

CITY OF EDEN, N. C.

A special meeting of the City Council, City of Eden was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers at Eden City Hall, 308 East Stadium Drive. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor:	Wayne R. Tuggle, Sr.
Mayor Pro Tem:	Jim Burnette
Council Members:	Angela Hampton
	Bernie Moore
	Darryl Carter
	(absent) Neville Hall
	Jerry Epps
	(absent) Jerry Ellis
City Manager:	Brad Corcoran
City Clerk:	Sheralene Thompson
City Attorney:	Erin Gilley
Planning & Inspections:	Kelly Stultz
Business & Economic Development:	Mike Dougherty
Tourism & Events:	Cindy Adams
News Media:	Gerri Hunt, Eden News

MEETING CONVENED:

Mayor Tuggle called the special meeting of the City Council to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Presentation of the Eden Strategic Plan, Positively Eden:

Council Member Burnette explained that he had met the Mayor of Lexington at a League of Municipalities meeting almost two years ago and talked with him about their strategic plan and how they had gone about it. Last year, Lexington Mayor was asked to come to a special council meeting to discuss what his city had done. At that time, the City Council agreed to go forward and approve the hiring of a consultant. About a year ago a steering committee was formed. Interviews and meetings were held that provided community input.

He stated that he wanted to recognize the staff who were very instrumental in helping to put this plan together and they included the City Manager, Brad Corcoran, Business & Economic Development Director, Mike Dougherty, Tourism & Events Coordinator Cindy Adams, and Planning & Inspections Director, Kelly Stultz.

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He explained that the real recognition goes to their steering committee. He thought they had put together an excellent committee and their task was that once this info came back, they were to look at it to see if it was the right thing to do for the future of Eden. He recognized those members and asked them to stand if they were present.

Reverend Anthony Pass, Reverend Rod Ingram, Reverend Sue Anne Morris, Benny Sexton, Sarah Griffith, Dr. Jen Nixon, Judge Ed Wilson, Randy Hunt, Dr. Cindy Corcoran, Joy Toms, Nick Freitag, Elnora Dillard, Dr. Bill Knight, and chairman, Dana Weston.

He explained that Ms. Kristy Carter would be presenting an overview of this plan. He noted that it was quite extensive and there was a lot of information to grasp. He explained that he had only just received an electronic copy and that they would send it out to them along with paper copies of the plan. He asked them to concentrate tonight on what was being said and then they would open up for questions. He added that this was just the temporary part of the plan. The next part was the implementation and the City Council would then decide on which part of the plan came first. They will have almost two weeks to review this plan and it would be placed on the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda for approval.

Council Member Burnette then introduced Ms. Kristy Carter, Planner with J.M. Teague Engineering and Planning.

Ms. Carter explained that she would just be presenting a highlighted overview because they have not had time to look at the document. She explained that they thought that tonight it would be good to hear from some of their steering committee members as well and then absorb the bigger, longer document and then vote rather than giving them a presentation and then voting tonight.

She began by explaining the process and to give a capture of how they presented it to the community. She pointed out that Eden has a lot of really big questions that it was wrestling with on a day to day basis. Like a lot of small rural sized communities they were wondering how they create jobs, keep their young people here, how to grow downtown, grow businesses, stay healthy, promote their assets and how would it all be funded.

She explained that those were just a few of the questions that started you down this path of strategic planning and as they talked to the community more questions came up and their task was to figure out how to work with those questions. They talked to a lot of folks throughout the process. She had not added in the account from the last community meeting on the final list but over the process they talked to folks, they worked the steering committee, they had a health focus group, they had individual focus groups, in terms of one on one interviews and they had the community budgeting meeting. They also had the last community meeting where folks got to come and see a version of what they were seeing tonight.

So, they got to talk with a broad section of the community and ideas came in from every which way. Some folks were passionate about health, some about education, some about

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jobs but the one thing consistent was there were folks in this community who were very passionate about Eden and its success.

She explained that based on the community information they had, five different strategy areas were developed. Such as, what they promote, how do they broaden the impact of downtown Eden, how do they live, how do they boost neighborhood development, how do they prosper and grow, which was how they increase economic vitality, how do they connect, how were they as a city council connecting with citizens to get them involved and then how do they thrive, how do they integrate health and recreational opportunities

That sounded like a bunch of jumbled words together and as she had said, there were a lot of details behind this that they were not seeing now but what it boiled down to was, how did Eden become a quality place and that means, if she was a visitor and came to Eden, what would she do. If she lived in Eden and had young kids or teenagers what do they do. Who was there and who could she connect with. Also, what was going on, were there events for her to go to and were there fun things to do to keep folks involved.

