

CITY OF EDMONDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
February 19, 2014

The Citizens Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Witenberg in the Brackett Room, 121 5th Avenue North, Edmonds.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Bruce Witenberg, Chair
Kevin Garrett, Vice Chair
John Dewhirst
Darrol Haug
Roger Hertrich
Nicole Hughes
Debbie Matteson
Nathan Proudfoot
John Rubenkonig
Gail Sarvis (arrived 6:16 p.m.)
Rich Senderoff
Douglas Swartz
Evelyn Wellington (arrived 6:19 p.m.)
Teresa Wippel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Doug Purcell, excused
Darlene Stern, excused

ALSO PRESENT

Gloria Evstatieva, Student Representative

PLANNING BOARD LIAISON

Phil Lovell

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Strom Peterson
Councilmember Kristiana Johnson

PORT OF EDMONDS LIAISON

Bob McChesney, Executive Director

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Clifton, Comm. Serv./Econ. Dev. Dir.
Rob Chave, Acting Dev. Serv. Dir.
Frances Chapin, Cultural Services Manager
Jeannie Dines, Recorder

PUBLIC PRESENT

Ron Wambolt

1. **OPENING REMARKS**

Chair Witenberg relayed he gave the annual EDC Report to the City Council last night; the report is in the February 18, 2014 Council packet.

2. **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – NONE**

3. **APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2014**

COMMISSIONER MATTESON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2014. COMMISSIONER DEWHIRST SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Commissioners Sarvis and Wellington were not present for the vote.)

4. **LOOKING AHEAD TO 2015 – GMA UPDATE**

Acting Development Services Director Rob Chave explained the Comprehensive Plan update is due in 2015. He described the regional planning context, explaining the City's Comprehensive Plan needs to be consistent with countywide and multicounty planning policies as well as state policies. He displayed a map of the region that compared the population in 1950 and 2000 and reviewed the major components of the new Regional Growth Strategy (RGS):

- a. Designation of geographic areas for regional growth centers, manufacturing and industrial centers as well as other centers such as town centers and activity hubs in UGAs and cities
- b. Planning for multi-modal connections and supportive land uses between centers and activity hubs
- c. Promotion of sustainability in all decision making
- d. Allocation of population and employment growth to regional geographies in Snohomish County

He displayed and reviewed:

- Map identifying centers and connections.
- Graph of population growth by regional geography and county 2000-2040 – metropolitan cities, core cities, larger cities (includes Edmonds), smaller cities, unincorporated UGA.
- Chart: RGS regional geography, jurisdictions, 2010-2035 RGS growth allocation, 2000-2025 growth target, 2000-2010 actual change
- Graph: RGS Population Growth and 2007 BLR Additional Capacity – Snohomish County
- Chart: Countywide Population Growth Shares, Past and RGS Future – Snohomish County
- Major findings: population growth and employment growth countywide under the RGS are in line with past trends and the adopted 2025 countywide targets. However the distribution of population growth within the county, in particular, changes significantly under the RGS since it is more heavily weighted toward cities with regional growth centers (metropolitan cities and core cities) and away from the unincorporated UGA than has been the case in the past (source: county fact sheet)
- Chart: 2035 Initial Plan Targets
- Importance for Edmonds:
 - 2015 update must be consistent with Vision 2040 RGS and the updated countywide planning policies.
 - Acknowledge and anticipate emerging trends that will affect the City
- Demographic trends in Snohomish County
 - Major trends are emerging that will significantly change demographic patterns
 - Biggest underlying trend is an aging population
 - More demand for housing in urban locations
 - Less demand for detached single family housing
 - Less reliance on automobiles and more interest in alternate modes of travel

Mr. Chave provided graphs, charts and information courtesy of Snohomish County Principle Demographer, Steve Toy, regarding the following:

