



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MAY 4, 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 Liz Johnson

Also Present: Community Development Director Jill Hutmacher; Senior Planner Matthew Bachler; and Council Liaison Brenda Holden

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was the consensus of the Commission to accept the agenda as presented.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was the consensus of the Commission to accept the March 2, 2016 meeting minutes as presented.

3. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

A. Business Retention and Expansion (BRE)

Senior Planner Bachler noted that the EDC reviewed the BRE Program Report from the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) at their meeting on March 2 and provided staff with recommendations on priority projects. Staff and SPACC drafted an implementation plan for three projects based on this feedback and presented the plan to the EDA at their meeting on March 28. The EDA supported the proposed projects and implementation plan.

Senior Planner Bachler indicated the first priority project was to develop a system to maintain the City's efforts to build relationships with businesses. He explained this would include identifying an objective for business visits each year, setting a goal for the number of businesses to visit, and completing a year-end report.

Senior Planner Bachler noted that for 2016, staff recommended to the EDA that the City focus on visiting businesses in the Red Fox-Grey Fox Business District due to transportation issues, new businesses in the Red Fox Business Center, and recent business turnover in the area. He then provided further details on the next steps for this priority project.

Commissioner Lassen asked how the City would use the information from the business visits.

Senior Planner Bachler noted that feedback from businesses could help inform discussions around traffic issues along the Lexington Avenue corridor and future land use plans for this area of the City.

Community Development Director Hutmacher noted that the Planning Commission's 2016 work plan included looking specifically at the B-4 District and whether the current purpose and allowed uses in this district is consistent with the City's long-term vision for the area.

Commissioner Johnson commented on the importance of meeting with existing businesses in the area to understand what issues they face and how the City can help address any concerns.

The Commission supported the staff recommendation to focus on the Red Fox-Grey Fox Business District and the proposed next steps for this project.

Senior Planner Bachler explained that the second priority project was to convene a roundtable of commercial real estate brokers in Arden Hills in order to gather information on local market dynamics. He noted that SPACC expressed a willingness to organize the roundtable discussion. Staff would provide a summary report to the EDC and EDA.

Commissioner Lassen questioned what the amount of commercial real estate volume was in Arden Hills on an annual basis in terms of leasing.

Senior Planner Bachler stated that he did not have information on these figures.

Community Development Director Hutmacher noted that a majority of the retail, office, and industrial properties in the City are leased by only a handful of brokerage companies.

The Commission was supportive of proceeding with this priority project.

Senior Planner Bachler explained that the final priority project was to explore the City's role in workforce development. He noted that this would involve researching resources that are currently available through Ramsey County, the State, and other entities, and beginning to build relationships with local community colleges and Mounds View Public Schools.

The Commission was supportive of proceeding with this priority project.

B. State of the City

Community Development Director Hutmacher explained that a State of the City event has been held in four of the previous five years. She noted that in the past two years, two events have been

held: one that is targeted to local businesses and the other to residents. She added that attendance in 2015 was less than in previous years.

Community Development Director Hutmacher reviewed the following options for a 2016 State of the City event and requested feedback from the Commissioners:

- Hold the event as it has been for the last two years
- Hold the event but change the presentation topics
- Hold community meetings (day and evening events) to introduce the community to the TCAAP master developer and provide updates on development plans, but do not market the meetings as State of the City
- Other options suggested by the EDC

Commissioner Johnson commented on the difficulty of getting younger residents to attend the State of the City.

A discussion ensued regarding how to make the State of the City event more appealing to younger residents.

Community Development Director Hutmacher noted that different demographic groups have different expectations for the format of a meeting.

Chair Erickson supported the idea of incorporating an introduction to the TCAAP Master Developer into the event.

Council Liaison Holden questioned what types of information could be provided at the event that would be helpful for businesses.

Chair Erickson noted that transportation issues were always relevant to businesses. He suggested that the City market the event as a networking opportunity and that a larger local company, such as Land O'Lakes, be asked to provide a keynote presentation.

Community Development Director Hutmacher suggested that the City ask Land O'Lakes, Boston Scientific, the TCAAP Master Developer, and MNDOT to each provide a 15-minute presentation.

Commissioner Lassen recommended that the event be filmed and the video made available online.

A discussion ensued regarding where and when the business-focused State of the City event should be held.

The Commission supported holding the event at Flaherty's Arden Bowl and scheduling the event in September.

4. UPDATES

A. Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) Update

Community Development Director Hutmacher noted that the Joint Development Authority selected Alatus, LLC as the TCAAP Master Developer at their meeting on May 2. She commented that Alatus was selected because of their emphasis on the town center component of the development and their ability to bring in a variety of quality housing types.

B. Commission Members

None.

C. Council Liaison

None.

D. Staff Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.



Dan Erickson, Chair



Jill Hutmacher
Community Development Director