

# Business Development Commission (BDC) MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: Thursday, February 25,  
2021

LOCATION: City Hall

CALLED TO ORDER: 8:05 AM

MEETING 9:01 AM

ADJOURNED:

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, March 25,  
2021

Name	Present	Absent
Mike Pincus Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Tim Delanty (Old Webster)	X	
Erbab Majeede (Business Owner Rep)	X	
Jennifer Starkey (Business Owner Rep)	X	
Rebecca Now (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Kara Bowlin (Citizen at Large)	X	
Andrew Scavotto (Citizen at Large)	X	
John Barr	X	
Laura Arnold Council Liaison	X	
Joan Jadali, City Manager Designee	X	
Mara Perry, Staff Liaison	X	

Also in Attendance

Dr. Marie Peoples, City Manager, City of Webster Groves

Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion to approve the January minutes was made by Jennifer Starkey, seconded by Rebecca Now, and unanimously approved.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Newly appointed to the Business Development Commission, John Barr, owner of The Frisco Barroom, The Annex, and Civil Alchemy all in the Old Orchard Business District, introduced himself to Commission Members.

New City Manager, Dr. Marie Peoples, introduced herself to Commission Members.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Webster University Video Project Phase II** – The University’s video production spring semester class will produce a video highlighting a group of Webster Groves business focused on spring gardening with such possible businesses as Rolling Ridge Nursery, Maypop Coffee and Garden Shop, Roger’s Produce, and Schnaar’s Hardware. A finished video should be available in May.

**BDC Working Group Sub-Committee** – Kara Bowlin shared an overview of the discussions held during the first sub-committee meeting which discussed such as the desire from businesses to have a better way to connect, communicate, and coordinate with each other especially when conducting events. Notes from the sub-committee meeting were shared with Commission Members (See Addendum A). Joan Jadali requested any business not receiving a copy of the quarterly newsletter mentioned in the sub-committee notes to please let her know.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)** – As a way to bring more patrons into Webster Groves, Erbab Majeede suggested there is an opportunity for the BDC to collaborate with the Sustainability Commission as they work on ESG. For example, tie in with their focus on a bikeable community with businesses that are focused on biking, i.e. The Hub Bicycle Company. Laura Arnold suggested Erbab be a BDC Liaison to the Sustainability Commission. Erbab will move forward with that and report back to the BDC at the next meeting.

**Budget** – Joan Jadali reviewed budget information with Commission Members about last year’s budget with an eye to next year’s budget. A discussion was held on the challenges faced by the BDC Holiday Sub-Committee in determining which types of media to use and acquiring tracking information. Jennifer Starkey and Kara Bowlin volunteered to join the holiday sub-committee for 2021.

**Prop #1 Use Tax** – Joan Jadali shared information with Commission Members regarding Prop 1 Use Tax that will be on the April 6 ballot (See Addendum B). Information is available on the City’s website. Informational counter cards and yard signs are also available.

### **DISTRICT, CITY, & COUNCIL UPDATE**

- All three Special Business Districts are focused on fiscal budget 2022.
- The Streetscape project in Old Orchard is moving forward.
- Crossroads is putting a scaled down version of their streetscape plan before St. Louis Count for their approval.
- Missouri American Water’s work will be impacting additional streets throughout Webster.
- The use of golf carts with restrictions and caveats has been approved.
- The City expects the results of the feasibility study from Development Strategies for a proposed redevelopment project in North Old Webster is expected soon.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade will take place on July 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- The swimming pool is planning to be open this summer following whatever the COVID-19 guidelines are this season.

**NEXT MEETING** – March 25 at 8:00 AM via Zoom.

# **ADDENDUM A**

## **BDC Working Group Sub-Committee Notes First Meeting – 2-12-21, via Zoom**

**Attendees included: John Barr, Tim Delanty, Lisa Dolan, Alan Nehring, Kara Bowling, Rebecca Now, Gerry Welch, Laura Arnold, Fran Sudekum**

**Businesses don't know who or where to go to when they want to communicate with other businesses, especially those outside of their immediate business district or business neighborhood.**

**Meeting Take-Away Key Words:** engagement, business-to-business education, recruitment, liaisons, empowerment, coordination, inclusion, new business outreach

### **Notes from Laura Arnold**

**Fran reviewed past activities and current means of communication (see Appendix A).**

- This included some discussion of needed improvements on the city website. Improvements in ease of use and accessibility would lead to greater use by residents and visitors.

