



## Bi-Monthly E-News

February 2007

### Development Panel

The Partnership will host three development breakfasts in 2007.

The first one will be held Thursday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. at the Shoal Creek Golf Course.

#### Our event sponsor is Aquila.

The program will be a developers' panel touching on every segment - office, light industrial, warehouse/distribution, retail and public projects. Panelists will answer prepared questions and questions from the audience.

Confirmed panelists include:

- John Ferguson - Ferguson Properties and partner in Whitehall Station
- CBL & Associates - national developer & a Whitehall Station partner
- Charles Small - a commercial realtor with Prudential- Carter-Duffey Realtors
- Rick Baier - a commercial realtor with CB Richard Ellis & partner in the Liberty Triangle
- Doug Holmberg - Shoal Creek Valley developer
- Curt Wenson - Liberty City Administrator

These panelists provide an excellent level of expertise in development issues. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from the experts.

[Click here to go to the reservation form.](#)

Shoal Creek was the site of our November awards breakfast and the food and service received high marks!

[www.thinklibertymo.com](http://www.thinklibertymo.com)

::

## Significant additions to our website

The Partnership has added several items to its website recently.

The report written from our 2006 business visits is posted to the website. The report includes key findings from the visits as well as a breakdown of industry sectors, sizes and make-up of those visited. As always, however, you won't see the names of those visited. The Partnership guarantees confidentiality thus spurring honest, open communication.

[Click to go to the Business Retention/Expansion report.](#)

After reviewing the report, if you would like to participate in our 2007 visits, please call the office or drop us an email.

The Liberty area is brimming with new development plans. We have added a section to our website that links directly to site plans. Want to see what Roger's has planned? How about Whitehall Station?

[Click here to link to the site plans.](#)

Partnership investors are leaders in the community when it comes to economic growth and development. Certain investor levels are highlighted on the website each month.

[Click here to read the highlight & to see the investor list.](#)

Jesse Shroyer is our new intern for this semester.

Click [here to read Jesse's bio on our website.](#)





## E-News, Volume 3, Issue 2, April 2007

Our E-News is intended to inform you about topics pertinent to business and development. If you have comments or ideas for future issues, please contact the Partnership office at 816-407-9242 or via email at [astephens@thinklibertymo.com](mailto:astephens@thinklibertymo.com).

### Signage Discussion Continues

Last year the Partnership and the Chamber co-hosted an information session about signage and banners ordinances. It was an effort to inform the business community about changes in regulations. City staff explained the current ordinances at that session.

We continued, however, to hear comments about those regulations in our business visits. The Partnership requested that the City Council consider making changes to the ordinances. Early this year, the Council instructed City staff to research some options.

Today, the Partnership with the Chamber and Historic Downtown Liberty hosted a meeting to discuss suggestions and ideas for changes. It was a good session attended by about forty people including business owners, City council members, City staff and Planning & Zoning commission representatives. The topics of discussion included pole signs, monument signs, wall signs, banners and attention getting devices.

The hosting organizations took notes and will take them back to their respective groups. At our next business retention committee meeting on May 3rd, we will summarize the discussion and hear from the City about an on-line survey. We plan to develop our recommendations at that meeting.

**Your input is critical! Please call me if you have ideas, or better yet, please take the time to complete an on-line survey. [Click here to go to the survey](#). This is your opportunity to voice your opinion!**

### Development Breakfast

The Partnership coordinated a development breakfast last month. The event was sponsored by Aquila. The 80 plus attendees heard area developers talk about the challenges facing their development and industry sector.

John Ferguson with Ferguson Properties and the developer of Whitehall Station noted that infrastructure around that development is critical. Especially important is the transportation network along the south side of Liberty including the Flintlock overpass and South Liberty Parkway.

