



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, Community Development Director

DATE: July 9th, 2015

SUBJECT: Economic Development Activities Report for June 2015

Business and Development Activity

Downtown Urbana

- Renovations are complete at Strawberry Fields, which announced that it will hold its grand reopening on July 9th. The newly remodeled store features a larger sales floor with higher ceilings, a restored café and seating area, new freezer and cooler sections, as well as a bakery. Owner Mohammad Al-Heeti reported that 25 employees have been hired including 10 former staff members.
- Sherwin Williams will be moving from their current location at 1504 North Cunningham to 203 North Vine Street, the former Corkscrew property, which was purchased by Joseph & Camper Commercial Properties. Joseph & Camper intends to invest over \$450,000 in the renovation of the building to prepare it for its new tenant.
- MedServ Equipment has relocated from Champaign to 400 North Broadway in Urbana (former Star Uniform building). The durable medical equipment supplier expanded as part of the move adding one additional employee.
- The Capoeira Angola Centre of Mestre Joao Grande has announced that it plans to relocate to 122 West Main Street above Mirabelle Fine Pastries in August. The center offers lessons and performances of a unique Brazilian martial art that combines dance, acrobatics and music.
- Matthew Farrell Creative, a graphic designer, has opened his new startup in [co][lab].
- The Urbana Lil Porgy's at University and Broadway was forced to close temporarily until repairs can be made after a car struck the west wall of the building.
- Silvercreek Restaurant is proceeding with its outdoor expansion plans along the new Boneyard Creek Improvement Area, which includes an outdoor seating area along a new deck overlooking the Boneyard Creek.
- Work continues for the expansion of Heel-To-Toe into 108 ½ West Main Street to accommodate Innovative Bracing.
- Work continues for a second-story expansion of A-Plus VIP Lounge to include a karaoke bar at 214 West Main Street.
- Submissions for the Request for Proposals at the North Crane Alley Site concluded on June 26th.
- Parasol Records / Itty Bitty Bike Shop is seeking approvals to improve its building façade at 303 West Griggs Street.
- Lacy's BBQ restaurant has opened at 115 W Main Street. The business owners held a ribbon cutting with UBA on June 24th.
- Work continues for an expansion of Amara Yoga & Arts into the space formerly occupied by the Great Impasta at Lincoln Square.

- Staff will hold meetings with prospective developers for the 200 Vine redevelopment site in the coming weeks.

University-Medical

- Demolition is nearly complete at Lincoln and Western Avenues where an 84 unit apartment is proposed. Plans are currently under review.
- The expansion of Gateway Shoppes on University Avenue is filling up with tenants. Final buildout continues on the Lacey’s Place gaming hall, plans are under review for a new Wireless Mike’s store, and plans have been submitted for a karaoke lounge.
- The Cherry Tree Café received a conditional use permit on June 17 to operate a café at Washington and Race Streets.
- Work is underway for a new Korean BBQ restaurant called Bab+ going into Gregory Place East.
- Work continues for the Campus Circle apartment complex on University Avenue.
- Demolition is underway for the expansion of the MTD facility at 1101 East University Avenue.
- In mid-April the Don Juan Cocina Mexicana and Cantina closed its doors at 1106 West University Avenue. The business had been open for approximately one year. New tenants have expressed interest in the property.

Philo Road

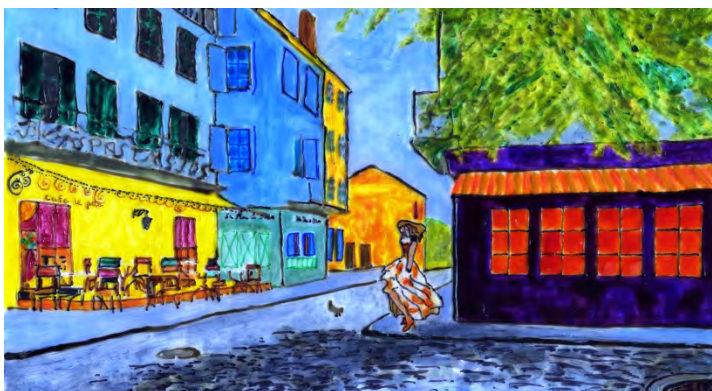
- Café Zojo announced that it will close on July 12th.
- The intersection of Philo Road at Windsor is now open.

