

Cramerton working on strategic plan

By Joe DePriest

PUBLISHED IN: REGIONAL NEWS

A small but vibrant downtown; a walking trail that links historic sites; and a 400,000-square-foot former textile plant waiting for the next major tenant.

Cramerton has a lot to offer, and town officials want to do a better job of letting people know about it.

Following a recent retreat, town commissioners adopted a set of goals and objectives that include an economic development strategic plan that will attract new businesses and partner with existing businesses.

Mayor Ronnie Worley said that while the town will continue working with the Gaston County Economic Development Commission, "we want to do all we can to market Cramerton."

The town will work with the N.C. Department of Transportation to get directional signs on Wilkinson Boulevard that point motorists to the central business district.

On May 1, the farmers market will reopen downtown after a successful debut in 2010. The market will open from 4 to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays.

A higher profile on the Internet and other electronic media is also a goal, Worley said, along with marking the town's new history trail.

An ongoing goal is finding a tenant for the former Eagle Mountain Finishing Plant on Eagle Road.

The operation, which had been around since 1984 and was the town's largest wastewater customer, closed in 2008.

Constructed in the 1960s, the building has high ceilings and ample dock-loading space and easy access to Interstate 85, Worley said.

"It's more modern and up-to-date than some of the plants around," he said. "We've had a couple of perspective clients look at it, but so far we haven't found the right fit."

As the search for a tenant continues, the town will survey local small businesses to determine their needs, Worley said.

Meanwhile, he said, plans are apparently moving forward on a proposed development with more than 500 homes between Cramer Mountain Road and Hamrick Drive.

Worley said the plan that was originally presented last summer may be expanded into a commercial/institutional/residential complex.

The town has approved a conditional use permit for the original plan.

Worley said an announcement about the project's status and scope may be coming within the next few weeks.

Related Stories

Related Images

In about a month, a draft of the economic development strategic plan will go to town commissioners, according to Town Manager Michael Peoples.

It will include partnerships with the county EDC and chambers of commerce but will "localize Cramerton," Peoples said.



[Subscribe to The Charlotte Observer.](#)