrial area in Highland was held in November. A second meeting will be held in 2010 to discuss issues that were raised during the first meeting. A press conference to celebrate the remediation of the former Bult Oil site located between Condit, Garfield, and First Streets was held in May. Appraisals on the site were completed and a rezoning request will be made of the Plan Commission from light industrial to general business district. The Commission also provided funding for the lighting study on Kennedy Avenue. In December, two Redevelopment Commissioners visited a potential developer in Mishawaka, Indiana.

The Director took part in a number of projects including the Lake County Housing Task Force, the Re-Engagement Strategies Group, and the 2010 Census. She is also the point person to receive redevelopment and development opportunities in Highland.

The following is a monthly itemization of Redevelopment Commission activities for 2009.

January

Town Council appointments to the Commission for 2009 were not made by the first meeting date in 2009; therefore, the Commission from 2008 continued with the meeting schedule in January 2009. Commissioner Adam Gawlikowski, Greg Kuzmar, Jim Kessler and Dominic Noce were present. Commissioner Brice Johnson resigned from the Commission at the end of 2008.

Resolution 2009-01, *a Resolution Authorizing Compensation for Certain Employees to be Derived from the Proper Fund of the redevelopment Department of the Town of Highland, Lake County, Indiana*, was approved. This resolution authorized compensation for the Director, Cecile Petro, the Recording Secretary, Cecile Petro, and the Attorney, Carol Green-Fraley.

Resolution 2009-02, *A Resolution of the Highland Redevelopment Commission to Formally Approve the Supplement to the Highland Municipal Code, Section 214.180: RD-Redevelopment District (Architectural and Design Standards and Guidelines for the Redevelopment Area)* was approved. This resolution approved the new design standards for the Redevelopment Area. The Supplement will now be forwarded to the Plan Commission and the Town Council for their approval.

The Commission also approved the meeting schedule for 2009 and the goals for 2009. A thank you letter was written to Mr. Brice Johnson for his years of service.

During the study session, information was received regarding Aide Rentals and Sales II's (8600 Kennedy Avenue) proposed changes to their original site plan. The Design Advisory Committee (DAC) worked with Aide Rentals for several months; however, Aide Rentals decided to put their plan on hold. At the January 28, 2009 Study Session, newly appointed members, Dominic Noce, Greg Kuzmar and Tom Crowl were sworn in as Commissioners.

Goals and the 2008 Annual Report were reviewed.

February

Election of officers was tabled until all members were appointed. A letter from Mrs. Teresa Carstensen (3324 Glenwood Street) was read. The Director stated that the Public Works Director will be addressing Mrs. Carstensen's concerns regarding the levee project along the Little Calumet River.

The Retainer Agreement for Financial Advisory Services and General Redevelopment Consulting to the Highland Redevelopment Commission for Fiscal Year 2009 was approved with Cender and Company of Merrillville, Indiana.

The 2009 Annual Report was approved.

At the Study Session, the Commission discussed the idea of inviting Commercial Realtors to a breakfast or luncheon to inform them about the Redevelopment Commission and how it may be helpful in bringing in business to Highland.

The Director will attend the March 4, 2009 meeting of the Plan Commission to discuss the proposed Architectural and Design Standards and Guidelines for the Redevelopment Area.

Three different applications have been sent for projects within the town of Highland by department heads. The Director is overseeing the submittals for the town. The Commission's submitted projects include placement of fiber on the full length of Indianapolis Boulevard and Kennedy Avenues and the relocation, demolition, and purchase of property for a new Public Works garage.

Commissioner Selena Rich was sworn in at the February 25, 2009 Study Session. The School Town of Highland appointee will be Ms. Luanne Jurczak and her substitute will be Mr. Lawrence Vassar. Councilman Bernie Zemen is the Commission's liaison to the Council. The Commission is now complete.

Commissioners are invited to attend the Baker and Daniel's presentation on March 3, 2009 regarding the new Federal Economic Stimulus Program. Director Petro will submit an application to the state for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). These are monies designed to improve neighborhoods. Our focus will be on demolishing dangerous and blighted structures.

The Director informed the Commission about her activities with the Lake County Housing Task Force and the Indiana Economic Development Association (IEDA).

March

2008 officers, President Adam Gawlikowski and Secretary Dominic Noce, nominated themselves for the offices of President and Vice President, respectively. The nominations were approved. Commissioner Selena Rich nominated Commissioner Greg Kuzmar and his nomination was approved. President Gawlikowski stated that he would like the Commission to consider appointing a Treasurer for the Commission.

During the Study Session the Commission discussed their backgrounds, skills, and why they wanted to be on the Commission. Commissioners also discussed taping Commission meetings and decided not to do so at this time.