Cunningham Avenue

- The demolition of the former Hanford Inn is nearing completion.
- Plans are under review for the renovation of the new Urbana Boulders rock climbing gym at 1502 North Cunningham Avenue.
- Plans are under review for two, 20-unit apartment buildings at Eastland Apartments located at 1905 N Cunningham Avenue.

Public Arts Program

- The call for entries for Murals on Glass received 36 applications by the June 19 deadline. The jury has met to review all submissions and selected “Arles Morning” by Phil Strang and Slat Painting by Nathan Westerman. Both will be printed on adhesive vinyl sheets, and installed on the windows of Urbana Business Association Office (111 W. Main Street) and the Civic Center, respectively (108 E. Water Street) by late August.





- The working group for the Urbana Art Expo, consisting of staff, commissioners, and officers at 40 North: Champaign County Arts Council, has begun planning for the juried fine arts exhibition and sale. This event will be at the Civic Center on September 13th, from 10:00am to 5:00pm. The call for entries has been promoted through social media, the Urbana Public Arts Program e-newsletter, and a Smile Politely ad. Deadline for all application materials will be on August 7, after which a select group of local artists and arts administrators will select sixteen artists or artist teams.
- In June, Art Now! highlighted the work of Catherine Wiesener, a ceramic artist and faculty member at the University of Illinois. For the month of July, a new episode featuring Glen C. Davies will be aired.
- At Art at the Market in June, Karissa McDermott led a flower pot-decorating party, and Djibril Camara & Ballet Allah Tantou gave a participatory West African drumming and dance performance. The next Art at the Market on July 11 will have a veggie stamping workshop led by artists Ellie Pinzarrone and Maria Ludeke, and music by guitarist Sam Payne and fiddler Claire Johnson. The 2015 Art at the Market schedule is available online at www.urbanaininois.us/artworkshops.

Marketing and Events Activity

- Marketing Coordinator Natalie Kenny-Marquez coordinated the first in a series of three food truck rallies at the Urbana Civic Center. The first rally was a huge success including seven food trucks and hundreds of patrons. The event was well covered by local media including live and recorded spots on WCIA and FOX as well as coverage by News-Gazette. The next rally will take place on July 28th.
- Staff filmed the July edition of “It’s All About U”. This program airs on Mondays at 6 p.m. on UPTV or can be viewed on YouTube.

Urbana’s Market at the Square

- The Market has submitted a grant to USDA in partnership with The Land Connection which will help to fund promotions and staff to support EBT/SNAP programs at the Urbana and Champaign farmers markets.
- Market Director Natalie Kenny-Marquez made appearances on the following media to promote the farmers market: WCIA News Channel 3’s ciLiving, News-Gazette, WDWS/WHMS, “It’s Your Business” with Alex Ruggieri, and the radio stations 96.1, 93.5/95.3, 94.5.
- Farm Fresh and Fast cooking segments are ongoing weekly on WCIA News Channel 3’s ciLiving program. The segment appears every Thursday at 4 p.m and can also be viewed online: <http://www.illinoishomepage.net/ciLiving>
- The Market Director led a grant project with the Illinois Farmers Market Association to increase Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) vouchers issued by the local Women, Infant and Children (WIC) offices in downstate Illinois. \$1,000 of that project has been issued to Urbana’s Market at the Square to help boost WIC FMNP voucher redemption in Champaign County.

Other Updates

- Economic Development Associate Miles Thomas has been promoted to the role Economic Development Specialist. Also joining Community Development as an Economic Development

Specialist will be Libby Horwitz who will be relocating from the Philadelphia area in August.

- Urbana Business Association Executive Director Cynthia Chandler announced that she will be moving on to a new position at the end of July. During her successful tenure, Cynthia established the Middle Market and Uncork Urbana Wine Festival, created the Urbana mobile app, and grew business membership in the organization. The UBA Board will soon appoint an interim director and begin the search for the next executive director.
- Community Development Director Libby Tyler attended Smart Growth America's invitation-only Local Leaders Policy Forum in Washington D.C. where she presided over a round-table discussion on blight reduction.
- Community Development Director Libby Tyler and Economic Development Manager Brandon Boys presented on the topic of community development and economic development programs in Urbana to two groups of visiting dignitaries from China as part of the China Executive Leadership Program at the University of Illinois.

