

CITY OF EDMONDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
January 15, 2014

The Citizens Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Commissioner Witenberg in the Brackett Room, 121 5th Avenue North, Edmonds.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Bruce Witenberg
John Dewhirst
Darrol Haug
Roger Hertrich (arrived 6:05 p.m.)
Debbie Matteson
Nathan Proudfoot
Doug Purcell
John Rubenkonig
Gail Sarvis
Rich Senderoff (arrived 6:05 p.m.)
Darlene Stern
Douglas Swartz
Evelyn Wellington
Teresa Wippel

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Kristiana Johnson

PORT OF EDMONDS LIAISON

Port Commissioner Bruce Faires

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Clifton, Community Services/Economic
Development Director
Cindi Cruz, Executive Assistant
Jeannie Dines, Recorder

PUBLIC PRESENT – None

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Kevin Garrett
Nicole Hughes

1. OPENING REMARKS

Commissioner Witenberg welcomed City Council liaison Kristian Johnson. He reported Commissioner Garrett has an excused absence.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – NONE

3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

Commissioner Sarvis requested the December 18, 2013 minutes reflect that she was present.

COMMISSIONER STERN MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 18, 2013 MINUTES AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Commissioners Senderoff and Hertrich were not present for the vote.)

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Commissioner Witenberg described the procedures for election of Chair and Vice Chair. He opened nominations for the position of Chair

COMMISSIONER HAUG NOMINATED BRUCE WITENBERG AS CHAIR. COMMISSIONER MATTESON SECONDED THE NOMINATION.

There were no further nominations.

NOMINATION OF BRUCE WITENBERG AS CHAIR CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSIONER PURCELL NOMINATED KEVIN GARRETT AS VICE CHAIR. COMMISSIONER SARVIS SECONDED THE NOMINATION.

Commissioner Purcell said he had discussed this with Commissioner Garrett (who was absent from tonight's meeting) and he was agreeable.

NOMINATION OF KEVIN GARRETT AS VICE CHAIR CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. REMARKS FROM NEW CHAIR

Chair Witenberg expressed his appreciation for the Commissioners' confidence in selecting him as Chair, commenting he has a great deal of confidence in the EDC, 17 volunteer ambassadors of economic development. The EDC has done excellent work during its existence; if each Commissioner makes a commitment to work a couple more hours a month, the EDC can do even better. He encouraged Commissioners to make a diligent effort to attend subgroup meetings, participate in the dialogue and do the assigned work between meetings. He recommended subgroups set deadlines for completion of projects and for input on projects from other EDC members.

Chair Witenberg relayed his goals:

1. Enhance the relationship between the City Council and the EDC
 - Commissioner Purcell and he appointed as liaisons to Council
 - Plan to work closely with Councilmembers Peterson and Johnson.
 - Will report on their initial meeting with the Councilmembers at the EDC's February meeting
2. Make the EDC more visible in community by:
 - Communicate with the community.
 - An ad hoc committee comprised of Commissioners Stern, Rubenkönig, Purcell, and himself plan to meet on January 31 with the goals of publishing their first article before the next EDC meeting and publishing at least one article per quarter. He invited Commissioners to contact committee members with input on article topics.
 - Partner/coordinate with other community groups to inform them of the EDC's existence and its role in economic development. This will allow community groups and the EDC to partner on projects and avoid duplication of efforts via coordination and collaboration.
 - A signup sheet was circulated and each Commissioner asked to select his/her first second and third choice for 1-2 community groups
 - May not be possible to provide an EDC liaison to every community organization
 - Using the sign-up sheet, he and Commissioner Purcell will assign the liaison positions and an alternate
 - Commissioners were asked to meet with the organization they are assigned to prior to the next EDC meeting; to introduce themselves and determine the best way to interact with the group such as attending meetings, meeting with the chair, etc.
3. Update Commissioners' contact information. (Ms. Cruz will email to Commissioners)
4. Commissioners are encouraged to be in contact with each other between meetings and relay constructive input to him and Vice Chair Garrett between meetings

Discussion followed regarding community groups that not on list, groups on the list that are not active, objective of the liaison positions to inform of EDC activities and learn of community groups' efforts, Chamber of Commerce efforts that Commissioners may want to be involved in, Commissioners serving as liaisons in groups they are already active in, meeting dates/times, whether groups allow the public to attend their meetings, using notes from the subgroups to inform community groups, and adding Reports from Community Groups to future EDC agendas. Commissioner Proudfoot reported he is preparing a list of ongoing activities with regard to Strategic Plan action items.