She explained that they, as a city, were competing with every other city across the country and what folks were looking for, particularly young folks, was to have the ability to get on the internet and look at what the place offers them, then move there and find out what was next. They really wanted to think about how Eden could focus on quality of place in addition to its standard economic development strategies that they have been working on for a long period of time. That kind of set the stage.

She presented a quick snapshot for each of those goal areas. They would see it presented two ways in the document. They have the goal, how do you know if you have met that goal, the responsibilities assigned in terms of an owner, and a timeline that goes along with that. They would see a second set in their document that gave them even more information for each goal area that was outlined.

She explained that all of that was to put in line for them their mission and vision and honoring community values. The mission was to build the brightest future they could create together through relationships between citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions in the city and the region. The idea was that in order for Eden to become that quality of place and to reach the vision it was going to take everybody. They as a council could not do it alone, city staff could not do it alone and citizens out in the community could not do it alone. It would take everybody working together to reach the vision where Eden would be a community where people would have an opportunity to be positively bold and actively engaged.

The steering committee unanimously adopted the mission and vision so the big question was that they have to filter through the budget. She stated that she wanted to spend a little time talking with them about the money and where it would come from.

They have all types of goals, strategies and ideas in this strategic plan and the idea was that as they move through their business of the city, first they focus on their mission and vision.

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Secondly, they focus on the broader goals and next they focus on the strategies underneath that in order to get this work done. She added that there was nobody in the city that thinks they would go out in year one and check off everything that was listed out in this plan. What they were asking the council and the steering committee to endorse was this idea and it was constant shuffling.

She explained that year to year as they were going through their budget, as opportunities arise, ask themselves what they were ready to take advantage of and what can the community help with. So, as they adopt the strategic plan, they say this is our vision, this is our mission and they were going to do their best every day to try to make it happen. They might miss the boat sometimes and as an example of that was they might have a really expensive water or sewer line failure one year that eats up all of the money they had planned to spend. Those things happen but it did not mean that they would say no we cannot do this, it was just keeping it in the forefront and using it as much as they possibly can.

What they would do next would be to communicate what they were doing and how they were doing it to the community. They were given two sets of tools to prepare them for that to think through initiatives and strategies as they come to them.

First, a mission of criteria and she explained that if she, as a citizen, came to them and said she would like for them to do a boat landing in this budget year because it was important, it might work and it might be a good thing but it would need to fit in with the mission and vision overall. They would need to evaluate that and see how it would stack up.

So, they have given them criteria, have they done it previously and were there leadership and partnership opportunities, such as DENR or DRB. They should look at the impact and was that the best way to spend their money at this point in time as maybe there was a more pressing issue or a better opportunity. Would it take staff time and effort and when could it happen.

Secondly, communities who were successful with using their plans integrate it into their daily work. That means you think about your strategic plan, your goals and your mission and vision when you do your capital improvement plan or land use ordinances or when you are developing new city policies, general planning and programming. She explained that education was important and making sure all of their staff members were involved such as people who issue permits people or who may interface with the public such as public works folks who see downtown business owners, they need to know as well.

Eden has lots of partnerships and relationships established already so they need to make sure that their partners know. Also monitor the plan and keep tabs of how things are going. They would also need to amend the plan as needed. She explained that they were originally thinking that it would be a 7 to 10 year plan and they now have come back with a 3 to 5 year plan. There was still a lot of ground work that needs to be done such as a lot of thinking through and building some additional partnerships.

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She explained that there would be a strategic plan 2.0 but it will be a lot easier to do next time around and that was why monitoring the plan was so important and amending it as needed. Then, as they begin their process of updates, one of the things that the steering committee would be doing was to continue to work together, annually or possibly more. She pointed out that Eden also has a lot of people out there who wanted this plan to work and be successful.

Ms. Carter then introduced Ms. Sarah Griffith, Mr. Nick Frietag, and Ms. Dana Westin.

Ms. Sarah Griffith, 1130 Harris Street, explained that as a business owner, she could not imagine being anywhere else. She remembered admiring each building as a little girl and she had always loved the area and the rich heritage. When she got her first camera at age sixteen, she never thought she would be in such a beautiful location, running a business that she loved and employing three people. Taking a scary but fruitful risk has grown her both fruitfully and professionally. She could truly say that it has been a dream come true.

Her concern was for their future. She had seen some great businesses have to close their doors and buildings that have been around for decades have been abandoned or dilapidated. She had recently had a conversation with a man who had lived in Eden for 58 years and he had never considered living anywhere else until the past year. She stated that she would love to raise a family here like he had and be able to share in the history that their city values. Without moving forward with this plan, she was not sure that she could confidently say that she had hope of that happening in the near future.