#### **What is the goal?**

- Kara: Too many "silos". Unity under WG would be useful. That is how those outside WG think about us. Business districts should be more unified and communicate better.
- Tim: Always going to be some recognition of different areas. We need to be more cohesive and include Old Orchard more. OWTA is not looking to include other areas right now. Without existing trade associations in other districts, it is hard to reach out and organize jointly.
- Are we using the resources we have to pull things together? How can we better use our existing resources?
- Two closely related but distinct issues: (1) How do we get more businesses to participate? This includes increasing participation in formal (trade and commissions) and informal ways (like around specific events that are planned by others). (2) How do we better coordinate activities and increase inclusiveness in planning activities? Identified as both a communications issue (how do we coordinate) and a man-power issue (so much going on in working with our own business, it is hard to focus on things like event planning).

#### **Ideas/Possible Action**

- Incentivize participation with membership program or activities (like business day at the pool)
- Need someone empowered to facilitate coordination. Is that staff? Is it Fran? Is it a commission member?
- Assign liaisons between business district commissions
- Hold business forum so business owners can get to know one another, provide feedback, etc.
- Renew efforts of the BDC to welcome new businesses
- Provide events for business owners to meet informally, like a reception at the Art Fair.
- Cautioned not to exclude non-retail or restaurant businesses.
- Specific event coordination: Holiday open house and tree lighting.

### **Notes from Gerry Welch**

**1. Fran reviewed background information on past and current communications and coordination efforts (see Appendix A).** These included with comments • Review of past business forums that began in 2012 and ended in 2018

- Email addresses – While there are over 500 email addresses, there is uncertainty about who actually receives them – owner, employee, . . . – as well as whether or not all businesses are included. There is no requirement for submitting an email address with a business license. There was a suggestion from T. Delanty that phone calls be made to identify those who don't have a working email.
- There is a private Facebook page open to all businesses; managed by Old Webster.

- The Inside quarterly newsletter is not known to businesses. NOTE: We need to check to see if commercial addresses are included in the mailing. It could be just residential.
- Some of the business-related material on the website is hard to find and clunky – like the restaurant guide in the map center. The work of Creative Entourage and the explore page is good.

## 2. Comments regarding the role of the subgroup as well as business coordination

- Kara B. noted that Webster businesses could be better served by operating under one umbrella unifying WG as a destination
- Tim D. indicated that the districts don't talk with one another, especially with events. There is a need to include others in events and to figure out how to talk together.
- John B. noted that Old Orchard wants to bring things together but the interest in working on a commission or trade association is missing in this district (there are currently 4?? Openings on OO Taxing)

## 3. Suggestions for addressing coordination/action

- Contact needs to be made with businesses that are not part of the formal taxing districts such as Yorkshire, Owen Development, Maypop, and others on the list Fran provided
- Suggestions were made for bringing the businesses together to meet and greet each other including early morning coffee at the Art Fair, Lunch and Learn, and others
- SEE LAURA's GOOD LIST

## 4. Next steps

- The group agreed to meet in early March and try to include an additional member from Yorkshire
- The group will set goals and some actions in place at the next meeting.

# APPENDIX A

## Communication & Coordination Overview 2-12-21 BDC Working Group Sub-Committee Meeting

### Past Cross-Business District Communication

- June 2012 – BDC Business Forum
- March 2013 – BDC Business Forum
- February 2014 – BDC Business Forum
- May 2016 – BDC Focus Group; Opening and Operating a Business in Webster Groves
- March 2017 – BDC Email and In-Person Survey of Business Owners ([See Appendix B](#))
- November 2017 – All Business Districts Commissions Meeting w/City Attorney Helmet Starr
- January 2018 – All Business Districts Commissions Collaboration Meeting
- Insight Marketing; PR Consultant

### In-Place Communication and Coordination

#### Email Addresses

- Email addresses (if provided by the business) obtained from the business license are uploaded to the Webster Groves Constant Contact Email account along with additional information used to categorize and segment the addresses into appropriate groupings. Categories are related to such things as geographic location (i.e. a business district or neighborhood) or type of business (i.e. dining or retail).