6. OVERVIEW OF 2006 CITY OF EDMONDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Commissioner Purcell relayed the subgroup was surprised to learn an economic analysis had been prepared for the downtown area by HyettPalma. The City adopted an Economic Development Plan in 2006, entitled Edmonds Economic Development Comprehensive Plan Element. The goal of tonight's presentation is to familiarize the EDC with the Plan. The Land Use Subgroup, now known as the Business District Enhancement Subgroup, will review the plan in detail and make recommendations to the EDC regarding potential changes and/or implementation of the element. He reviewed the three major sections of the element:

- I. Introduction and Approaches to Economic Development
 - A. Why do economic development?
 - B. Past economic development efforts and local stakeholders
 - C. Current national thinking in economic development
- II. The Edmonds Economy
 - A. Analysis of local economy
 - B. Important regional trends
 - C. Developments in neighboring cities
- III. Economic Development Goals and Policies
 - A. Edmonds' current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities (SWOT) relating to economic development
 - B. Goals and Policies
 1. Foster a healthy business community that provides employment and other economic opportunities
 2. Revitalize the city's business districts, balancing redevelopment, preservation and the need for consumer amenities
 3. Diversify the tax base and increase revenues to support local services
 4. Strengthen the quality of life and vitality of the community for residents, workers and visitors to enjoy
 - C. Implementation

Chair Witenberg requested Commissioners provide comments to the subgroup by January 25 for the February 3 subgroup meeting. Discussion followed regarding the opportunity to revise the element, opportunity for the EDC to discuss the City's business districts and updates regarding implementation provided in the Community Services Quarterly Report.

7. TOURISM SUB-GROUP REPORT

Commissioner Dewhirst reported on the subgroup's review and decision on each proposal:

- Proposal A: Combine the Communications and Tourism Subgroups into one and rename to Communications and Visitor Services Subgroup.
Decision: Reject - Insufficient resources to work on both communication and visitor/tourist issues
- Proposal B: Develop community and media outreach and education about the EDC and its projects

- Decision: Reject - See Goal 2 under Item 5
- Proposal C: Develop social media applications
Decision: Reject. Mr. Clifton reported the City's new social media contractor's first task will be to create a Facebook page
- Proposal D: Have the Tourism subgroup members be the EDC liaisons with community groups
Decision: Reject – to be done by all EDC Commissioners (see Goal 2 under Item 5)
- Proposal E: Rename the Tourism Subgroup to “Tourism and Visitor Services”
Decision: Accept

Commissioner Dewhirst reported at their next meeting, the Tourism and Visitor Services subgroup will discuss how to best use resources and time to address tourism and visitor issues. He would also like to complete discussions the subgroup started last year regarding a fine arts museum, downtown restrooms, and year-round farmers market. He invited Commissioners to inform subgroup members (Commissioners Wippel, Proudfoot, Dewhirst, Swartz, Hertrich and him) of ideas.

Discussion followed regarding the timeline to prepare a tourist/visitor spending model. Commissioners' suggestions included the subgroup investigating other types of museums such as an intertidal estuary interpretive center and posting QR codes on light posts to inform of other locations.

8. LAND USE SUB-GROUP REPORT

Commissioner Rubenkönig reviewed the Land Use Subgroup's report:

- Topic 1: Change name of subgroup to Business District Enhancement
- Topic 2: Review plans, reports, etc. the City has on file for various districts. Monitor Westgate Plan for possible EDC recommendation to City Council. Other districts of interest include:
- Five Corners
 - Firdale Village
 - Perrinville
 - Downtown and the waterfront subarea plus Harbor Square
 - Hwy 99 with 4 areas of interest (medical, International District, Retail and Residential)
- Topic 3: Renew work on crafting incentives to attract businesses to Edmonds
- Topic 4: Solicit input from Council liaisons to determine fruitful topics of investigation by EDC.
- Topic 5: Review other cities' Economic Development Plans for useful ideas
- Topic 6: Commissioner Haug will continue work he outlined at December EDC meeting regarding the economics of development including breakeven models of development, analyze accommodations that may be needed for population Edmonds is required to absorb in the future and the potential demographics of that development.