- Snohomish County's population projected to continue growing but by lesser amounts and at slower rates than in past
- A projected reduction in natural increase is responsible for Snohomish County's reduced population growth to the year 2035
- An increased number of deaths over the next 20 years will drive the reduction in natural increase in Snohomish County
- Snohomish County population pyramid, 1985, 2010 and 2035
- Percent of past and projected county total population growth by age group
- Snohomish County population change by age group and decade
- Characteristics of the projected age structure for Snohomish County that could affect future land use, housing and transportation needs

- Characteristics of Snohomish County’s population growth and permit activity that could affect future land use, housing and transportation needs
- Initial 2035 growth shares – population and employment
- Initial 2035 population targets – Bothell and Lynnwood (core cities), Edmonds (larger city), unincorporated UGA total and unincorporated rural/resource area total

Mr. Chave described Edmonds 2015 focus areas:

- Check capacity against targets and trends
 - County-adopted growth target
 - Projected city capacity
 - Demographic trends and needs
- Critical areas review and update
 - Best Available Science review
- Specific plan elements
 - Economic Development, Housing, Design

Mr. Chave responded to Commissioners’ questions regarding employment growth, actions that shape trends, Edmonds-specific information, growth targets in metropolitan and core cities and GMA mandates. Commissioners requested staff post the PowerPoint slides to the website. Councilmember Johnson commented on the update of the Transportation element of Comprehensive Plan.

5. LIAISONS

Chair Witenberg explained in an effort to make the EDC more visible in the community, each commissioner has been assigned as a liaison to the organization(s) of their choices. Vice Chair Garrett referred to an article written Mr. Clifton (attached to the agenda), Economic Development in Edmonds – Collaboration and Partnerships, that explains successful economic development is the product of a lot of people generally in groups doing many different things to take small steps. The Strategic Plan is an example of small steps all contributing to the City moving forward. A major initiative for the EDC in 2014 is following up on the Strategic Plan action items. He summarized the purpose of the liaison program is two-way communication –making connections and providing information about the EDC and assistance the EDC and the City can provide.

Vice Chair Garrett requested liaisons make initial contact with their organization(s) and email Chair Witenberg and him (and copy staff at EDC@edmondswa.gov) what they hear about the City, what the organizations are doing, and issues of importance to EDC. He and Chair Witenberg will review the emails and schedule items on the EDC agendas as necessary.

Commission Haug described the meeting he and Vice Chair Garrett had with the Port as an example. Port Executive Director McChesney expressed his appreciation for the outreach; the Port does economic development but cannot do it alone and sees themselves as a partner with the City and the community.

Chair Witenberg reported the initial meetings he and Commissioner Purcell had with Council liaisons Johnson and Peterson were mutually productive. They plan to meet monthly to open the lines of communication and collaboration with the Council.

BUSINESS DISTRICTS ENHANCEMENT SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Rubenkonig reported the sub-group had been reviewing several incentives proposed by Commissioner Senderoff. Mr. Clifton and Mr. Chave created a list of incentives borrowed from Washington State and the cities of Auburn, Renton and Tacoma. The in-state programs have the legal code structure that

makes the legislative work less daunting to put them into action in Edmonds. Incentives the sub-group decided to pursue are:

- Multi-unit housing development tax credit (originally proposed by Commissioner Senderoff)
- Building façade improvement program (originally proposed by Commissioner Senderoff)
- Waiver of fees for parks or other development fees that might normally be charged (proposed by staff)

Commissioner Senderoff described the source and rationale for the original list of incentives, noting business incentives are one of the highest ranked items in Strategic Plan. He suggested inviting Councilmembers Johnson and Peterson to the sub-group's next meeting to discuss the Council's interest in pursuing incentives.

The sub-group will continue its research with a goal of presenting a business incentive proposals to the full EDC for discussion and vote in the spring.

