



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MARCH 2, 2016 8:00 AM
CITY HALL -- 1245 WEST HIGHWAY 96**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Erickson called the meeting to order at 8:05 am

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Dan Erickson and Commissioners Kyle Lassen and David Radziej

Also Present: Community Development Director Jill Hutmacher; Senior Planner Matthew Bachler; and Deputy Clerk Julie Hanson

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Radziej moved to accept the agenda and it was the consensus of the Commission to accept said agenda.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Radziej moved to accept the minutes from the January 6, 2016, meeting, and it was the consensus of the Commission to accept said minutes.

3. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

A. Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Recommendations

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated there would be an additional meeting with the EDA in the future in order to discuss further recommendations.

Chair Erickson stated that some EDA members appeared to want additional clarity on the data included in the BRE Report.

Senior Planner Bachler indicated City staff would be meeting with Jonathan Weinhagen of the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) to discuss the recommendations in detail and to obtain further recommendations for next steps. He said that staff would request that SPACC make

additional revisions to the report based on the comments provided by the EDA. The revised report could then be provided to the EDA at a future meeting.

Senior Planner Bachler outlined the four key recommendations of the report as follows:

Transit Advocacy – Proposal to extend the Snelling Avenue Bus Rapid Transit corridor into Arden Hills. Recommend the City invite Metro Transit to an EDA work session to discuss what they are considering in terms of transit in the area.

Workforce Training – City staff to meet with local technical and community colleges with job training programs to obtain valuable information that could be passed on to local businesses in an effort to assist them in meeting their workforce needs.

Tracking Growing Businesses – City staff to create a system to check in regularly with growing businesses to determine the status of their needs.

Continued BRE Program – City staff to put system in place to identify a targeted list of businesses to visit each year. Coordinated effort with local Chambers and GreaterMSP. Potentially share data with regional and state databases.

A discussion ensued regarding these four main recommendations.

A list of action steps to further the goals for each recommendation was created as follows:

Transit Advocacy

- Meet with businesses that would be affected by expanded transit
- Invite Metro Transit to future EDA meeting
- Design infrastructure to accommodate transit

Workforce Training

- Understand what skills are needed
- Identify a clear point of contact at the City
- Build employer relationships
- Investigate satellite programs and partnerships with local schools such as Century College, Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Dunwoody Institute and Normandale Community College

Tracking Growing Businesses

- Obtain data from SPACC
- Obtain and provide regular business updates

Continued BRE Program

- Expand current site visits
- Coordinate with other entities
- Show value to existing businesses
- Share regional information
- Communicate information back to businesses

- Consider frequency of formal BRE Program (3 to 5 years, formal report, continue visits, etc.)
- Track results of BRE initiatives

Community Development Director Hutmacher asked EDC Commissioners to identify priority action items.

A discussion ensued regarding determination of top priorities. The priorities were selected as follows:

- Obtain data from SPACC
- Expand current planned visits
- Show value to businesses pertaining to site visits (information and contacts)
- Communicate information back to the business community

Commissioner Lassen suggested adding to the next EDC agenda various ways to communicate the BRE plan to local businesses.

Commissioner Radziej agreed, stating this would show the City's continued interest in assisting the local businesses.

Commissioner Lassen asked about next steps regarding transit advocacy.

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that the Met Council conducted a study and created a draft report regarding the BRT extension. The draft report was provided to the cities of Arden Hills, Shoreview and Roseville, as well as Ramsey County, MnDOT, and SPACC. A final report will be provided that incorporates feedback and suggestions.

B. Small Business Workshop Project

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that a small business workshop will take place on March 17, 2016, in Vadnais Heights and everyone is welcome to attend.

A short discussion ensued regarding the workshop and its value to the business community.

C. New Business Update

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated future EDC agendas would include an update regarding new business visits. She indicated recent visits included Counselor Realty, China Express and Preferred Insurance.

4. UPDATES

A. Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) Update

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that responses to the Solicitation for Master Developer are due March 9, 2016. She explained that an evaluation of the responses would

then take place by a Solicitation Review Committee, followed by an evaluation, interviews and recommendations to the JDA. The JDA will select a master developer. She said the selected master developer would then enter into a development agreement with the JDA as well as a purchase agreement with Ramsey County as the property owner. She said this process will take some time.

B. Commission Members

None.

C. Council Liaison

None.

D. Staff Comments

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that at the February 29, 2016, meeting, the City Council approved a Resolution Regarding the Support of a Job Creation Fund Application by Land O' Lakes as the company is considering a significant expansion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.



Dan Erickson, Chair



Jill Hutmacher
Community Development Director