There are currently a little over 500 email addresses categorized as Commercial Businesses.

Note #1: Each business may have more than one email address uploaded.

Note #2: Email addresses provided on the business license may or may not be that of the business owner and/or business contact person.

- Old Webster Trade Association member email addresses are also uploaded to the Webster Groves Constant Contact Email account with the member's permission. These email addresses represent the business owner and the business contact persons.

### **Private Facebook Group**

After a joint meeting of members of the Old Webster Trade Association (OWTA) and the Old Orchard Merchant & Business Association (OOMBA) took place in April of 2013 to discuss how the two groups could better communicate and cross-promote each other, the Webster Groves Business Owners private Facebook Group was created. While the group was created for businesses located in the two Associations' districts; it is open to any brick-and-mortar Webster Groves business. The group currently has 118 individual business members associated with 82 businesses: 76% Old Webster, 15% Old Orchard, 3% Crossroads, 5% Not in a Business District.

### **Print**

*Inside Webster Groves* Quarterly Newsletter U.S. mailed to businesses and residents

*Community Connection* Monthly Newsletter published in the Webster-Kirkwood Times

### **Online/Social Media**

The Friday Page; weekly online newsletter

Explore Webster Groves landing page on WebsterGroves.org

Restaurant Guide in the "Map Center" on WebsterGroves.org; Geographic Information System (GIS)

Explore Webster Groves Facebook Page; administered by Creative Entourage

Old Webster Facebook Page, Instagram, Twitter; created by the Old Webster Trade Association

Old Orchard Facebook Page, Twitter; created by the Old Orchard Merchant & Business Association

### **Communications Coordinator**

Fran Sudekum was established in July of 2018 as an avenue to share information between the four business-related commissions and disseminate and/or solicit information to/from businesses as directed.

## **Who's Who**

### **Business Related City Commissions**

**(Comprised of appointed Commission Members)**

1. Business Development Commission; 9 Members
2. Old Webster Special Business District Advisory Commission; 9 Members
3. Old Orchard Special Business District Advisory Commission; 9 Members
4. Crossroads Special Business District Advisory Commission; 7 Members

### **Special Business Districts (a.k.a. Taxing Districts)**

**(Comprised of the businesses within its geographic boundaries)**

1. Old Webster Special Business District
2. Old Orchard Special Business District
3. Crossroads Special Business District

### **Business Neighborhoods/Areas (NOT taxing districts)**

**(Comprised of businesses in a general geographic area)**

1. Yorkshire Plaza
2. Zeta Dell Business Neighborhood (Marshall & Summit)
3. "Town of" Fairview Business Neighborhood (Marshall & Glen)
4. Watson Rd Business Corridor (E. Old Watson to Grant; north side)
5. Brentwood Blvd Business Corridor (Newport to Marshall)
6. Owen Ridge Campus (Marshall near Brentwood Blvd)
7. Big Bend Blvd & Key West Ave Business Area
8. Big Bend Blvd & Laclede Station Rd Business Area
9. Breckenridge Industrial Area (north edge of Webster)

### **Trade/Business Organizations**

1. Old Webster Trade Association; Non-Profit Organization  
Roots traced back to 1931. Currently active with 60 members; Arts 8%, Dining 19%, Shopping 32%, Services 41%.
2. Old Orchard Merchant & Business Association; Non-Profit Organization Roots traced back to 1979. Disbanded in 2015.
3. Webster Groves/Shrewsbury/Rock Hill Chamber of Commerce; Non-Profit Organization  
Roots traced back to 1937. Originally covering businesses in the City of Webster Groves and later the businesses of Shrewsbury and Rock Hill were added.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Business Development Commission Survey Questions**