Commissioners reviewed future lighting along Kennedy Avenue once the reconstruction of the road was finished. Decorative lighting interspersed with cobra lighting will cost an additional \$350,000 and is not a part of the current 80% federal/20% local funding plan for the reconstruction of Kennedy Avenue.

Plan Commission President, Mario Martini, addressed the Commission regarding the Design Standards. Once several changes are made to the document, he will present it to the Plan Commission for approval.

The Commission directed the Director to seek appraisals on the former Bult Oil site located between Condit and Garfield Avenues along First Street. Appraisals will consider both a light industrial and a business-three zoning classification. A press conference is being planned to mark the remediation of the site and to promote a future sale of the property.

April

Re-election of officers was conducted because the Commission's attorney stated that smaller public bodies do not usually conduct self-nominations nor are telephones used for that purpose. Officers for 2009 include President Adam Gawlikowski, Vice-President Dominic Noce, and Vice President Dominic Noce.

Appraisal proposals for the Bult Oil site were approved for Cyrus Realtors, Inc. and Bochnowski Appraisal Company. The results from the two appraisals are expected within one month.

During the Study Session, Commissioners were informed about the progress of lighting along Kennedy Avenue. LED decorative and cobra style lights will be explored.

The Commercial Realtor Luncheon will take place on April 30, 2009. Nineteen Realtors are registered to date.

Design Standard changes are being made to the document based upon Plan Commission requests.

During the Study Session of April 22, 2009, Commissioners were given three options for lighting along Kennedy Avenue. A special Public Meeting will be held on April 29, 2009 to approve one of the options.

The Commercial Realtor Luncheon has reached its maximum attendee level of forty-two. It will take place at the Hi-Fi Roadhouse Restaurant on 45th Street. NIPSCO has agreed to subsidize the luncheon and inform the attendees about the NIPSCO/State available property website; and the Northwest Indiana Forum also assisted with the event.

The Director provided updated information on the Design Standards. The Plan Commission's attorney is reviewing a letter outlining the proposed changes to the Design Standards. Once he approves the letter, changes will be made to the document and hard copies will be available for Plan Commission members and the public to review. Certified letters will be mailed to all property owners in the Redevelopment Area inviting them to a public hearing on the proposed Design Standards.

The regularly scheduled May meeting on May 13, 2009 will be changed to May 20, 2009 due to a scheduling conflict.

The Director requested the attendance of two Commissioners at a meeting with a potential developer on May 4, 2009 at 4:00 PM at the town hall.

At a Special Public Meeting on April 29, 2009, the Commission approved Resolution 2009-03, *A Resolution Affirming, Ratifying, Authorizing, and Approving an Agreement Between First Group Engineering, Inc. consulting Engineers, and the Redevelopment Department of the Town of Highland to Perform Professional Engineering Services in Support of the Kennedy Avenue Lighting Modifications Project of 2009.* This resolution provided for the design study costs and change order (\$20,000) for lighting along North Kennedy Avenue from the Little Calumet River to Highway Avenue. Commissioners provided a number of questions to First Group to be considered in the study.

May

Commissioners reviewed the Commercial Realtor Luncheon held on April 30, 2009. They felt that it was a positive event and that the attendees complimented the Commission for hosting the event. They also thanked NIPSCO for underwriting the cost of the luncheon.

The two appraisals for the former Bult Oil site were received and reviewed. Commissioners discussed the possibility of rezoning to conform to the Comprehensive Plan for the Redevelopment Area. Copies of the following zoning classifications will be sent to the Commissions: Business-One, Business-Two, and Business-Three and Light Industrial. The Press Conference to announce the remediation of the Bult Oil site will be held at the site on May 21, 2009. All current and former Commissioners, Councilmen, department heads, and EPA personnel, will be invited to receive a certificate of appreciation. Phytoremediation was started in 2003 with the clearing of petroleum and other pollutants and with the planting of 40 hybrid poplar trees. A letter of completed remediation from the Environmental Protection Agency, Region V, will be presented to the Commission. Local newspapers, radio, and public television will cover the event.

A formal agreement between Beckman, Kelly & Smith for legal services for 2009 was approved. Appropriation for legal services was approved in January with Resolution 2009-01.

The Design Standards are now updated and available in electronic form, as well as, in hard copy at the Municipal Building's reception desk.

Economic Development Commissioner, George VandeWerken explained the function of the Re-Engagement Strategy Group, a group organized to explore ways to encourage entrepreneurship and small business ownership. Director Petro also participates in the group.

