

**CITY OF EDMONDS**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**March 16, 2011**

The Citizens Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Chair Frank Yamamoto in the Brackett Room, 121 5th Avenue North, Edmonds.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Paul Anderson (arrived 7:21 p.m.)  
Bruce Faires  
Stacy Gardea  
Don Hall  
Beatrice O'Rourke  
Evan Pierce  
David Schaefer  
Rich Senderoff  
Kerry St. Clair Ayers  
Bruce Witenberg  
Rebecca Wolfe  
Frank Yamamoto, Chair  
Marianne Zagorski

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Darrol Haug  
Betty Larman  
Mary Monfort  
Rob VanTassell

**PLANNING BOARD LIAISON**

Kristiana Johnson

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Councilmember Diane Buckshnis

**STAFF PRESENT**

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

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Ron Wambolt  
Jennifer Mantooth  
Roger Hertrich

1. **INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTS BY CHAIR – NONE**
2. **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – NONE**
3. **APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2011**

The following amendments were made to the minutes:

- Add the following to the end of the second paragraph under Audience Comments:  
“Commissioner Wolfe responded that their fears are based upon their lack of ability to visualize how things would look under different conditions – upon a lack of understanding and knowledge. When people understand, their fears diminish.”
- Add Commissioner Witenberg to the list of Commissioners Present

**COMMISSIONER GARDEA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2011 AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER FAIRES SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **REPORTS FROM SUBGROUPS**

**a. Land Use (Westgate & Five Corners)**

Mr. Clifton reported on the March 12 design workshop regarding Five Corners and Westgate. Approximately 65-70 citizens attended, about 45 including several EDC members stayed for the entire workshop and provided a great deal of positive feedback. Commissioner Marianne Zagorski and Planning Manager Rob Chave provided an introduction and UW Professors Jill Sterritt and Nancy Rottle provided an outline of the first meetings and the findings of the surveys conducted during Phase 1. To launch Phase 2, the UW students and professors things they would like to see at Five Corners and Westgate. Attendees then gathered at tables for a conceptual exercise with the UW students, City staff and design experts. The UW students will use the information provided to develop concepts.

Mr. Clifton anticipated the concepts will be presented to the EDC as an initial sounding board before presenting them to the public. Several property owners attended including the Landau's, Bartell, and the Jeremiah Center. A concerted effort was made to advertise the workshop via press releases, mailings to an increased radius, and notices to all property and business owners.

Commissioner Bruce Faires reported he was impressed with how the working groups, which consisted primarily of residents of the neighborhoods, characterized the neighborhoods. They characterized Five Corners as a relatively small neighborhood that could be more important than it is but not a destination. They characterized Westgate as a destination due to PCC and QFC that has the potential for additional residential. They recognized that the hills on three sides of the Westgate area would allow mixed use buildings to be sited against the hills without much impact. He was impressed that the process did not produce a pro forma plan; the neighborhoods were characterized well and there were many good ideas. Mr. Clifton reported photographers documented the designs developed at each table. Staff will obtain all the files, presentations and notes from the UW and post them on the City's website. The PowerPoint presentation is posted under Phase 2 March 12 Community Meeting.

Commissioner Don Hall reported he was seated at a Five Corners table. Although the survey conducted in Phase 1 reported respondents favored 1-2 story buildings, as the group began talking about what they wanted such as green space, they realized they may need taller buildings and more density to support businesses. He was encouraged by how the residents/property owners came up with their own ideas without anyone directing them.

Commissioner Faires reported Mr. Chave made a presentation to the City Council last week on zoning processes and form based code. His understanding was formed based code gives the zoning authority more control over what is important in a given area. A form based code approach seems ideal for redevelopment and for constrained areas. He suggested Mr. Chave make a similar presentation to the EDC.

Commissioner Hall reported Mr. Chave also made a presentation regarding form based code to the Planning Commission. The Planning Board seems to recognize the issue may not be height but what can be created within in a taller building. In his opinion form based code eliminates the fear of building height, distance of a building from the sidewalk, etc.

Commissioner rich Senderoff recalled a similar presentation to the City Council a few years ago. He did some research and found most zoning focuses on what developers cannot do versus a form based code that engages the community where the development is occurring and allows them to have input into what they want. He agreed with having Mr. Chave make a presentation to the EDC. Mr. Clifton referred to form based code information he provided to Commissioners, advising Mr. Chave will make a presentation to the EDC at a future meeting.