**Total # of Responses: 52**

1. *The City should explore whether it should designate certain areas in the business districts to retail only zoning to drive foot traffic and shopper convenience. Yes 34 No 17*
2. *Please identify what you believe the City needs to do to encourage businesses to start up or move to Webster Groves.*

Financial – Tax, incentives, other financial considerations

- I think they should reevaluate some of the taxes they put on businesses in our community and try to figure out a way to develop better parking as well. I also believe they should think about how they promote/advertise the businesses in our community too.
- Webster Groves to look at its tax and permit requirements to make sure they are competitive for new businesses starting up or relocating to Webster. City also needs to look at rental rates and encourage landlords to maintain reasonable rents along with maintaining their properties. ○ Lower business license fees.
- There should be incentives for the businesses to come to Webster Groves. (Credits) ○ Provide a reduced tax rate, or license fee for people who live in Webster and also own a business in Webster. Reduce the cost of the business license. Eliminate the additional fee for being in one of the business districts. Reduce the cost of a business license for the first few years. Change Zoning laws to allow more types of businesses to operate in the city limits. Allow churches to rent their kitchens to food/catering/baking business even if the church sits in a residential zoned area. (DONUTS) Webster could then offer a business license to those businesses. ○ Offer micro loans, establish a small business

liaison to assist with the process: connecting with potential landlords, walking through licensing/permitting, etc

- Tax incentives, more business friendly posture from City Hall to business owners. My business is moving from Webster Groves to St Louis City later this year to take advantage of the tax abatement and historic tax credits offered there because WG property is too expensive and the taxes are too high.
- The only reason that a business is relocating is space and if retail, exposure to the public. Then the driving factor is rent or purchase of property. The most important part for a business is return on investment. If Webster uses an outside consultant they must be able to show the prospect how this area will give them a good return on their investment.
- Rental rates here are too high-restricting demand and building owners don't do enough.

## City Processes/Procedures

- The conditions the planning and zoning board put on small businesses are extensive. They should consider the business, especially if small, and make sure the conditions they are asking said business to do are within the budget of the business. I feel that they do not consider this when asking small businesses to "fix" things. I think that the reputation of the board prevents small businesses from even considering Webster as a possibility to open a business.
- Start with a CHANGE IN ATTITUDE with City Personal as it relates to NEW and existing businesses. I not only have my own business in WG but own a bldg. with three tenant spaces. The problems, delays, condescending attitude from City as businesses arrive continues to astound me. This is 30 years of experience with the City.
- Be more flexible with building permits, occupancy permits, etc...city creates an unfriendly environment.
- Be easier-online licenses, permits, waive fees for new businesses. Current process is not friendly. ○ Provide a more favorable zoning/design approval process. Move away from a closed community mindset of preservation and toward an open mindset of growth. Develop stronger and better relationships with major local institutions (Webster U.) Be more welcoming to small businesses.
- An online platform that lists the steps and contacts on how to start a business, including permits, maps and anything else you can think of. Would LOVE to have a more robust website for our community too.
- Continue to be helpful when potential businesses contact them for information. Mara Perry has done a wonderful job in this as has her staff.
- With the buildings being old there can be several surprises when obtaining city inspections for permits. It would be nice to establish some sort of PRE-Inspection prior to signing a lease so that the new tenant knows EXACTLY what is expected PRIOR to signing a long term lease.
- Offer a comprehensive new business packet and a dedicated liaison.
- Be easy to work with, be excited when inquiries are made from business owners, be accommodating to them, listen to them and what they need from us (WG) to be successful.
- Identify what is causing us to be looked over. As an architect, I hear signage is a big issue from some.
- Partner with them in starting their business. Many see the City government as an obstacle to moving here rather than an advantage.
- Streamline and reduce regulations for new businesses ○ Total City cooperation between the districts. Seems like always them or us.

