



Economic Sustainability Commission

*301 West Main Street
Carrboro, North Carolina 27510
February 8, 2017*

The following members were present: Bob Saunders, Robert Hash, Leo Gaev, Matt Neal, Bill Thompson, Terry Turner, Shelia Walsh Reedy, Kim Calandra, Board Liaisons Randee Haven-O'Donnell and Sammy Slade.

The following staff members were present; Annette Lafferty, ECD Director and Graduate Student Taylor Smith.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Bob Saunders. The first item on the agenda was a discussion of the concept for the Food First program conditional use rezoning request. Jim Spencer was on hand to describe the program and building concept of the Food First building located at 110 West Main Street in downtown Carrboro. The project will combine the pantry which is currently located at this site and the food kitchen located in downtown Chapel Hill. The building would be a 15,500 square foot 3 story tall (with parking under as the first level). Mr. Spenser reviewed building elements including parking, building height, interior spaces, and other features.

Questions by the Commission included, what outreach and contact had been made with surrounding businesses, the amount of parking, had other locations been considered, transportation on weekends, what have other communities done in terms of ordinances to discourage panhandling, how comfortable is the business community in speaking out, clarifying on process of bringing people in and out.

The ESC then discussed the update to the Economic Sustainability Plan. The discuss centered around funding and capital issues for new and existing businesses. The Commission discussed the following recommended action items that will be included in the final plan.

Action Items

- Update the RLF and BLF application process to be more streamline and efficient.
- Develop a process for micro-loans of \$5000 or less.
- Develop a policy for business grants.
- Collaborate with banks and other lenders or developers to provide gap financing/lease assistance to businesses.
- Work with lenders on incentives programs.
- Target light manufacturing opportunities like development of the town owned property on Old 86.



- Work with non-profits to ensure knowledge of capital funding source.
- Review program guidelines for the EERLF possible expansion of the eligible expenditures.
- Create a marketing public awareness campaign to share with the public raising awareness of buying local.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.