

The City of DeKalb has had a two year relationship with an entity called **DeKalb 2020, LLC**. This company's papers were filed in October 27, 2012 with the State of Illinois. The Company's agent is Keith L. Foster and its manager is **Stephen P. Irving** of **Irving Construction, inc.** According to an e-mail by Bill Nicklas from NIU (obtained by FOIA) quote ***“the City of DeKalb tasked its planning staff to consider new uses for this provisional project area which contains about 40 lots”***. Three days later, a presentation was made by the City development staff called **“DeKalb 2020 A Prospectus”**. This plan was used as a starting point for the **“City Center Plan”** adopted by the City of DeKalb July 08, 2013 and developed by **SAA Design Group, Inc.** In the attached **“DeKalb 2020 A Prospectus”** (page 13) the city development staff planned to guarantee a sufficient number of residents by removing rental space city wide - ***“The success of the housing component of the mixed use project would partly benefit from the removal of perhaps 100-200 bedrooms of apartment and rooming house occupancy in the neighborhood. Other strategies to reduce student rentals elsewhere in the City or on the University campus may be considered as part of a comprehensive strategy.”*** DeKalb 2020 was used to run a meeting (Charette) on October 29, 2013 to present some of the concepts from Wills Burke and Kelsey (Chuck Hanlon formerly of Land Vision Inc) along with Roger Hopkins.

### **DeKalb 2020 Concept Charrette – Agenda**

	<b>Introduction of Attendees</b>	<b>(3:00 – 3:10)</b>
I	<b>Opening Comments</b>	<b>(3:10 – 3:25)</b>
	a. Tim Struthers – Castle Bank	
	b. John Rey – Mayor of DeKalb	
	c. Ron Walters – NIU Advisor	
	d. Bill Nicklas – NIU	
	<b>Project Kick-Off</b>	<b>(3:25 – 4:05)</b>
	a. Roger Hopkins – Ultimate Property Acquisition and Financing	
	b. Chuck Hanlon WBK Land Planning and Urban Design	
	c. Kristine Meyer WBK Flood Plain Study	
	d. Chuck Hanlon WBK Charrette Instructions and Official Kick-off	

The attendees of this meeting are in the attached documentary but they do include **Mayor John Rey** who is included in much of the communications over the development. Prior to becoming Mayor, he was head of the **Economic Development Commission** and Vice President of **ReNew DeKalb**. ReNew was intimately involved with the development concepts.

This company has been used as a vehicle to move money out of sight of public scrutiny. Their main goal is the creation of a commercial district from the Kishwaukee to First Street along Locust Street as described in the City Center Plan (**Design and construct West Locust Street as a direct connection from First Street to College Drive, potentially as a “bike boulevard.”**). This is also according to the attached e-mail from Bill Nicklas **“The parallel Locust Street corridor immediately north can be redeveloped to feature the kind of purpose-driven, student-centered and visitor friendly town/gown district that is common in many other college towns.”**

This would remove at least one third of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood. The NIU Bold Initiative

adopted these plans but has portrayed the results as the results of group sessions held on campus. This is essentially false and can be factually proven as a direct result of interaction with Irving Construction and the city planning staff. A letter obtained from Dr. Baker to Tim Struthers indicate the **“DeKalb 2020 A Prospectus”** is the source of the concepts since the Charette held on October 29'th 2013. The December 17, 2013 letter states **“ First, I want to express the appreciation of Northern Illinois University for your personal leadership in organizing the recent charrette focussing on the transformation of John Street/Harrison Street area into a vibrant neighborhood f or living and learning that connects NIU and DeKalb's downtown district. Bold urban planning and redevelopment on this scale will require creative and committed private and public partners.”** Dr. Baker and his wife were both in attendance. They want to start with the John Street, Lincoln Way, Pearl Street and Harrison Avenue then move out from there. The key project in all the documentation is the removal of the lagoon (**Tim Struthers January 3, 2014 Letter states “The flood mitigation work on the Kishwaukee River is vital to the success of the plan” This was copied to John Rey, Ron Walters and Bill Nicklas**) and replacing it with a detention pond. Significant changes must be made to the area to make it usable to a redevelopment project. Towards that goal, **DeKalb 2020, LLC** (Fall 2013) received **TIF funds of \$10,000** to survey the NIU Lagoon, property outside of the **Central TIF (TIF #1)** area. This was done by acting City Manager Rudy Espiritu under his spending authority (probably to avoid going to City Council) and under the full knowledge of Mayor Rey as he was included in the e-mails.