Memorandum



TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor
FROM: Cynthia Chandler, Executive Director
DATE: July 1, 2015
SUBJECT: Urbana Business Association Activities Report for June 2015

Membership Growth

The UBA has seen the addition of three member businesses in the month of June and we have achieved the \$28,000 threshold in cash membership dues for this fiscal year.

Ribbon Cuttings

The UBA performed one ribbon cutting ceremony in the month of June: Lacy's Kansas City Style BBQ (June 24).

Uncork Urbana Wine Festival

The UBA once again worked with the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Association to plan and coordinate the Uncork Urbana Wine Festival. This event took place in downtown Urbana at Race and Main Sts. on Saturday, June 13. The IGGVA secured the insurance and liquor license and recruited the wineries to attend. The UBA arranged marketing, food trucks, sponsorships, volunteers, entertainment, and all the necessities of a festival (tents, tables, chairs, toilets, handwashing stations, stage, etc).

Live entertainment featured five local artists performing throughout the day – Katie Flynn, Kenna Mae, Ryan Groff of Elsinore, Emily Otnes of Tara Terra, and The Diva & The Dude. Three food trucks participated including Dragon Fire Pizza, Piato To Go, and Roks Tacos. The expanded footprint of this year's event included the Busey Bank parking lot and Race St (south of Main St and north of Elm St.) and provided better accommodations allowing for more tables and chairs and more room for mingling of attendees. Portable toilets and hand-washing stations were also on site.

Nine Illinois vineyards were represented this year including Alto Vineyards (Champaign), Berryville Vineyards (Claremont), Hopewell Winery (Rockport), Illinois River Winery (North Utica), Kite Hill Vineyards (Carbondale), Niemerg Family Winery (Findlay), Pheasant Hollow Winery (Whittington), Sleepy Creek Vineyards (Fairmount), and Wyldewood Cellars (St. Joseph). All vineyards represented were pleased with their sales throughout the event with one depleting their full inventory and another coming close. Sponsors for this event included the City of Urbana and Busey Bank with Illini Radio Group serving as our media sponsor.

Despite the rain, the Uncork Urbana Wine Festival was an incredible success. An estimated 2,200 people attended, doubling last year's attendance. Our supply of souvenir glasses was depleted by 7pm (1,500 2015 glasses and 300 2014 glasses). There were two downpours of rain, one lasting about 20 minutes, the other about 45 minutes, but the attendees stayed.

Urbana Sweetcorn Festival

The 40th year of the Urbana Sweetcorn Festival is in full planning mode. To date 43 vendor applications have been received and the early bird deadline has expired. The final deadline for receiving vendor application is July 24.

The second round of entertainment line-up announcements went out on Thursday, June 25. On Saturday, the Los Angeles based synth-pop group Berlin will headline the main stage. Berlin is best known for their 1986 single "Take My Breath Away", the love theme from the movie "Top Gun," the band also has seven albums and numerous other hit singles. Combined with The Psychedelic Furs, the English rock band best known for hits like "Love My Way," "Heartbreak Beat," and "Pretty in Pink," and supported by Australian based new wave band The Church, known for their singles "Under the Milky Way" and "The Unguarded Moment," makes for an incredible trifecta of Sweetcorn headliners. Rounding out the main stage entertainment will be Tigerbeat, Sun Stereo, and Cody & the Gateway Drugs.

The One Community Together stage line-up is near finalization and will include performances by Bruiser and the Virtues, Mike Ingram and the New Souls, Diva and the Dude, and Traditional Jazz Orchestra on Friday night. Saturday will feature Bow-Dacious String Band, BBL Fine Arts Jazz Ensemble, Classy Combinations, CUperstars, Prairie Dogs, and the marching bands of Urbana, Central, and Centennial High Schools. New this year will be the extended entertainment line-up into Saturday evening featuring Bone Jugs n Harmony, Tara Terra, and Oshwa.

The UBA will again work with C-U Folk and Roots to promote a third stage at Main and Race Sts. This entertainment line-up has not yet been finalized and will be announced mid-July with the final entertainment release.

Marketing Update:

Uncork Urbana radio ads ran May 30 through June 13 at which time destination downtown ads took over. The UBA continues to maintain a web presence on Smile Politely with three ads placed throughout as well as weekly SPlogs (online blogs).