

Town of Selbyville
Economic Development Committee
May 21, 2026

Mayor Duncan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Selbyville Public Library.

The first item on the agenda was the review and discussion of the proposed Downtown Development District (DDD) application. Mayor Duncan turned the discussion over to Sharon Cruz of Davis, Bowen & Friedel (DBF), the Town's consultant for the DDD application. Attendees introduced themselves for the benefit of those attending for the first time. Mayor Duncan emphasized the importance of moving forward quickly due to the State's application deadline. He explained that the Town has been actively gathering public input through a community survey distributed to residents, business owners, employees, and other members of the Selbyville community to identify priorities for future improvements. At the time of the meeting, the Town had received 184 completed survey responses. Ms. Cruz presented the proposed Downtown Development District boundary map and reviewed the designated area with the committee. Matt Leimbach, owner of Matt the Carpet Guy, discussed the high costs associated with commercial development. He stated that impact fees and other development costs make projects difficult to complete and suggested reducing certain fees or providing financial assistance so developers can invest more into their projects. Mayor Duncan noted that Mr. Leimbach's proposed redevelopment project would be a significant asset to the Town and explained that he had been invited to the meeting because of the positive impact his project could have on downtown revitalization. Ms. Cruz stated that projects already committed to moving forward strengthen the Town's DDD application. She explained that including "shovel-ready" projects demonstrates that Selbyville is prepared to begin revitalization efforts immediately if designated. Coleman Bunting, representing Bunting Development, stated that parking continues to be a challenge within downtown Selbyville. He referenced the Town of Berlin's municipal parking lot as an example of a successful public parking solution. Kelly Kline, representing the Selbyville Public Library, commented that pedestrian connectivity is another concern. She noted there are limited safe crosswalks connecting the municipal parking lot to downtown destinations, making it difficult for pedestrians to safely access businesses and community facilities. Survey responses also identified inadequate lighting, additional crosswalks, and improved pedestrian safety as major priorities, particularly for individuals with mobility limitations and families with young children. The committee discussed the possibility of establishing a fast-track building permit process for redevelopment projects. It was noted that the Town already maintains a relatively quick permit review process. Discussion followed regarding available grant opportunities for improvements such as lighting, sidewalks, and crosswalks. It was noted that many grant programs require the improvements to be tied to a specific development project.

Mr. Leimbach asked whether his proposed project could qualify for future grant opportunities if the Town receives DDD designation. Ms. Cruz explained that the Office of State Planning

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Coordination intends to review applications quickly and expects designation decisions by the end of the summer.

Ms. Cruz requested that Mr. Leimbach provide additional information regarding his proposed project so it can be included in the application package as evidence of the Town's redevelopment readiness. Ms. Cruz reviewed the project timeline, noting that a draft application must be completed by June 1 to allow Mayor and Council sufficient time for review and approval at the June Council meeting. The completed application is due to the State by June 15, leaving a limited timeframe for completion. The committee discussed strategies for attracting additional restaurants, noting that dine-in establishments remain one of the Town's greatest needs and serve as important economic drivers for downtown areas. Susan Bunting, representing the Selbyville Historical Society, stated that Selbyville also has a significant need for a local pharmacy. Since the closure of Rite Aid, residents have been required to travel to Harris Teeter or Millsboro, both of which often involve heavy traffic congestion. She noted that word-of-mouth recommendations within the community are influential and suggested maintaining a list of available commercial properties for prospective businesses. The discussion expanded to identifying attractions that could encourage visitors to spend more time in Selbyville. Several participants suggested utilizing Town-owned parcels for small public amenities such as a splash pad or additional municipal parking. Cruz asked why the Historical Society building is only open during limited hours, noting that it could become a stronger tourism attraction if visitors had more opportunities to access it. Representatives from the Historical Society explained that the organization is currently undergoing maintenance, redevelopment efforts, and membership growth. They agreed that expanded operating hours could become a future goal. Councilman Bill Kirsch suggested recruiting a comprehensive medical facility that could house physicians, urgent care services, and other healthcare providers under one roof to better serve Selbyville's growing senior population. Pastor Blair suggested developing a dog park, explaining that he currently pays an annual membership fee to use the Ocean City dog park and values both the recreational opportunities and the social interaction it provides. He stated that a similar amenity could strengthen community connections in Selbyville. Ms. Cruz explained that municipalities themselves are not eligible to receive grant funding through the DDD designation; however, nonprofit organizations within the district may qualify for certain funding opportunities. The committee discussed the importance of establishing a long-term vision for the Town. Members agreed that the community survey provides valuable insight into residents' priorities and should help guide future planning efforts. Ms. Cruz reviewed examples of incentive programs offered by other designated Downtown Development Districts. Mayor Duncan stated that Selbyville should consider both short-term and long-term incentives while determining what programs would be financially feasible for the Town.

Ms. Kline suggested developing a tiered incentive program that would prioritize business types most needed by the community, such as restaurants, while offering different levels of incentives

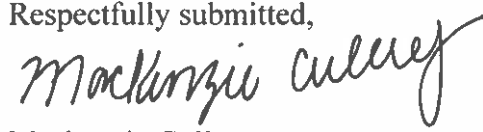
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for other types of commercial development. Tax credits were discussed as one potential option. The committee noted that impact fees are established to recover actual infrastructure costs and provide important revenue for the Town. Members also discussed the effects of Sussex County's recent property reassessment on local property taxes. Streetscape improvements, landscaping, downtown beautification, and revitalization efforts were consistently identified as top community priorities. Councilman Kirsch suggested organizing a "First Friday" event similar to other communities but acknowledged that Selbyville currently lacks the concentration of downtown businesses necessary to support the event. Members discussed both the advantages and challenges associated with implementing such an event. Mayor Duncan asked how the Town might work collaboratively with Leigh Scott regarding the revitalization of several older downtown buildings. He suggested reaching out to discuss future redevelopment opportunities and determine how the Town could assist with those efforts. The committee also discussed the Town's current election requirements, noting that only bona fide residents may vote in municipal elections. Some members expressed concern that property owners who invest in the Town but do not reside within municipal limits are unable to participate in local elections. Possible changes to voting eligibility were discussed. Additional ideas included establishing a farmers' market to increase community activity and attract visitors. Members also discussed transportation challenges, noting the lack of DART bus service in the area, increasing transportation costs, and the need for convenient local destinations where residents can gather and socialize. It was also noted that remote work has increased the desire for accessible community gathering spaces. Ms. Cruz explained that the Downtown Development District Plan must be formally reviewed every five years. At that time, the Town may revise the plan based on changing priorities. Individual projects or initiatives may be adopted before that review period; however, elements included in the original adopted plan generally cannot be removed until the five-year evaluation.

With no further business to discuss, the next meeting was scheduled for May 27, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Loryn Rose made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kirsch. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,


Mackenzie Culley