## Vision and Planning

- WG is an older community and has the perception that it is an expensive community to live and shop in. Most people are using Brick and Mortar shops to investigate products and then buy online for a cheaper resource. There are no tax breaks or incentives for anyone to locate their business or new business owners to remain in WG. Brick and mortar is expensive to maintain and operate on a year-round basis. There is not enough community type events that drive people to the business districts. The City needs to

work with businesses on a business development plan that will drive consumers from not only WG but other communities as well and not rely on the Business groups (OWTA) or businesses to make this happen. This needs to be a collaborative effort with City Hall and ALL the local businesses. A strategic plan needs to be developed with a vision as to what needs to happen and who is going to make it happen. The City needs to be part of this and fund this, without putting the entire burden on the business owner. Chambers don't work. It needs to be a consolidated effort on the WG businesses and City Hall.

- Have a concerted plan to promote shopping local to residents. The main reason why retailers can't survive is that the population does not support them enough. Until we get a fervent movement, no businesses will survive.
- I believe the appeal is there. The challenge is bringing in the "right" businesses. Businesses that match the city's vision for the specific districts. Businesses that will retain the character & history but will draw more people, revenue & other businesses to the neighborhoods.
- Classifying properties or areas as "retail only" eliminates uses which are beneficial and critical to a thriving "business district" like offices, which brings jobs from a much larger area, whose employees are also customers for the existing and future retail. Downtown WG business district needs to be MIXED, such as retail, restaurants, office uses, banking, services and multi-family/hotel. Look at any successful urban business district and it will always have that MIX. The parking available today is inadequate and/or inconvenient for many existing retailers and offices. Bring in more restaurants will overload already inadequate or inconveniently located, too far away parking. A boutique hotel would be successful and its parking requirements are inverse of office and most retail. Multi-Family apartments/condos and a quality, boutique hotel also would have an inverse parking demand to that of offices and retailers. Restaurants overlap parking demands of MF and hotel in the evening from 6-9 pm, but that is unavoidable but actually a very positive indication of vibrancy. Golf cart shuttle service up and down Lockwood and Gore at certain times - would help with parking distribution, the elderly, those with disabilities, and would help make the business district function better and more attractive to retailers and property owners.
- Not duplicating services within 1 mile of each other, excluding food service ops of course. ○ It would help to know where to find retail space that is available to rent. ○ Zoning should encourage mixed-use, a retail only ground floor critical mass, with residential or office above. An strong commitment to retail/business parking needs. A framework for collective and individual marketing. A clear understanding of the challenges that face small businesses in Webster Groves. Bring retail out to the sidewalk with as few gaps as possible.
- Welcome CHANGE - support locally owned businesses, a trendy coffee shop or two, allow there to be 21+ bars, encourage prospective business owners to want to have shops here by making the process easier for them, encourage architectural integrity in new buildings proposed around town. Happy residents + happy, thriving town.
- Encourage landlords to rent to retail businesses vs. service businesses. Retail businesses pay taxes and bring foot traffic.

Marketing ○ Target a certain population and advertise to them. Maybe young adults since the college is so close. ○ Have individual to proactively seek out new businesses.

## Parking

- More parking—liquor laws and other ways to encourage more traffic
- Address the parking issues. (This was the response of four separate individuals completing the survey.) ○ Solve the parking issues, lower taxes and where ever possible the city should shop within its borders. ○ Lower cost on business licenses. More parking. Care more about the needs of individual businesses.
- Incorporate additional structured parking for traditional 'full-time' business employees who overlap with retail hours. ○ More Community Events.

- Show that Old Webster and Old Orchard are fun places to be by sponsoring regular events that draw the residents and even some that draw from outside the area.

3. ***The City should explore the incorporation of residential properties with commercial properties (mixed use districts) such as commercial on the main floor and residential (condos or apartments) on the second floor. Yes\_\_\_47\_\_\_ No\_\_\_5\_\_\_***

4. ***Would you support a tax increase or one-time fee or levy to allow the City to hire a consultant to market and grow our business sector? Yes\_\_20\_\_\_ No\_\_31\_\_\_***

5. ***If you answered “Yes” to question 4, please list two areas of responsibility for the consultant.***

Financial ○ A one time fee only. Taxes never go away. .1) Review the tax structure for commercial property, with the intent of reducing rents to help businesses become successful. 2) Parking, traffic flow, and design that adds to our historic heritage.

