

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
April 21, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Libertyville Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting.

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

Members Absent: Commissioner William Abington

Staff Present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development

Others Present: Mark Anderson, Main Street Libertyville, Kevin Considine, Lake County Partners, Jennifer Johnson, Main Street Libertyville

Minutes: The Commission approved the minutes of the March meeting (Motion-Marks/Second-Rolsma)

COVID-19 Local Impacts

Chairman Cortesi opened the meeting with a discussion on COVID-19 Local impacts. Commissioner Grano reviewed the difficulty in recruiting new staff members. The Commission concurred with the statement on the general shortage of labor. It was noted that Milwalky Trace is offering sign-on bonuses for new employees. Business is generally up with walk-in traffic and event bookings, but food costs have significantly increased.

Commissioner Marks stated that previously owned vehicle costs are high and that the supply chain for cars is interrupted by the computer chip shortage. Commissioner Martin discussed the increased costs of lumber and how it is affecting new construction. The Commission requested that Finance Chair Mostardo attend the June meeting for an update on Village finances.

Review of Potential Business Support Programs

Lake County Partners President/CEO Kevin Considine was present and discussed business support programs for Lake County Businesses. Staff reviewed the use of some of the funds to be awarded to the Village from the American Rescue Plan for business support. Possible uses include existing business stabilization grants, business resiliency or pivot grants, new business assistance grants and other promotional or investment programs. The Finance Committee of the Village Board had recommended that a minimum of \$100,000 from the funds be made available for business related revitalization programs.

Members of the Commission stated their support for the program and offered that the funding be increased if possible noting costs for local businesses such as services and trades while restaurants have increased costs for outdoor dining of tables/heaters/propane, etc.. Use of the funds for women/minority owned businesses was also discussed.

The order of support for the programs is as follows:

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- Existing business stabilization grants
- Business resiliency or pivot grants
- New business assistance grants
- Advertisement/promotions

Members of the Commission thanked Mr. Considine for his expertise and for his attendance at the meeting.

Church Street Garage Signage

Director of Community Development John Spoden presented plans for additional signage for the Church Street Parking Structure. The Parking Commission has been studying the possible options for new signage for the garage and hired the firm of Teska and Associates to make recommendations. The firm determined that the installation of a monument sign on the north side of Church St. would highlight the main entry to the garage. Another smaller monument sign in the Brainerd right-of-way would mark this entrance. The Commission expressed support for the signs and suggested that the total number of spaces available be marketed through signage also.

Other Communications and Discussion:

South Milwaukee Avenue Corridor Planning: The Commission reviewed the Committee of the Whole Meeting with the Village Board on this subject. The Commission expressed support for the study. A general discussion followed with individual suggestions that the Village should be open to allowing more height through the Zoning Code to incent new development.

Libertyville Rewards: Staff gave an update on the Rewards Program and stated that a full summary will be presented at the May meeting.

Development Activity: Staff proposed to amend the previously approved Economic Development Strategy to remove car dealerships as priorities as the two (2) open sites have either been purchased or leased. Members of the Commission concurred with the request.

Staff further reviewed the progress of proposed projects at the Sports Complex, the Young Property at 137 and 21 and the Fould's property.

Main Street Update: Executive Director Jennifer Johnson reported that Maison Chic has opened a second location in the downtown and now has Milwaukee frontage. In addition, an update to the downtown Libertyville guide is underway. Mark Anderson stated that they are meeting with their light consultant to address the downtown building lighting for the upcoming summer season.

The Commission expressed their appreciation to Mayor Weppeler for his work in the field of economic development during his terms in office and wished him well.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:39 AM. (Motion - Martin/Second - Grano).

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Respectfully submitted,

John P. Spoden, AICP
Director of Community Development