Doug Holmberg with Zion Securities talked about their proposed next phase along 152 in the Shoal Creek area. The mixed-use development could add another million square feet of commercial space including retail. Holmberg noted that the competition in the northland for retailers is significant. He counted seven new retail areas in Platte & Clay Counties along 152, I-435, 291, I-35.

Charles Small represented different industry sectors including office and light industrial. He noted that Oakwood Business Park has several new buildings underway. Small said that the office market in the entire KC metro area has its challenges right now.

Cardon Smith is with CBL & Associates, the national developer partnering with Ferguson Properties on Whitehall Station. Smith noted that this area has great potential. He said they are excited to begin the project here. CBL is the recent purchaser of Oak Park Mall.

Liberty City Administrator Curt Wenson said the development comes with challenges. For the retail sector, rooftops (housing starts) make the difference. Right now, there is a great deal of effort going into boosting Liberty's residential building permits.

After the meeting, attendees had the opportunity to review site plans and visit with the developers. More pictures are posted on our website, [www.thinklibertymo.com](http://www.thinklibertymo.com). The Partnership's next development breakfast is scheduled for September 27th. That program will include the KCHBA regarding the housing market.





---

## June, 2007 E-News

ICSC Convention results in great prospects

A Liberty area team participated in the annual convention of the International Council of Shopping Centers. The team had appointments with retailers, developers and redevelopers. All team members felt the time at the convention improves each year.

Additionally, the Partnership participated in the Public Sector Showcase. The Showcase area is a no-charge opportunity to display a poster, distribute fliers and visit with interested parties. The Partnership also had available for the team members a flash drive that contained information about the developments in the area. The flash drive will be used in follow-up communications as well.

Herein are some news bytes from the Partnership.

### Company chooses a Liberty location

The Partnership worked with the **Kansas City Area Development Council** on the following project. We thank our local team members including **KCADC**, the **City of Liberty** and **Charles Small** with the **Oakwood Business Park**. This project is on a very fast track and our partners worked hard to keep it moving forward, quickly!

### Hydroforming manufacturer expands in KC Vari-Form to invest more than \$8 million in first U.S. facility

**June 8, 2007 LIBERTY, Mo.** - Vari-Form Inc. selected Liberty, Mo. for a new manufacturing facility. The decision will create more than 40 new jobs for area residents.

---

### Thank You to Our Investors

#### Leadership Level

Hallmark Cards  
M&I Bank  
Shoal Creek Valley Dev.

#### Chairman's Level

Aquila  
Bank Midwest

#### Executive Level

B&B Theaters  
Jim Ballinger/A G Edwards  
Clay County Savings Bank  
Crowley Furniture  
Essig Management  
Ferguson Properties  
Hy-Vee  
Havens Construction  
Liberty Area Chamber

"We want to thank the regional, state, and city-level economic development teams that helped streamline the site selection process, the central location of the new Liberty facility will serve our North American market well, logistically," said Stephen Dow, President of Vari-Form.

"The Liberty area is pleased that Vari-Form chose our community for their first U.S. site. This project brings with it everything a community wants - jobs, investment and enhancement to the economic well-being of the area," said Alicia Stephens, executive director of the Partnership for Community Growth & Development.

"New payroll and facility investment will be multiplied throughout the Liberty area. Through this project's process, the Liberty team proved its willingness to do what it takes to attract new business," added Stephens.

"This is a great example of the teamwork in Clay County, the

Liberty PriceChopper  
Walton Construction  
William Jewell College

#### **Foundation Level**

AT&T  
Bank Liberty  
Carma  
Cates Realty and Auction  
Charles Small  
Climate Control Heating & Cooling  
Curry Investment Co  
Design Lighting  
Dobberstine Custom Homes  
ERA Threshold Realty  
Gary Crossley Ford  
Gould Evans  
HBA of Greater KC  
Historic Downtown Liberty  
Hunt Midwest  
J E Dunn Construction  
Kansas City Power & Light  
L J Brant, CPA  
Liberty First Bank  
Logan & Associates  
Missouri Gas Energy  
Office Depot  
P1 Group/A D Jacobson  
Pony Express Bank  
Realty Executives, Liberty  
S M Wilson Company  
Schlotzsky's  
Shaped Steel Inc.  
Smurfit-Stone Container Corp.  
Trophy Properties  
Turner Construction  
Russ Weathers  
Williams & Campo, P.C.  
Yoshi's Kitchen