- My customers already think our taxes are high. We probably already know WHAT to do, it's just finding time and know-how to actually doing it.

Marketing ○ Positive branding and messaging about Webster. Proactively seek to keep businesses and grow businesses.

- Support retailers with coordination of advertising, seminars for marketing, social media, business building activities that help everyone. Work on attracting businesses.
- Shop local campaign ○ Group advertising and PR
- Find physical areas to expand as commercial regions. Market for more awareness of pre-existing events in the region.
- If the consultant is good he/she will work on a sliding scale of Salary plus commission on the implementation of the plan they develop. The plan then they should have targeted businesses that would be willing to relocate to Webster Groves. Then and only then should they be paid the commission which should be a substantial part of the overall pay.
- Cohesive city-wide marketing plan 2) Networked or wifi enabled areas like The Loop
- How would this person be responsible? I suggest that we reach out to the commercial brokers and real estate teams to encourage them to bring business here first. It is shocking how we have some of the brokers that live in Webster - maybe engage them first.

Data Collection ○ Commercial rental rate analysis. Impact of strategic zoning. Impact of Retail/Services/Residential zoning categories.

- Bring options and best practices from other places. Look at how to maintain a range of cost/square foot—keep rents sustainable. Help enforce city codes to encourage owners to rehab and maintain properties.
- Retail/business advocacy with evaluations and data reported to the Council and Commissions/Boards. Gather and present resources for small business/retail and find a variety of ways to disseminate or present to business owners and the City.

City Processes

- Create an ombudsman-like role to help shepherd businesses through regulations, someone to do more prospecting with businesses and be a point person.
- The city and the local business associations need to get on the same page. The city also needs to be willing to accept change (which always comes with growth).

Vision and Planning ○ Creating a recommendation of appropriate zoning (districts) and land uses. Create a conceptual master plan that is forward-looking, enabling WG to evolve, thrive and become a better community for the majority of residents, businesses and property owners for the next 50 years. Identifying incompatible and underutilized buildings, parcels and public parking. Recommendations of incorporating underutilized properties like those along W Pacific so there is a more vibrant critical mass. Designate areas that could utilize incentives to make them financially feasible.

Parking ○ The feasibility of increasing parking without affecting the traffic flow or the aesthetics of the community. ○ I am against this idea as it was exactly what we were told the BDC was supposed to do. We don't need more consultants we need more cooperation between those responsible for the city already.

## 6. *How do we encourage property owners to lease their property?*

### Financial

- Property owners will lease their property if there is a benefit to them and not a huge outlay of expense to make it leasable.
- An independent analysis of commercial rental rates and maintenance/condition of properties needs to be done so that property owners are more aware of the value of their locations as well as the competitive market for similar properties in the area. Webster is unique, but rental rates are driving businesses away. The City needs to encourage them to remain competitive so the properties remain fully leased and do not fall into disrepair.
- Create incentives for them to rent to retail-zoning-are there other ways like differential incentives? ○ Getting maintenance is hard-encourage codes for upkeep and investment and maintenance.
- I'd ask everyone if they would want to redo their exterior/update and possibly get up to 2000 from Crossroads for beautification (make their spaces more presentable).
- That should be a major role of the city. For the most part, market forces should, and will, determine what gets leased. In order to foster a stronger market, the City can continue to invest in supportive infrastructure and services, as well as reduce the cost and regulatory compliance hassle of being a landlord and tenant.
- Give them a discount on taxes. ○ Tax incentives might be the only way. ○ Property tax credits?
- Not very positive, property owners are all about the income, how much they can charge without keeping up the property.
- This question is a little vague. It seems like property owners that will accept a reasonable rental rate quickly rent their property. Property owners that are trying to get 18, 24, 30+ per sq foot are pricing themselves out of the market. A small business, or new business may not be able to afford the high rent. The real estate tax rate may also be a problem. The tax has to be recuperated by the land lord through higher rent.
- By signing an agreement to help upkeep the front facade of the building. Keeping the city looking nice and full of residents and businesses benefits everyone.
- Property owners want money as much as the city does. You have to make incentives for them!
- I think for buildings there is an automatic incentive called rent and cash flow. Is this referring to parking? Proactively approaching owners and offering financial incentives and assistance in creating reciprocal cross parking agreements.
- Offer some kind of incentives ○ Show the property owner what they can expect in real dollars. Again return on their investment. ○ Are there property owners whom do not want to lease vacant property? Is this a real problem?