Commissioner Rubenkönig invited Commissioners to contact subgroup members (Commissioners Witenberg, Senderoff, Purcell, Hughes, Haug and him) with ideas. Discussion followed regarding business incentives, the City Council's past economic development committee, and requesting the Council discuss their expectations about the role of the EDC at their retreat.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

Port Liaison Faires provided a report on the Port:

- Jacobsen Marina, a marine sales and service company, is moving to the Port

- Proposed 10,000 square foot building, located north of the work yard, is before the Architectural Design Board tonight
- Hope to begin construction in February and be operational by July
- With the exception one geographic area across from Anthony's, the Port is now built out west of the railroad tracks
- Washington Tourism Alliance has proposed a bill to the legislature that would involve the State with a private organization whose responsibility would be to fund tourism activities via assessments on tourism related businesses using the State's database.
- The Port held its annual strategic planning meeting Monday
 - Port Commission continues to believe the Harbor Square Master Plan is the highest and best use of the property for the Port District and the community. However, there is a conflict between the Master Plan and what can be accomplished.
 - A long term ground lease of the Harbor Square buildings would preclude redevelopment.
 - The buffers in the Shoreline Master Plan are not in the Port's or the community's best interest. Without redevelopment, there is no enhancement of the marsh.
 - The Port Commission believes one of most positive economic development opportunities is Westgate; the Port challenges itself, the City and citizens to make rezoning of Westgate a reality within next year.
 - One of highest priority in the Strategic Plan was Harbor Square; recent decisions make that moot.

Discussion followed regarding past efforts related to establishing FACE (Fine Arts Center of Edmonds) at the Port; the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Virginia; potential for artist live/work spaces at Harbor Square similar to Schack Art Center; availability of fiber at Harbor Square; reuse of historic buildings; the Freighthouse Square in Tacoma that is housed in an old building; and whether the Port has considered a train museum.

Mr. Clifton reported on the following:

- The City's Finance Director resigned; there has been a press release and his letter of resignation is on My Edmonds News.
- The Council approved limiting office uses in the BD1; the ordinance will be on next week's Consent Agenda.
- He is preparing the RFQs for the two part time contractor positions were approved in the budget, 1) to monitor the Strategic Plan, and 2) communications.
 - He will send the RFQ for the consultant to monitor implementation of the Strategic Action Plan to key stakeholders for review
 - Need two Commissioners to assist with reviewing the RFQ; anyone interested contact Chair Witenberg.

Councilmember Johnson reported she was delighted to be assigned as the Council liaison to the EDC, noting she was the Planning Board liaison to the EDC four years ago. She reported the City Council included \$50,000 in the budget for an art museum study. She encouraged the Tourism Committee to talk with Parks & Recreation Director Carrie Hite about sports tourism and for the Business District Enhancement Subgroup to include Public Works Director Phil Williams, noting that subgroup's interests overlap somewhat with the Planning Board.

Chair Witenberg reported the first Planning Board meeting in February will include a public hearing regarding the Westgate Plan. He relayed there has been some misunderstanding/misinformation about the traffic study of SR104, its relationship to the Westgate Plan, and whether adoption of the Westgate Plan needs to be delayed to await the outcome of that study. His understanding is the setback requirement in the Westgate Plan will provide enough space in the unlikely event SR104 is widened in the future.

Councilmember Johnson reported the intent of the transportation study is to consider the relationship of the road to the buildings; the only potential impact will be to building setbacks to ensure sufficient space for non-motorized facilities, landscaping, etc. The current building setback on SR104 is 20 feet.

Chair Witenberg pointed out delaying the implementation of the Westgate Plan allows development to continue in the same pattern that exists today. He was hopeful there would be adequate time for the EDC to take position on the Westgate Plan before the Planning Board's recommendation is forwarded to the City Council.

10. AUDIENCE COMMENTS – None

11. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.