

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS**

### InnovateNC

The kickoff meeting of the Innovation Council (IC) was held on October 22nd at the MARBIONC Biotechnology Center at UNCW Crest Research Campus. The IC will continue to meet monthly for the duration of the two-year initiative.

The first cross-city convening was held in Durham and the Research Triangle Park on December 14th and 15th. At this event, Wilmington's Executive Council was introduced to representatives from the four other InnovateNC cities and to the 10 partner organizations who are supporting this initiative with in-kind services. We were given a timeline which establishes key milestones for the work that must get accomplished by the Innovation Councils from each city during the next six months.

In order to provide for an effective way to communicate the progress of the Wilmington/Carolina Coast InnovateNC initiative to stakeholders and citizens in the Wilmington region, the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County, the Town of Leland, and Brunswick County will regularly post information on each of their respective websites.

### Development of 63+ acres on Hwy. 17 between Ocean Gate Plaza Dr. and Ploof Rd.

During the Master Plan Update workshops, the PlaceMakers consulting team prepared a concept plan for the proposed Ocean Gate mixed-use development which generally conforms to Flexcode principals. This concept plan was shared with the developer for the purpose of initiating further discussion and cooperation. Planning Staff will meet with the developer on February 3<sup>rd</sup> to review the concept plan and keep this exciting project moving forward.

### Harrington Village

With Staff's guidance, the developer has prepared a concept plan for a mixed-use development proposed for the 20± acre property located at the corner of Baldwin Dr. and Village Rd. The tract is presently occupied primarily by the Leland Flea Market. This concept plan conforms to the Flexcode and the Town's vision for this site that was recommended by PlaceMakers during the Gateway District rezoning study. The concept plan shows approximately 30,000 sf. of retail/commercial space and 300 apartment units to be constructed in two phases. Staff met with the developer on December 22nd to discuss utilities, the proposed re-alignment of Northgate Dr. and a request for possible economic development incentives. In a separate memorandum, I have outlined a list of economic development incentives for this project that have been requested by the developer.

### Other Gateway District Re-development

- Work is underway to fit-up a building located at 113 Village Rd. (the former dry cleaner) for use as a donut shop.
- Staff is working with the owner of the 2± acre property at 480 Village Rd. near the corner of Village and Dresser Lane to provide guidance for preparation of a concept plan for a residential development.
- Staff is working with Mr. E.G. Dale and the owner of a business who is interested in the future corner lot that will result from the re-alignment of Northgate Dr.

- Staff is having discussions with a developer planning a residential development with 90 single-family lots on Village Rd. adjacent to the VFW Hall. The property is presently located in the County but Staff is attempting to persuade the developer to annex the property into the Town.
- Staff met with a developer who interested in purchasing a 7+ acre property at 408 Village Rd. near the corner of South Navassa Rd. for the purpose of constructing 80 apartment units. The developer will be conducting its due diligence during the next six months before it determines whether the project is viable.

#### Other Economic Development News

- A Fairfield Inn by Marriott is planned for a site on Westgate Dr. near the Best Western Hotel.
- Brunswick Forest has announced plans to construct a 300 unit luxury apartment community to be located on land south of the commercial/retail area.
- ALDI's is planning to construct a new grocery store at the corner of Ploof Rd. and Hwy 17.

#### Public Improvement Projects

- Mallory Creek Road Extension: Plans have been submitted for permits; bids are expected to be advertised in March and construction should be completed by the end of the year.
- Northgate Dr. Re-alignment: AECOM has prepared preliminary drawings for improvements to Northgate Dr. and re-alignment with Baldwin Dr.
- WB & S Road Extension: Coastal Land Design has completed preliminary drawings to enable Staff to delineate right-of-way and assess the viability of this project.

#### Update to Town Master Plan

Planning Staff is working closely with PlaceMakers on the update to the 2009 Town Master Plan; the Charrette workshop was held from November 10 – 13 at Town Hall; the preliminary draft of the updated Master Plan will be presented to Staff in mid-February.