### City Processes

- Be friendlier to prospective businesses-Why did the City torpedo the Mills project on Lockwood?

- Seems always full---few vacancies ○ Create a tax for those empty buildings --that can begin to cover loss of tax income for community.

Hopefully a tax would encourage them to proactively lease it rather than letting it sit empty. ○ Not sure what you are asking here. Most property owners are eager to lease vacant space. If you are asking encourage them to lease to "retail" tenants I would suggest we continue to maintain the amenities to a high standard and this will be attractive to businesses with foot traffic.

- Look at the Maplewood plan to actually build a city. Webster is falling off the map.
- We've had property that have been vacant for years just sitting, we need to have some type of systems to help the landlord find businesses to lease the properties.
- Improve zoning requirements ○ The City can't do it for them, only help sell the benefits of being here and maybe some techniques.

#### Vision and Planning

- Develop a list of businesses that the neighborhood needs. This could be generic i.e.. Italian Restaurant or Shoe Store or more specific by identifying existing businesses in other markets or WG businesses that may be looking to expand. Make contact with these businesses. Put together a "waiting list" of businesses that may fit and have a list of contacts for landlords. This will allow landlords to specifically target potential tenants that will not only allow them to avoid periods with no tenant but also strategically bring in businesses that will fit the vision and add to the neighborhood in some way.
- Mandate that if the property is up to code and leasable and not leased say within two years there is a penalty.

#### Other

- Talk with them.
- Find out if it is the same property owners that are the issue first (create a list). Then sit down with them and find out why they are so hesitant to lease their properties. See if they want to sell?

**7. I believe that the West Pacific Avenue area (located between Kirkham and the railroad tracks) is a possible development area that should be further explored.**

**Yes 38 No 12 8. How do you suggest that the**

**City seek public buy-in from the community?**

- Yet another great question. !! I find it strange as I train so many people here in Webster that they seem to NOT want too many businesses in the area yet complain about how high their taxes are. Somehow they need to realize what bringing businesses into Webster would do for them and their families. ○ It should be explored with several viable and doable recommendations to the community. Make it realistic and put together focus groups of citizens and area business owners for their thoughts.
- By providing a diverse assortment of businesses and restaurants and creating a "walkable" community.
- Include the residents of that area in Town Hall planning meetings. Reach out to the personally so they are part of the change and not simply victims of it.
- Railroad tracks are too much of a problem. (I think this person is referring to the prior question.) ○ Hold town halls and other communication with concrete ideas and visuals-not vague talking points. ○ Town hall meetings-really communicate and listen, involve locals in what kind of business to attract in area.
- Let them know that more business taxes will help keep their property taxes level and will bring money for our parks and schools.
- Instead of hiring an outside consultant to tell the city what to do, develop a public committee with concerned citizens and business people to create a strategic plan.