7. TOURISM AND VISITORS SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Dewhirst reported the primary purpose of their last meeting was to determine 2014 projects. The following 2103 projects/reports will be finished before additional projects are started:

- Year-round indoor farmer s market – Commissioner Wippel – draft by March
- Downtown Restrooms – Commissioner Hertrich – draft by March
- Getting cruise ship tourists to Edmonds – Commissioner Hertrich – draft by June
- Fine Arts Museum – Commissioner Dewhirst – to the EDC in February
- Mobile App – Commissioners Dewhirst and Garrett – wait until City hires new communication person. Meanwhile work on content. Projects needs to be done by spring 2014.

The sub-group changed their meeting frequency from once a month to every two months on the first Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. Ideas for 2014 projects include:

- Tourism spending model – Commissioner Swartz – draft by March
- Analyze regional trends of tourism. What applies to Edmonds? Other types of museums/facilities that maybe suitable in Edmonds? Interactive art facility – like the Torpedo Factory in Arlington, VA
- Transportation aspects of tourism – getting people to & from Edmonds – Commissioner Proudfoot
- Shopping/Sightseeing tours – who, what, where, how – Commissioner Proudfoot
- What is missing in Edmonds to make it a day, weekend, other destination location? What tourist support facilities are missing in Edmonds?
- Pedestrian access across the railroad tracks
- Promote the International Area on SR 99
- What waterfront related activities could bring in more people? How to build on the dive park?
- What waterfront concessions are needed? (Liaison start discussions with the Port)
- Other projects as needed

Commissioner Dewhirst reviewed the Fine Arts Museum report he prepared that included:

- Background
- Regional museums
- Questions that must be answered to determine the feasibility, kind and type of facility
- Possible models
- Possible locations
- Possible museum facility types
- Potential economic development

Discussion followed and suggestions included developing a database of B&Bs/rooms for rent in Edmonds and adding a visitor link on the City's website that identifies things to do, places to stay, etc.

8. TECHNOLOGY SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Haug reported the City signed a contract with WiFog for a six month trial of free Wi-Fi in locations that have not yet been determined. Users will be required to provide their gender and age and watch a couple of ads to receive an hour of free internet. At the conclusion of the six month free trial, there is no commitment to proceed; if the City chooses to continue, the advertisement revenue will be shared. Discussion followed regarding informing the public about the availability of free Wi-Fi.

9. STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Proudfoot requested the sub-group schedule a meeting to discuss what is occurring in the community with regard to the strategic plan.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Clifton reported on the following:

- Mayor's State of the City – February 20 at 8:30 a.m. at the Edmonds Theater
- City Council retreat – March 14 and 15
- Six responses to the RFQ/RFP for a one-year, part-time contractor to facilitate implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. Representatives from the Port, Senior Center, Council, EDC and others will assist with reviewing the submittals and conducting interviews
- The RFQ for a one-year, part-time communication specialist has been issued

Commissioner Haug reported it is getting more difficult to find parking downtown. Parking garages are very expensive; each stall costs approximately \$30,000. Commissioner Proudfoot reported he is conducting a parking study of the downtown area to determine whether there is a lack of parking or simply a perception. Mr. Clifton relayed a past parking study found there is enough parking downtown, but if parking is not available in front of the store a customer wants to visit, there is a perception that there is not enough.

Discussion followed regarding the opportunity for diagonal parking on some streets, updating the parking study, availability of parking if people are willing to walk 1-2 blocks, a parking garage requiring people to walk more than a block, the BID's intent to work with private property owners with large parking lots for off-hour parking, providing signage regarding the location of parking and underutilized parking areas.

Councilmember Johnson reported the South Snohomish County Bike Business Forum, sponsored by Verdant and Swedish-Edmonds Hospital, is interested in ways to promote bicycling and business connections. Verdant recently awarded a \$1.2 million grant to help with signage and bike trails to promote business and biking opportunities.

11. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Ron Wambolt, Edmonds, asked how the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) operations are funded. Commissioner Dewhirst said each member pays dues based on their size. They also retain a percentage of the federal grant dollars they distribute.

12. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.