Commissioner Evan Pierce reported he was at a table with two facilitators, Planning Board Member Todd Cloutier and the owner of the Jeremiah Center. The discussion was heavily weighted toward people who have an inside track and a property owner with a vested interest in what occurs in Five Corners. One of his neighbors who was at a Westgate area table reported the discussion there was similar, she was the only resident at the table who was not a member of the Planning Board, EDC, etc. In his opinion, attendance at the workshop seemed heavily weighted toward EDC members. He was hopefully there will be more input from the people who are affected on a daily basis. Two residents arrived later; one did not think anything could be done because of the cost. Once they realized this was an exercise, they became more engaged in what they would like to see. Chair Yamamoto recognized this process starts a dialogue with the residents/property owners.

Commissioner Bruce Witenberg pointed out there has been a lot of publicity and community outreach regarding the workshops; it is simply difficult to get people to participate. He was hopeful more people would be involved once alternatives were developed.

Mr. Clifton advised staff is working on next steps with the UW; the next workshop has not yet been scheduled.

Planning Board Member Kristiana Johnson reported she recognized only one person at her Westgate table that was not with the UW, a designer or member of a group. She wondered how to engage the 400 people who responded to the survey as well as the general public, recognizing that the public needs to be engaged in order to avoid opposition when the alternatives are presented to the City Council. Commissioner Faïres was hopeful that visuals will provide citizens something to comment on.

**b. Strategic Planning and Visioning (Approved funding, EDC involvement, and approval of draft for City Council review)**

Mr. Clifton advised the original draft Request for Proposals (RFP) and a request for feedback was sent to Councilmembers, Department Directors, Planning Board Members and the EDC. The proposed draft RFP includes all the recommended changes that were submitted.

Mr. Clifton reviewed changes made to the RFP and minor additional changes were made. He requested the EDC provide a recommendation for approval to the City Council. He anticipated the RFP would be presented to the City Council in early April.

During review of the RFP, Commissioners and staff discussed the budget for the Strategic Plan, public outreach, ways to update the public regarding the Strategic Planning process, the importance of citizen buy-in, monitoring the goals in the Strategic Plan such as requiring action/funding requests to reference the Plan, other cities' "how are we doing" surveys that engage the public, whether to require consultants have experience preparing a strategic plan for a municipality, and specific evaluation criteria in the RFP.

**COMMISSIONER HALL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FAIRES TO ACCEPT THE RFP AS AMENDED AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL BY THE CITY COUNCIL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**c. Technology**

Commissioner Faïres reported there is tacit agreement with Rick Steves regarding a trial whereby they will hook-up and use the City's fiber optics for a period of time. The Port Commission approved meeting with the City to discuss an agreement between the Port and the City to provide fiber optics at Harbor Square.

Mr. Clifton reported discussions are underway regarding how to connect the Edmonds Conference Center, Edmonds Center for the Arts and the Edmonds Theater in order to provide broadband capabilities to broadcast events held in those facilities.

Discussion followed regarding the amount of revenue generated by Rick Steves connecting to fiber optics, who is leading the fiber optics effort, need for a project manager and a fiber optics business plan, targets of opportunity, and how the revenue stream generated by a customer like Rick Steves would be used. Mr. Clifton offered to confer with CIO Carl Nelson regarding issues raised by the EDC.

#### **d. Tourism**

Cultural Services Manager Frances Chapin reviewed a draft Tourism Plan Framework developed as a result of the Tourism subgroup's discussions. She explained subgroup members have been inventorying assets such as venues, basic infrastructure, and events. The Tourism Plan will assist with strategic planning as well as long term planning. She invited other Commissioners to participate and/or provide input. Following a brief discussion, public/private partnerships was added as a fourth category under assets

Commissioner Hall commented the biggest challenge is getting people who are attending an event to visit the rest of the City or return in the future. Chair Yamamoto commented events like the Arts Festival and the Taste are held in specific areas and it is difficult to attract people downtown. Sports tourism forces people to visit other areas of the City for food, lodging, etc. Commissioners suggested events such as a Discover Edmonds Scavenger Hunt, a photo marathon, and a contest regarding how many places a person has visited within the City.

Commissioner Wolfe offered to lead a subcommittee to brainstorm ways to attract and keep visitors in Edmonds. Planning Board Member Johnson offered to participate via email.

### **5. PRIORITIZATION OF FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS**

Chair Yamamoto and Mr. Clifton summarized suggested future agenda topics identified at previous meetings:

- Development of the post office property
- Harbor Square/Port process
- Webpage update
- Community outreach
- Public-private partnership
- Development agreement
- Educational presentations to the EDC regarding development agreements, form based codes, and other code related matters of interest
- Highway 99 Task Force – how can the EDC help with the Hwy. 99 enhancement project, CG3 zoning, and attracting businesses
- Tourism
- Green incentive program
- Partnerships to facilitate various types of development

Mr. Clifton reported Mr. Chave recently met with the new City Attorney to discuss development agreements. Development agreements are a complex process that first requires revising the zoning code to allow modifications via a development agreement. Mr. Chave is working on that and may have further information by the next EDC meeting.