- Include lots of parking possibilities. Actually increase parking to help with other areas of Webster too. A walking trail and bridge connecting to Old Webster. A creative & eclectic mix of old buildings mixed in with new. Keep or create some green space.
- Not sure what you are asking here. For West Pacific? We need condominiums and to a lesser degree apartments along with retail. The community would be thrilled to have more living space options in Webster. A combination of this and retail/office in this development would be attractive to our community.
- Need to publicize how difficult it is for a small business to survive without full on 63119 support. Write articles and have flyers about how main street has changed. A bunch of restaurants does not make a downtown.
- I don't think the community will accept that because of the way the University purchased properties clandestinely around the community. ○ Clearly communicate the vision for the district and why we believe that vision is ideal. Develop a strategic plan to make that vision a reality.
- Present possible family oriented business options that would marry in well with current businesses in the area. I.E. recreational. Public forums (brainstorming sessions), possible mail survey.
- Show them what the increased tax dollars can mean to them in additional services or decreases in their taxes.
- If a project makes sense to implement, there should be plenty of private dollars to develop the West Pacific Ave. Area. Tax dollars and TIF funding, should not be necessary to develop the area.
- Full disclosure of the costs and fees.
- A constant trickle of information about how a neighborhood business district benefits our community ○ Talk to the residents
- Creating a desirable concept plan and then holding multiple public forums for residents to express their ideas.
- Grass roots - door-to-door to educate community on the benefits of development, town halls to alleviate any concerns, sponsorships of community events (be allowed 5 minutes to talk to the audience), ads in W-K Times, concerted effort to meet with building owners and business owners to articulate the benefits of the community and their business and ask for their help to evangelize the mission.
- Ask the residents...do you want another property tax increase, a Walmart or do you want a controlled multi-use development?
- Hold town halls in the neighborhoods (Old Orchard & Old Webster), not at city hall. ○ Ongoing open conversation with town hall style meetings.
- Things aren't meant to change around here, that's why you have a council of older citizens that do not support change. It's meant to stay the same as it was when they moved their families here or when they grew up here. So in order to get them on board you have to sell it as preserving a tradition of walkable merchants rather than selling it as something new.
- Develop incentive plans, identify target areas, work with possible developers for options and have town halls to inform the community. Use social media to push information out to all citizens.

**9. The City should explore whether there are developers interested in developing a Successful Boutique Hotel.**

Yes 40 No 12

I am a hotel development consultant (<https://www.hvs.com/personnel/574-daniel-mccoy>) with an office here in Webster. There are a variety of issues that significantly affect the potential for hotel development in Webster. I would be happy to share my thoughts and perspective with the City. Feel free to contact me. (Dan McCoy 970215-0620 dmccoy@hvs.com)

**10. I would like to be a Business Ambassador to bring in and/or mentor new retail businesses to the City of Webster Groves.**

Yes 19 No 33

IF you answered "Yes" to question 10, please provide your name and contact information:

Pat Richards embtheo@yahoo.com 314-961-1201

I doubt that I'd be able to give sufficient time to this but feel free to reach out to me with more info if you like.

mike@dpf-stl.com

In a small capacity PLEASE. art@yucandu.com dan@warner-properties.com

Only if there are other efforts to support the program. As it stands now, Webster is not

vibrant. bruce2frame@yahoo.com mark@oliveandoakstl.com matt@mpalazzolo.com Beckie

Jacobs 324-368-6306 sanders@hpdcambridge.com

Don Land 314-397-9299 or donlandstl@gmail.com

Joe Fichter Webster Groves Subaru

Greg Ortyl; greg@oliveandoakstl.com; I would love to be the one to develop a boutique hotel here in WG. Happy to discuss.

John Sauter, john@stlwills.com

Rick Coltrane, 314-914-6556, rickcoltrane@coltranesystems.com

Jean Scholtes 314-517-2868

Dr. Sharon Whalen 314-962-6015

John Barr 314-304-4748 [johndbarrjr@gmail.com](mailto:johndbarrjr@gmail.com)

## Webster Groves BDC Survey

**SENT** on Thu, Mar 16, 2017 at 8:18 am CDT

Sent to Email Lists: District-Crossroads Businesses, District-Old Orchard Businesses, District-Old Webster Businesses

From Name: City of Webster Groves

From Address; [jadalij@webstergroves.org](mailto:jadalij@webstergroves.org)

Reply-to Address; [jadalij@webstergroves.org](mailto:jadalij@webstergroves.org)

Email Link; (survey monkey) <http://conta.cc/2mxkOij>

Sent	402	Clicks on Survey Link	75
Opens	180	Clicked Rate	41.70%
Did Not Open	222		
Open Rate	44.80%		
		Desktop Open Percentage	59.90%
Unsubscribed	0	Mobile Open Percentage	40.10%

## ADDENDUM B