

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
February 17, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Libertyville Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting (Motion-Marks/Second-Werdell).

Members Present: Chairman John Cortesi, Commissioners Thomas Kreuser, Steve Martin, Sara Rolsma, and Edward Werdell.

Members Absent: Commissioners William Abington, Brian Grano, and Dan Marks.

Staff Present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development and Heather Rowe, Economic Development Coordinator.

Others Present: Mark Anderson, Main Street Libertyville; Michael Comilla, Resident; and Stacey McClenathan, Beeline Communications.

Minutes: The Commission approved the minutes of the November meeting (Motion-Werdell/Second-Kreuser).

COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSION:

COVID-19 Local Impacts – Updates & Discussion: The Chairman noted that COVID positivity rates were dropping allowing business to open up more. He requested updates from Staff and the Commission. Ms. Rowe noted that restaurants and fitness businesses have been anxious for expanded occupancy. There's still a significant fear from much of the population in going out, but there's a feeling that people will be more mobile once vaccinations are more widely accessed, particularly by the senior population. The weather conditions have added to the reluctance of shoppers/diners. Ms. Rowe reviewed a few small business closures. The Commission discussed that the return of students to school will allow employees to return to work and consumers to be more mobile.

The Commission discussed the level of business participation in the PPP program for which applications are due March 31st. Commissioner Werdell noted activity level is down in the 2nd program phase, partly due to revised eligibility standards.

Economic Development Strategy: The Chairman referenced the proposed edits to the Strategy included in the Commission packet. The Commissioners discussed the edits and requested the following additional changes:

- Addition of the word “approximate” prior to the words “priority order” on the front cover to indicate that no site is of more importance, nor is it a firm order, it is simply a list of priorities for staff to focus on due to the project status.
- The addition of the County Farm property under Additional Items of Interest.

After further discussion the Commission recommended that the Village Board adopt the revised Strategy inclusive of the aforementioned edits and the proposed edits included in the draft copy (Motion-Werdell/Second-Rolsma).

Shop60048/Get Your Forks Out: Ms. Rowe noted that the Village has been posting shop and dine messages on a regular basis since the beginning of COVID, and that just prior to Thanksgiving had contracted the services of local PR/marketing firm BeeLine Communications to develop a weekly graphic/tagline targeting each campaign. BeeLine also developed the new Shop60048.com landing

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page. The graphics have been posted in all the Village communications and social media platforms, with funds used to boost certain posts. The Village has asked BeeLine to continue with this service and BeeLine has provided the draft graphics in the packet.

Ms. McClenathan reviewed the firms approach for the Village messaging to keep the material fresh, explained the plan to alter the approach some as people begin getting out more to shop/dine, this plan will be more content driven and will include Google ads, paid social media boosts, possible video messaging, etc. The Commission suggested including the word “Libertyville” in some of the imagery intended for a non-local audience, even though it accompanies the image in the tagline. It was also suggested that the imagery or content geared to out-of-towners might address free parking and the significant number of spaces available in the two garages. Ms. McClenathan noted she’d be providing Staff a more detailed plan based on the provided feedback.

Comprehensive Plan: Mr. Spoden noted the draft Plan was presented to the Committee of the Whole in January and would be presented formally to the Board for consideration later in February.

Ms. Rowe noted that the South Milwaukee Plan is following and building upon the Comprehensive Plan process, once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted a Committee of the Whole meeting would be held with the various Commissions and Board. The discussions will be more focused on the types of investments the Village would like to pursue in the corridor and the effectiveness of available tools to meet the Village’s objectives.

Development Activity: Mr. Spoden and Ms. Rowe provided updates on construction of the 5th floor in Condell’s West Tower, continued communications with the contract purchaser of the Young property who is pursuing a townhome product on the western portion of the site, the Encompass Rehab Hospital is ahead of their construction schedule, and the developer of the land near the Sports Complex continues to work through IDOT access details affecting their site design.

Other Communication and Discussions: The Commission discussed potential impact of new online sales tax collections and a desire to review the trend data once more information becomes available.

Mr. Anderson reviewed Main Street Libertyville’s social media marketing approach and the fresh content they are featuring including Facebook Live. Most of their regular events will be postponed until Fall, but Farmers Market, First Fridays, and Car Fun on 21 will proceed.

Commissioner Kresuer noted the terrific editorial in the Daily Herald by EVBox discussing why they chose Libertyville and Illinois.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 AM. (Motion- Kreuser/Second- Werdell).

Respectfully submitted,

Heather J. Rowe, AICP
Economic Development Coordinator