June

Commissioners approved *The Use of the Redevelopment Corner Lot located on the southeast corner of Kennedy and Highway Avenues for an anniversary celebration of Growler's Sports Bar on August 29, 2009 for a fee of \$1650.00 and proof of liability insurance holding the Town of Highland and the Redevelopment Commission harmless.*

During the Study Session, the Commissioners received a copy of the Public Notice cover letter for the proposed Design Standards to review. This cover letter with the notice will be sent to all property owners within the Redevelopment Area as required by the Plan commission before approval action can begin.

July

Commissioners approved the *July 15th Assessed Value Capture Notice Letters to the Lake County Auditor for the Allocation Areas within Highland Acres and the Downtown Redevelopment Area.* This motion allows the Commission to receive any tax increment from the two allocation areas.

A motion was made and approved to *Acknowledge that the Redevelopment Director documents her time spent on public business—including time in excess of forty (40) hours each week and in excess of eighty (80) hours for each pay period; and further moved that for the pay period ending June 27, 2009, that the Redevelopment Director be authorized and permitted to draw from the documented, accumulated excess working hours the amount of forty two and one-half (42.5) hours as compensable paid time off for that pay period.* This motion allowed the Director to utilize accumulated compensable time.

During the Study Session, the Director reviewed the boundaries for the Riverfront Development District (RDD) as outlined by the letter from the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission dated June 18, 2009. The Commission will now develop an application procedure and the Commission will ask the Town Council to designate the Commission as the body to review applications.

August

The Commission *approved the proposed 2010 Redevelopment Commission Budget.*

The Architectural and Design Standards and Guidelines will go before the Plan Commission for approval on August 19, 2009.

During the Study Session, the Commission discussed the possibility of expanding the current Redevelopment Area or creating a new Redevelopment Area to include the Ultra Shopping Center on North Indianapolis Boulevard.

The Director will prepare a request to the Town Council to name the Commission as the body to review and recommend applications for the Riverfront Development District.

September

Attorney Green-Fraley informed the Commission that the Lake County Auditor will issue a Form 22 if any Tax Increment will be received.

During the Study Session, developers Richard Putz and James Zappia explained to the Commission what they would like to develop in Highland, if they receive financing. Commissioners asked Attorney Green-Fraley to re-contact a developer in Indianapolis who had expressed interest in Highland.

The Director explained the 2010 Census initiative that she will spearhead for the Town's Census Committee. Other members from the town include Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin and Building Commissioner Ken Mika. She will speak to various civic groups within town along with the local Federal Census Representative.

Two Commissioners and the Director met with the Director of the Northwest Indiana Forum on August 26, 2009 to provide information to the Forum from the perspective of municipalities for the Forum's legislative agenda. Two items were suggested: support for the elimination of personal property taxes for high tech businesses (SEA 448) and the need for dark fiber along major corridors.

The Director will be marketing the kiosks again now that the lighting problem is fixed. An article will appear in the town's newsletter, *Gazebo Express*, in the near future.

The Commission discussed the possibility of creating a foundation for economic development and philanthropic purposes.

During the September 23, 2009 Study Session, the Director provided information concerning the upcoming entrepreneurship conference entitled "Propel", which is scheduled for November 13, 2009 at Faith Church in Dyer, Indiana. The goal of the conference is to create and encourage entrepreneurship and is an outcome of the Re-Engagement Strategy Group.

The Director will make a presentation to the Town Council on October 5, 2009 regarding the proposed Design Standards.

October

Commissioners approved *The Riverfront Development District Application*.

The Commission also approved Resolution 2009-04, *A Resolution to Establish a Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Appointed by the Highland Redevelopment Commission within the Town of Highland*. The DAC will review design standards with property owners within the Redevelopment Area before any major improvements or development occurs in order to provide guidance to the property owner.

Commissioners discussed a possible meeting with the property owners in the largest light industrial area in Highland.

The Director described her efforts to create a coalition of border towns, cities, and counties that experience competition with neighboring states. She will also discuss this proposal with the Northwest Indiana Forum to gain their support.

Developer Cressy Everett/Grubb Ellis has invited the Commission to view their business park in Mishawaka in November.

Commissioners decided to postpone discussion on a façade improvement program until 2010.

During the October 28, 2009 Study Session, the Commission discussed a November 18, 2009 date for a meeting with the light industrial owners.

The Propel Conference will be held on November 13, 2009. A visit to Cressy Everett/Grubb Ellis will take place on December 1, 2009.

Commissioners discussed developing a resolution to request rezoning of the Bult Oil site.

November

Commissioners approved the *RFP for a Wetland Delineation Study to be Performed on the Public Works and Sharp Athletic Complex Areas with a Due Date of December 4, 2009*. The Commission wants a study to see if that area is a wetland area.