city of Liberty, Oakwood Business Park and the Partnership for Community Growth. We all worked together to make it fast and easy for Vari-Form to locate here," said Jim Hampton, executive director for the Clay County Economic Development Council.

Hampton added, "Combining the ease of doing business with the great infrastructure, good schools and quality workforce is a win for Liberty, Clay County and Vari-Form. We welcome them."

"I am pleased to welcome Vari-Form to the Show-Me State and Liberty where they will find an exceptional workforce and an outstanding community," said Greg Steinhoff, director for the Missouri Department of Economic Development. This is a tremendous opportunity for working families in the region. We look forward to a long and productive relationship with such a promising company."

"Kansas City's strong workforce continues to meet the needs of a growing and evolving manufacturing industry," said Bob Marcusse, president and CEO of the Kansas City Area Development Council.

#### **KCADC Partners**

The Kansas City Area Development Council partnered with **KC SmartPort**, the **State of Missouri**, **Liberty's Partnership for Community Growth**, **Aquila** and the **Clay County EDC** in assisting Vari-Form with its expansion.

#### **About Vari-Form**

The originator of structural automotive hydroforming, Vari-Form's technology is used to manufacture more than 7 million parts a year worldwide. Vari-Form began volume production using their patented Pressure Sequence Hydroforming (PSH) process in 1990. Today, Vari-Form is the industry leader, with over 40 million parts produced to date.

Vari-Form has won numerous consecutive-year contracts and awards for supplier excellence from its OEM and Tier One customers. The company operates sales offices in Michigan and Japan, and manufacturing facilities in Strathroy, Ontario and Reynosa, Mexico. For additional information about Vari-Form, see [www.vari-form.com](http://www.vari-form.com).

---

**Quick Links**  
[Our Website](#)



---

---

---

# Partnership for Community Growth & Development

an economic development organization

Newsletter, Volume 3, Issue 4

August 2007

[www.thinklibertymo.com](http://www.thinklibertymo.com)

## Economic Development Breakfast



---

The Partnership will host its second economic development breakfast on Tuesday, September 25th, 7:30.

The event will be held at the Liberty Public School District Administration Center at 650 Conistor.

The program will be a panel discussion on the state of the housing market.

Panelist include representatives from:  
KC Home Builders' Association  
KC Regional Assoc. of Realtors  
ERA Threshold Realty  
Hunt Midwest  
and  
an area residential builder

Watch your email next week for your invitation.

## Signage

At its meeting on August 20th, the City Council chose to continue the discussion regarding signage to its September 10th meeting. Some clarification in verbiage was needed. It is anticipated that a vote will be taken at that meeting.

---

---

## Another Project Announcement

On the heels of the recent Vari-Form announcement comes another recruitment success. A new automotive supplier company became an important player in the KC metro area's transportation industry.

We are pleased to announce the addition of Detroit-based [Piston Automotive Group](#) to Liberty. The company selected Liberty for its first expansion out of Michigan. Piston's decision will create more than 50 manufacturing jobs for the area. The company will lease 75,000-square-foot in the former Guy's plant for its assembly and distribution operations.

The project came to us through the Kansas City Area Development Council. Partners in this recruitment effort include:

- City of Liberty
- Aquila
- CB Richard Ellis
- Clay County Economic Development Council
- Colliers Turley Martin Tucker
- Missouri Department of Economic Development
- KC SmartPort

KCADC sourced this project six months ago with the help of CB Richard Ellis.

Having a company in the former Guy's plant should make it easier to lease the remaining space.