Mr. Clifton referred to his list of issues discussed at the joint City Council/Planning Board meeting:

- How can the City move toward implementing development agreements
- Undertake code rewrites to the advantage of short-term developments and green incentives
- Form based codes
- Strategic planning and visioning/branding
- Swedish Edmonds/Medical Activity Area/Hwy. 99

Chair Yamamoto relayed suggestions submitted by Commissioner Pierce: determine ways to attract younger people and explain the difference between contract rezone and development agreements. Mr. Clifton suggested Commissioners may want to attend Planning Board meetings where many of the above issues are being discussed. The Planning Board will eventually make a recommendation to the City Council.

Planning Board Member Johnson explained the Planning Board will be exploring the boundaries of the Medical Activity Area but need a better understanding of the economic multipliers related to expansion. She suggested the EDC explore the hospital from an economic development standpoint such as ripple effects of a hospital on the community and other services that are needed to support a hospital. She feared if other services were not provided in Edmonds, they would be established in surrounding cities. Mr. Clifton responded Mr. Chave and he met with Swedish representatives and offered their assistance with facilitating development around the hospital. Mr. Chave and he are planning another meeting to accomplish what Ms. Johnson suggested. He invited Commissioners and/or City Councilmembers to attend that meeting.

Chair Yamamoto reported the PR representative for Swedish is joining the Chamber of Commerce; one of Swedish's corporal goals is community outreach.

Planning Board Member Johnson explained the Planning Board is also considering possibilities in the BD1 and BD2 zones downtown via development agreements, retail versus general commercial use on the first floor, commercial depth requirement, street design, whether step backs make sense, etc. She offered to provide the Commission further information and encouraged the development community and the EDC to contribute to the process. The Planning Board meets the second and fourth Wednesday 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Mr. Clifton explained another issue under consideration is commercial street front on a building. For example on the post office site, it is not appropriate to extend commercial extend to Bell Street as is required in the existing code.

Mr. Clifton suggested the EDC take a position on the topics described by Planning Board Member Johnson. Other suggestions included scheduling a joint Planning Board/EDC meeting as the Planning Board makes progress on items and staff providing EDC members the Planning Board's minutes.

Mr. Clifton referenced information submitted by Commissioner Haug regarding a potential levy and his suggestions that the EDC, 1) evaluate and recommend potential levy proposals to the City Council, 2) participate in the public education campaign to promote a levy, and 3) follow any added direction provided by the Council.

## **6. MISCELLANEOUS**

Commissioner Kerry St. Clair Ayers reviewed talking points for making presentations to community partners. She will add the tourism information distributed tonight and next steps for each of the four key

areas (strategic planning, technology, land use and tourism). Chair Yamamoto commented on the need to expand the EDC's community outreach effort.

#### **7. AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

**Ron Wambolt, Edmonds**, pointed out a respondent to the RFP could not provide a strategic plan prepared for a business as an example because those plans are confidential. Regarding fiber optics, he has been on the CTAC for five years. A business plan was produced but it envisioned providing triple play to homes in Edmonds which was rejected due to the substantial investment required. There was a project leader, Rick Jenness, who was paid by the City. In his opinion things went astray when then-Mayor Haakenson changed the reporting of the IT Department from the Mayor's Office to then-Finance Director Lorenzo Hines. Mr. Hines planned to produce a business plan last April but that did not happen. He summarized progress is being made with regard to fiber optics. For example a court case last year in the City's favor allowed fiber optics to be sold to private entities.

**Jennifer Mantooh, Edmonds**, stated she owns rental property in Westgate and first learned of the process in October 2010 from an architect in Edmonds. The first mail she received was a postcard regarding Saturday's design workshop. She attended the Westgate-Five Corners design workshop and felt it was a good, well organized meeting. She was disappointed more people from the neighborhood did not attend and felt they might not understand how they could be affected. She suggested increasing public outreach such as doing more mailers and inviting people to participate in the process. She was interested in form based code, envisioning it would provide more flexibility. She would like to redevelop her property but cannot do so without a Comprehensive Plan change and rezone which were unsuccessful in the past. She recommended providing a variety of housing types in Westgate and Five Corners in order to attract young people with disposable incomes.

#### **8. ADJOURN**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.