Here are supporting documents on how TIF funds were used outside of the TIF District using DeKalb 2020, LLC. Note: We have looked at every check register since the founding of DeKalb 2020, LLC and have only found one check from the city.

1. ctp\_doc001.pdf is the DeKalb 2020 Prospectus. **Roger Hopkins** is the author and Land Vision (who assisted in the report) is **Chuck Hanlon**. Chuck now is working for WBK and was present at the Charette on October 29 last year.
2. Final Budget FY14 – page 117 will show the account that the payment came from (The Central TIF district) 13-00-00-300-8343 DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.

Re... x LLC - File Detail Report x +

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secretary of state illinois

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JESSE WHITE  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**LLC FILE DETAIL REPORT**

Entity Name	DEKALB 2020, LLC	File Number	04122836
Status	ACTIVE	On	08/30/2013
Entity Type	LLC	Type of LLC	Domestic
File Date	09/27/2012	Jurisdiction	IL
Agent Name	KEITH L. FOSTER	Agent Change Date	09/27/2012
Agent Street Address	2040 ABERDEEN CT	Principal Office	1826 SYCAMORE ROAD DEKALB, IL 601150000
Agent City	SYCAMORE	Management Type	MGR <a href="#">View</a>
Agent Zip	60178	Duration	PERPETUAL
Annual Report Filing Date	08/30/2013	For Year	2013
Series Name	NOT AUTHORIZED TO ESTABLISH SERIES		

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SECRETARY OF STATE

**LLC MANAGERS**

Entity Name	DEKALB 2020, LLC	File Number	04122836
Name	Address		
IRVING, STEVE	4 ARROWHEAD LANE, DEKALB, IL - 60115		

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3. DeKalb 2020, LLC – Manager Stephen P. Irving

4. File WBK\_Lagoon002.pdf is a services quote from WBK and initial work given in September 24, 2013.

5. File City\_FOIA003.pdf on September 25, 2013 this email was sent;

**From:** Struthers, Tim [mailto:tstruthers@castlebank.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 25, 2013 9:58 PM  
**To:** Espiritu, Rudy  
**Cc:** Rey, John  
**Subject:** John / College Expenses

Hello Rudy,

A little business and money issues regarding the College / John project.

With respect to current engineering and legal expenses I am seeking a total of \$30,000 between NIU, City of DeKalb, Steve Irving, and Renew DeKalb. I am assuming, based on general conversation, that the City of DeKalb would participate in some form (10% to 20%) in the exploratory expenses associated with the project. Expenses paid to date, bills in hand, and work in process total \$52,900. The bank covered the first \$25,000. My request of the City at this time is \$10,000 and I have attached an invoice for that amount. Supporting documentation for the current engineering & legal plus a current balance sheet and income statement for the organization is attached. Further costs will not be incurred until the concept planning is complete and approved by the group. Please let me know if you have any issues or concerns with the invoice to NIU.

Separately, we are actively raising capital targeted at \$2 million from eight shareholders (+/-) to begin acquiring property. I would expect to have a good understanding of where we stand on the capital raise within the next three weeks and will provide a report to you.

Thank you Rudy for your interest and involvement in this very important initiative.

Tim

6. This request for money was sent.

DeKalb 2020, LLC  
C/O Steve Irving, Manager  
4 Arrowhead Lane  
DeKalb, IL 60115

September 26, 2013

To:  
City of DeKalb  
C/O Mr. Rudy Espiritu  
City Hall  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Please remit \$10,000.00 to DeKalb 2020, LLC for a portion of costs associated with concept plans, flood mitigation study, and legal services associated with the potential redevelopment of the John / College neighborhood.

