

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
March 16, 2022

The meeting of the Libertyville Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:33 a.m. at the Libertyville Village Hall, 118 W Cook Avenue, Libertyville, Illinois.

Members Present: Commissioners Dmitry Dukhan, Brian Grano, Thomas Kreuser, Dan Marks, Steve Martin, and Sara Rolsma.

Members Absent: Chairman John Cortesi and Commissioner Edward Werdell

Staff Present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development; Heather Rowe, Economic Development Manager.

Others Present: Trustee James Connell; Mark Anderson, Main Street Libertyville.

The Commission appointed Commissioner Kreuser to serve as Chairman Pro Tem (Motion: Marks/Second: Grano).

Business Listening Session Program

The Chairman noted the memo in the meeting packet overviewing the Listening Sessions and inquired of Commissioner Marks his feedback on the session which he co-moderated. Commissioner Marks noted it was a vibrant group which provided good feedback, and that most people were happy with Village services. Ms. Rowe relayed Chairman Cortesi's feedback from the session which he co-moderated, noting that the group offered valuable feedback overall, that some sectors were a bit unsure how to integrate and answer questions with the larger group and he suggested they might be better served in separate sessions if the program was repeated. Commissioner Marks mentioned a concern expressed by a business on the south end of downtown that people don't continue to browse that end of the block. Mr. Spoden noted that the Village has a contract before the Village Board to help locate and design business directories to help address this need. Commissioner Marks also noted that the businesses value regular communication from the Village and want to be informed of resources and development activity. The Commission reflected on the interest expressed by some businesses for a separate business specials focused Village Facebook page, noting that Main Street and the Chamber are already posting business specials regularly on their platforms.

The Commission was happy with the number of registrations received and noted that it was a reflection that people are happy with the Village. The Commission felt these types of connections create community with the businesses and it would be valuable to hold additional Listening Sessions later in the year. The Commission agreed to continue this discussion when the full report is received.

COVID-19 Local Impacts

The Commission discussed ongoing COVID-19 impacts on the business community. Discussion included the following:

- Manufacturing/Distribution: To respond to their demand suppliers are looking to return production to the United States to ensure availability of crucial products.
- Office: Corporations are bringing employees back to the office. Medline is in the process of moving 700 employees into Innovation Park. They still have significant number of job positions open though. Commission Dukhan noted that while corporations may hold some small offices downtown Chicago, the suburbs seem to have the advantage based on where employees want to live and work long term, you aren't hearing about businesses moving offices downtown anymore.
- Auto Sales: Supply issues continue. The used car sales price may have peaked (was up around 40% last year). Margins continue to be good. Demand for vehicles is expected to continue strong

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because the average age of cars on the road is around 12 years, this is even older than pre-pandemic.

- Restaurants: Have been busier. They continue to print menus weekly to be flexible to supply and price changes.
- Commercial Real Estate: There has been a high inquiry rate on available spaces for the last month.
- Residential Real Estate: There are about 25 homes for sale in town with 79 under contract. There's very little available inventory for sale or rent. Limited home construction is contributing to the supply problem.
- Commissioners noted their sectors saw some increase in response to job openings.
- The Commission discussed that Libertyville seems to be of interest to investors from outside the area, because of the stability, strong corporate employers, low crime and consumer buying power.

Chairman Kreuser inquired of the Commissioner's thoughts on how high inflation is or will impact local consumer behavior.

- Commissioner Dukhan noted the cost of business is up significantly, that shipping is still four times what it should be, their fuel cost is up 300%, construction is up considerably, and labor is up.
- The Commission discussed that residential home construction and renovation costs are up 25-50% and delays in materials are extending the timeline for completion of jobs.
- If inflation continues at high rate through the year, it could impact vehicle sales, but it has not had an evident local impact yet.
- Commissioner Grano noted that demand continues to be high, and they aren't seeing price changes impact consumer behavior at his restaurant establishment.
- The Commission noted that some areas of Chicagoland and the country are seeing a greater impact on consumer behavior, but Libertyville is fortunate in that they aren't seeing it as much.

Other

Mr. Spoden and Ms. Rowe updated the Commission on development activity, noting Midwest Industrial's scheduled Board consideration, adoption of the Hyundai ordinance for their new building, Brick & Mortar's upcoming Board consideration, Community Partner's for Affordable Housing's apartment proposal, the scheduling of a public hearing on the Village's draft Attainable Housing Ordinance for May 9. The Commission also inquired about the Baker's Square site sale status and what can be done about the poor theater condition.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 AM. (Motion – Dukhan/Second - Rolsma).

Respectfully submitted,

Heather J. Rowe, AICP, MLAI
Economic Development Manager