A resolution to formally request a zoning change to the former Bult Oil property was tabled until the Commission's Attorney confers with the Plan Commission's attorney.

The Director reviewed her recent meetings with the Lake County Housing Task Force and the Task Force's meeting with the Lake County Auditor's office. The meeting with the Auditor was to discuss problems with the Homestead Exemption program and the number of people who were incorrectly claiming exemptions resulting in the loss monies to the various units of government.

The Commission met with owners of property in the light industrial area.

December

The Commission approved Resolution 2009-06, *A Resolution to Authorize Compensation for Certain Employees to be Derived from the Proper Fund of the Redevelopment Department of the Town of Highland, Lake County*. This resolution establishes wages and salaries for the Redevelopment Department for 2010.

A resolution to enter into an agreement with a firm to provide professional services for a wetland assessment was tabled until further information can be gathered from the two firms that responded to the request for proposals (RFP).

Commissioners reviewed their meeting with the light industrial area owners on November 18, 2009. They believed that it was successful for a first meeting and a second meeting will be scheduled in 2010. A representative from the Sanitary Commission and the Indiana Port will be invited to the next meeting.

Goals for 2010 were discussed and the appointment procedure for appointments to the Commission was reviewed. Updates on the kiosks and a review of the meeting with Cressy Everett/Grubb Ellis were discussed.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEMBERS

At the beginning of the year, Commissioners appointed by the Town Council in 2008 met to conduct business until appointments were made by the Council. These Commissioners included Adam Gawlikowski, Greg Kuzmar, Jim Kessler and Dominic Noce. Commissioner Brice Johnson resigned in December. The Director, Cecile Petro, was retained into 2009. By the end of February, all appointments were made and officers were elected in April. The officers and members included: President Adam Gawlikowski, Vice President Dominic Noce, Secretary Greg Kuzmar, and members Tom Crowel and Selena Rich. The School Town of Highland appointment was Luanne Jurczak and her substitute was Lawrence Vassar. Commissioners earned \$40 per month, except the President who earned \$50 per month for serving on the Commission. The Recording Secretary received \$600 for the year and the Director earned \$47,730.48 for 2009.

PUBLIC MEETING AND STUDY SESSION MEETING DATES

The Commission met on the following dates:

January 14, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
January 28, 2009 Study Session
February 11, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
February 25, 2009 Study Session
March 11, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
March 25, 2009 Study Session
April 8, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
April 22, 2009 Study Session
April 29, 2009 Special Public Meeting
May 20, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
June 24, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
July 8, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
August 12, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
September 9, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
September 23, 2009 Study Session
October 14, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
October 28, 2009 Study Session
November 11, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session
December 9, 2009 Public Meeting and Study Session

ACCOUNT MASK: 09-XXX-X-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-X		DEPT		DEPT		DEPT									
FUND: 097 0 - REDEV BOND & IN		YR FND F PRJT ACCTB SBACT DEPT L		ORIGINAL		BUDG-AMOUNT		DISBURSED		OPEN CLAIMS		OPEN P.O.'S		BALANCE	
09-097-0-0000-19000-39013-0000-0	REDEV BD PAYMENT OF PRINCIP	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00	495,000.00					495,000.00	
09-097-0-0000-19000-39012-0000-0	REDEV BD PAYMENT OF INTERES	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00	111,531.00					111,531.38	.38-
09-097-0-0000-39000-39013-0000-0	REDEV PAYING AGENT FEE	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00	750.00					750.00	
** FND/F 97-0		607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00	607,281.00					607,281.38	.38-
FUND: 096 0 - REDEV CAPITAL		YR FND F PRJT ACCTB SBACT DEPT L		ORIGINAL		BUDG-AMOUNT		DISBURSED		OPEN CLAIMS		OPEN P.O.'S		BALANCE	
09-096-0-0000-45000-45001-0000-0	REDEV CNP W/FT PRJT FURCHA	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	439.18	439.18					3,560.82	
09-096-0-0000-45000-45002-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR FINNL PHASE	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	439.18	439.18					373,560.82	
09-096-0-0000-45000-45003-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR KENNEDY/HIGHWA	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
09-096-0-0000-45000-45004-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR KENNEDY/HWY EN	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
09-096-0-0000-45000-45005-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR GATEWAYS & SIG	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
09-096-0-0000-45006-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR BENCHES & SECE	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
09-096-0-0000-45007-0000-0	REDEV CONSTR CONTINGENCY	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
** ACCTB 40000		374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	374,000.00	439.18	439.18			1,051.46		373,560.82	
** PRJT		400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	
** FND/F 96-0		400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	400,100.00	22,289.18	22,289.18			1,051.46		377,810.82	