When Councilman Burnette asked her to be a part of the steering committee, she did not know what to expect but she was met with a new viewpoint and a belief of what their city could be. She truly believed that if they, as their Council were to adopt this recommendation and more importantly not let it sit on a shelf, but to put it into action, that this could be an absolute game changer for the city that they love. The city that they all desire to see thrive. She had full confidence that with their support and the hard work of their city employees and their committee rallying together that this can be what they need it to be for their town. She was grateful that they all voted last year to move forward with this strategic planning process and she thanked them so much as it had been a huge encouragement to her.

Mr. Nick Frietag, Vice President of Gildan Activewear, explained that he wanted to briefly speak about the strategic plan process and the value that it brings to the residents of Eden. He first of all commended them for undertaking it. He was very pleased and honored to serve on the committee. It was a very quality collection of individuals and led superiorly by Dana and Kristy.

He stated that strategic planning has always been a very integral part of any successful business he had been associated with and it was only natural to transcend this over into the community operations. It has been a wonderful venue for city residents to express their opinions on a variety of topics. Primarily the major benefit of strategic planning was to make sure that everyone was provided a sense of direction. They all harness their

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resources which are limited and scarce so that they were attacking the most valuable projects that the city deems as priorities. They want to make sure they also have measurable goals that are achievable and realistic. So although they want to capture everybody's fantastic wish list of where they would like to see things be, they also understand the realities and they have to make realistic options here and show success and move forward and demonstrate that they were marching in the same direction.

Strategic planning was also very much a living organism and cannot be a book on a shelf. It has to be an ongoing process. They have to be adept enough and clever enough to adapt and react appropriately and to make sure that all actions that were taken were consistent with the values of the plan. That was where he believed the strategic planning process really paid off. He wanted to tell them that it was an honor to serve on this committee and to work with them and he thanked them for the opportunity. He also wanted to commend them for bringing them to this point.

Mayor Tuggle thanked him for all the leadership he had provided for this community.

Ms. Dana Westin, President and CEO of Morehead Memorial Hospital, stated that they all had the opportunity to see a very high level review of the plan and hear from some of the stakeholders. It was only just a glimpse but she hoped that they feel the excitement, the passion and that some of that has been contagious and trickled over to them as they talk about this plan.

She explained that prior to her current role, she did strategic planning for a living at hospitals from West Virginia to Georgia. Strategy was her passion. It was something that often times gets overlooked as they get bogged down with their day to day actions.

A lot of times they go on retreats and they think they are doing strategic planning but what they were really doing was making a list of all of their to do tasks and that was not what strategic planning is. She explained that it was not about writing down everything that they were already doing. It was about deciding what they can do differently. It was about deciding how they were going to prioritize and minimize and utilize their resources. This plan specifically was about how they were going to achieve the City of Eden that they all see when they close their eyes.

So what they have seen and what they will receive to look at in a more in depth way, was not going to be a step by step task list. The analogy that she liked to use was that strategic planning was putting an address in a GPS. What they have done was to put in their destination, where they want to go. Now, how they get there, that would be some of the implantation plan. If they have ever used a GPS, they know that it gives the ability to choose routes and then sometimes you end up going in one direction and you have to re-route or you have to make a U-turn because you are going the wrong way. They would have to do that with this plan but what they have done was to set a destination to where they want to be as a city and they think they have done that in a way that was going to be exciting for this community.

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So this was only the beginning. As she had mentioned she made her living doing strategic planning so she made a short check list to evaluate this plan. As an example, she asked the following: Do they have a serious consultant with an open mind for an original plan not a cookie cutter plan. Check. Do they have aspirational mission and vision. Check. Did they receive input from a diverse representation of stakeholders. Check. Did they create relevant goals that can drive change. Check. Did they create innovative initiatives that could be prioritized, measured and tracked. Check.

There was only one box left. Did they have their leadership's buy in, sponsorship, and support, and she thought the steering committee, the community and she all had full confidence that that was another check. She wanted to thank them for their ongoing service to Eden and all that they give to make this place that they know it can be. They also appreciate their support for this plan.

Mayor Tuggle also thanked her for all she had done and for taking on the task of being the chair as that was no easy thing to add to what she already did.

#### Discussion and Acceptance of the Eden Strategic Plan, Positively Eden:

Ms. Carter explained that it was a little bit of a challenge as they have not seen the full plan but they should get the full plan in time to adopt it on May 16<sup>th</sup>. She then opened the floor up for questions.

Mayor Tuggle stated that he had been involved in many strategic plans and it shows all of this activity from the beginning and all of a sudden it was put on a shelf. He asked what they would have in place to keep this committee active and engaged.

Ms. Carter explained that for one, it was their job as leaders of the city to not put it on a shelf. They have given them tools and things to use to implement and integrate it but as a Council it was the leadership behind it and that was their job to not put it on a shelf or let their staff put it on a shelf and do not let the community let it go away. Likewise it was the community's job to say, we gave our voice and input, we are behind this, please do not put it on a shelf.