Supporting documentation of current bills totaling \$27,641.50 is attached.

Excluding the current bills referenced above \$25,250 of costs have been incurred and paid for by other parties. A summary current balance sheet and income statement is attached.

Please remit payment by October 25, 2013. Thank You.

**7. On September 26, 2013 this email was sent to Rudy Espiritu**

**Rey, John**

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**From:** Espiritu, Rudy  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 26, 2013 10:04 AM  
**To:** Struthers, Tim  
**Cc:** Rey, John  
**Subject:** RE: John / College Expenses

Tim,

Thanks for the report. I will get this invoice processed under the City Manager's spending authority. Thanks.

Rudy

8. The City then put the \$10,000 on the October 10, 2013 check register and voted by the council in Nov 25, 2013.

DEK2020 DEKALB 2020, LLC

092613 09/26/13 38453 10/25/13 10,000.00 10,000.00

01 RDVLPMT JOHN/CLLG 1300003008343 00000000 10,000.00

VENDOR TOTAL: 10,000.00



## 9. President Bakers Letter to Tim Struthers;



**Northern Illinois University**  
*Office of the President*

Douglas D. Baker, President  
Altgeld Hall 300  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115-2828  
815-753-9500  
Fax 815-753-8686  
www.niu.edu

December 17, 2013

Mr. Tim Struthers  
President  
Castle Bank  
121 W. Lincoln Highway  
DeKalb, IL 60115

RE: College Town Partners

Dear Tim,

I am writing for several purposes. First, I want to express the appreciation of Northern Illinois University for your personal leadership in organizing the recent charrette focusing on the transformation of the John Street/Harrison Street area into a vibrant neighborhood for living and learning that connects NIU and DeKalb's downtown business district. Bold urban planning and redevelopment on this scale will require creative and committed private and public partners, and NIU intends to be one of those partners.

Second, it is my understanding that a not-for-profit, 501 c(3) corporation is being organized to provide the core project development structure, and will be known as "College Town Partners." This approach closely models the very successful redevelopment structure that championed the transformation of neighborhoods surrounding the central campus of Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, in the 1990s and 2000s. At this early stage, in advance of a publicly embraced redevelopment plan, such a bridge entity has an uncertain focus. Nevertheless, to move forward, it is understood that a variety of initiatives such as further project planning, floodplain analysis, utility infrastructure analysis, traffic analysis, boundary survey work, and land acquisition will evolve in the months and years ahead.

To affirm NIU's interest in becoming a sustaining partner in this process, NIU hereby pledges up to \$250,000 to the not-for-profit agency, College Town Partners, for mutually agreed redevelopment purposes in the College/John/Harrison redevelopment area. Once the 501 c(3) process is finalized, we will reimburse College Town Partners from invoices for purposes aligned with the "living and learning" concept envisioned for the John-Harrison area.

I look forward to working with you in this important partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Douglas D. Baker in dark ink.

Douglas D. Baker  
President

*Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*

Northern Illinois University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

10. Tim Struthers Letter to President Baker.



www.castlebank.com  
800.990.5713

2014 JAN 13 AM 8:37

January 3, 2014

Dr. Douglas D. Baker  
President  
Northern Illinois University  
Altgeld Hall 300  
DeKalb, IL 60115

RE: College Town Partners, NFP

Dear Doug,

Thank you for your letter of commitment to the College Town project.

We are currently working through the process of establishing a Not-For-Profit-Corporation which has some unique challenges but expect we will get through them. I have also talked with Mayor Rey to be sure our efforts continue to be aligned with the broader initiatives of the City of DeKalb. Hopefully we can have capital in place by the end of January and start purchasing some property.

The flood mitigation work on the Kishwaukee River is vital to the success of the plan. This initiative will take time and money and will require the leadership of Northern Illinois University.

I remain bullish on what the revitalization of this neighborhood and an eastward movement by NIU can do for the marketability of the University and success of the greater community. I will continue to work closely with Bill Nicklas and Ron Walters as the project progresses. Thank you for your vision and confidence!

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Struthers  
President

Copy: Bill Nicklas, Ron Walters, John Rey

RV