## Partnership adds part-time staff

We are pleased to announce the addition of part-time staff member, Angie Thornton. She started on August 1st and is in the office in the mornings. Her first project for the Partnership was the annual update of our database of sites and buildings. She has done an excellent job obtaining property details, pictures and contacts. The database is the foundation of our prospect response. Please welcome Angie the next time you call the office or drop her an email at [athornton@thinklibertymo.com](mailto:athornton@thinklibertymo.com)

---

---



## E-News Extra Edition

October 2007

On October 18th the Partnership board of directors will review the 2007 Plan of Work. This is in preparation of planning our 2008 goals and activities.

If you would like to provide some feedback, please contact one of our directors listed below.

Rodney Ames  
Withers Brant Igoe & Mullenix

Tom Atkins-Liberty First Bank

Harlene Bowman -Bank  
Midwest

Pete Burney-Hallmark

Tom Cole-S M Wilson Co.

Joe Crossett -  
Liberty Hospital

Lou DeMarco  
Liberty Price Chopper

John Engelmann -  
Aquila

Jay Ferguson  
Ferguson Properties

Don Fletcher

Doug Holmberg  
Shoal Creek Valley Development

Larry Muck - M & I Bank

Tim Pence-Platte Valley Bank  
Ora Reynolds - Hunt Midwest

David Sallee  
William Jewell College

Tony Sarver  
Realty Executives of  
Liberty

Bob Steinkamp, Mayor  
City of  
Liberty

Mario Usera  
ClayCounty Savings Bank

Russ Weathers

Curt Wenson -City of  
Liberty

## Sign Ordinance Changes Approved!

The Liberty City Council has approved changes to the signage ordinances.

Changes include:

- one wall sign per building face;
- monument signs can be up to 72 square feet;
- pole signs are allowed in specific areas;
- banners no longer require a permit;
- businesses can have banners for up to 90 total days in one year.

Of course, this is a very brief synopsis. For all the specifics and details of the ordinances, please contact City Hall.

Thank you to all who participated in this process including the business owners who raised the questions in the first place, City staff for helping us through the process, our own Business Retention Committee, the P & Z Commission and the City Council for considering and acting upon our requests.



## Partnership hosted a housing panel

At its second economic development breakfast of the year, the Partnership pulled together an impressive group of panelists to discuss the state of the housing market.

Fred Buckley from KC Home Builders Assoc., Mary Alice Dobberstine - ERA Threshold Realty, Steve Freidell - M & I Bank Investment Division, Richard Jacobs - Homes by Jacobs, Ora Reynolds - Hunt Midwest and Derek Ramsay - KC Regional Assoc. of Realtors answered questions and shared their insight.

Some important points to note include:

- General consensus is that the housing market slump will begin to recover in 2009.
- Some panelists felt that the market seems so poor now because it was so very good for a long time.
- The midwest is somewhat insulated from the severe changes as experienced on either coast.

Larry Wepler - Trophy Properties  
Phil Wright -Liberty Public Schools

- Ora Reynolds made the connection between home buyers and net new job growth. Recruiting and retaining businesses and therefore jobs are critical to the residential market.

---

Partnership Chairman Larry Wepler moderated the discussion.

**Quick Link to Us**  
[www.thinklibertymo.com](http://www.thinklibertymo.com)

Springsted has also released a special report on the housing downturn. We have posted it to our website. [Click here](#) to be linked to the news section of our website, scroll down to the September entry.

[Mark your calendars](#)

October 25th

Pryor Center

"Tools for Business Growth" seminar co-hosted by the Partnership, the Chamber and Historic Downtown Liberty. Watch for your invitation.

November 29th

7:30 a.m. Shoal Creek Golf Course Clubhouse

The Partnership presents its annual awards event -

**"Breakfast for Champions"**

---

Partnership for Community Growth & Development | 9 S. Leonard | Liberty | MO | 64068