In terms of actually using it, there were many opportunities day to day, particularly for Eden, the only thing that was different in this plan than other projects she has worked on was that they have a lot of low hanging fruit that you can do and that was why it was a short term plan to start with. They have the community interest and they were ready to go. So she thought the first thing out of the gate which they have already done was having some ways such as, what was going to happen if their budget passes, there were already some funds to implement, there were already some projects on the way, they were going to be able to, either in six months or so down the road come back to the community and say "we heard you, here is what we have done." The steering committee was committed to coming back together that was not necessarily formal, they do not have the date set, but she did not think Dana or Jim would let that slide in terms of getting folks back together. They have things in line that other communities have not had at this point in the process.

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Mayor Tuggle asked if they had discussed if this should be a permanent committee and should it meet quarterly or semi-annually. He pointed out that leadership changed and councils change. Things can change quickly and they needed continuity. At least there needed to be some permanence to something like this to make it work.

Ms. Westin replied that they talked about this at the last meeting and the folks on the committee were so excited that a few talked about really formalizing the committee and creating by-laws so that everyone knows what the expectations would be. In terms of how frequently, that would change a little bit and they need to provide a certain amount of time for initiatives to get moving. The first check-in usually did not make sense until at least eight or nine months of work and then they have the committee come back together and it may not meet for all of the goals, it may be for specific ones but there would be accountability and structure in place to get it set up.

Council Member Hampton expressed thanks for their time and she was glad to see the diversity. She noted that they mentioned education and asked what she would consider another struggle.

Ms. Carter replied that another struggle would be how do you move forward and honor history at the same time. She did not think they had a specific strategy for that but she thought that part of Eden's story was that it was three stories and now it was one story and how do you honor the three stories, the one story and move forward with one collective vision. In response to the small businesses, she explained that they were trying to present it positively. One thing they heard was that people want to do something, they were just not sure what it was.

Council Member Moore thanked them for all their work. When you can get a group of community people together and be positive and going in the right direction that was great. When they talk about the business district, when he looked out and saw business people, he saw mostly folks from the Leaksville district. He asked what about the people from the Draper Village and the Cook Block. He just hoped that they received input from those people too. With that Mega Park on Berry Hill Road, a lot of that could affect the East side. He asked if they had received any input at all.

Ms. Carter explained that they had input from all areas and they were intentional about that. There was a lot of focus on downtown Eden and part of the strategic piece of that was that was where there have been some events and things happening but that was not to say that the other areas of town were left out. Part of what they have suggested here and one thing she was surprised by was like, they talk a lot about marketing and branding and being clear about who you are and what these neighborhoods represent and the history behind them but also moving forward. So, once they get a chance to dig in they would see all of those areas reflected and all the areas were important.



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Ms. Carter, Ms. Westin and the remaining members of the steering committee recognized Mr. Jim Burnette and give a big shout out to him for his commitment to this process. He has been a joy to work with and had instilled hope into the community.

Approval and Adoption of Resolution in Support of Main Street Solutions Fund Grant:

Mr. Mike Dougherty, Director of Business & Economic Development, explained that this fund was designed to create investments and jobs in the downtown area. It requires a 2 to 1 investment and also \$25,000 per job, so for example if someone was going to get \$25,000 in a grant they would have to spend at least \$50,000. In the case they were speaking about, this person would have to spend anywhere from \$100,000 to \$150,000 on an expansion and they would be applying for a \$25,000 grant which would be administered by the city.

**EDEN CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF  
MAIN STREET SOLUTIONS FUND GRANT**

**WHEREAS,** The City of Eden has been part of the NC Main Street program since 2003, leading to more than \$7 million in private and public investment in two of the city's traditional downtown areas and;

**WHEREAS,** The Eden Main Street program has set as one of its goals to recruit and support young entrepreneurs to open successful businesses in Eden and;

**WHEREAS,** The NC Main Street Solutions Fund has proven to assist small business owners and be a catalyst for downtown investment in numerous NC Main Street communities;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE EDEN CITY COUNCIL** supports the City of Eden and Mayor Wayne R. Tuggle, Sr., as applicant for and to authorize the NC Main Street Solutions Grant application on behalf of the City to assist with small business development.

**ADOPTED** by the Eden City Council this 2nd day of May, 2017

Wayne R. Tuggle, Sr., Mayor

ATTEST

Sheralene S. Thompson, City Clerk

A motion was made by Council Member Carter seconded by Council Member Epps to approve and adopt the resolution in support of the Main Street Solutions Fund Grant. All Council Members present in favor of this motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by unanimous consent to adjourn. All Council Members present voted in favor of this motion.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Sheralene S. Thompson City Clerk

ATTEST:

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Wayne Tuggle, Sr., Mayor