

CITY OF EDMONDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
March 19, 2014

The Citizens Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 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
Roger Hertrich
Nicole Hughes
Debbie Matteson
Nathan Proudfoot
John Rubenkonig
Rich Senderoff
Darlene Stern
Douglas Swartz
Evelyn Wellington
Teresa Wippel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Darrol Haug
Doug Purcell
Gail Sarvis

PLANNING BOARD LIAISON

Phil Lovell, Commissioner

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Strom Peterson
Councilmember Kristiana Johnson

PORT OF EDMONDS LIAISON

Bill McChesney, Executive Director

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Clifton, Comm. Serv./Econ. Dev. Dir.
Cindi Cruz, Executive Assistant
Frances Chapin, Arts & Culture Program Mgr.
Jeannie Dines, Recorder

PUBLIC PRESENT

Ron Wambolt

1. OPENING REMARKS

Chair Witenberg announced Commissioners Haug, Purcell and Sarvis have excused absences. He requested Commissioners who plan to be absent email him and Cindi Cruz.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Chair Witenberg reported the presentation by Kyle Vixie would be rescheduled to next month. The City's new Development Services Director Shane Hope will come to the April or May EDC meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2014

COMMISSIONER WIPPEL MOVED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2014.
COMMISSIONER MATTESON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chair Witenberg requested the minutes reflect that Commissioners Stern and Purcell had excused absences last month.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. KYLE VIXIE, PRESIDENT, EDMONDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: BACKGROUND AND NEW ROLL AT THE CHAMBER AND ITS BROADER PLAN FOR GENERAL IMPROVEMENT

This item was rescheduled to next month.

5. STATUS OF PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION ON WESTGATE

Planning Board Commissioner Phil Lovell explained the Planning Board's work has focused on reviewing the UW/Cascade Land Conservancy's product and producing a plan and code amendment that would fit within the City's regulatory system and produce a result acceptable to the community. The current proposal is a result of the Planning Board's review and reflects a number of changes from the original proposal.

The PowerPoint in the packet is the presentation made by Acting Development Services Director Rob Chave at the Planning Board public hearing. He provided background on the plan including the public process and the decision to delay the Five Corners plan due to the roundabout. He displayed a map and identified the Westgate study area, assuring the proposal would not change the commercial zoning of Westgate.

Mr. Lovell reviewed reasons for a form based code.

- Traditional zoning – regulate and emphasize the separation of uses
- Design guidelines – modulate building facades and materials
- Form-based codes – emphasize the relationship between public and private space to support users and foster local character. Results in more variation in building height, shape and size.

Mr. Lovell reviewed:

- Contents of the plan and form based code:
 1. Introduction
 2. The regulating framework
 3. Building type and standards
 4. Civic investment: streetscape and public space standards
 5. Private investment: amenity spaces and green features standards
 6. Administration and implementation standards
 7. Recommendations
- Intent and Goals – Leverage Synergies
 - Create mixed use, walkable, compact, commercial centers
 - Improve connections for bicyclists and pedestrians
 - Enhance Westgate identity and visibility
 - Prioritize amenity spaces
 - Promote civic and private investments
 - Incorporate sustainable features
 - Regulate building placement and form
 - Create variety of housing choices and retail options and parking options
- Westgate: What is regulated?
 1. Amenity spaces
 2. Required building lines
 3. Street types
 4. Building types
 5. Building frontage types
 6. Sustainable and green features
 7. Development requirements and options

Mr. Lovell reviewed key changes to the plan:

- The plan's emphasis has been shifted from the adjoining streets/highway to the four "quadrants" that make up the Westgate commercial area
- The overall plan provides for opportunities while not mandating that new development conform rigidly to certain minimum building heights or insisting that all buildings be pushed up against sidewalk lines. Nonetheless, open space and amenity spaces is still required, as well as pedestrian and non-motorized circulation within each of the four quadrants of the Westgate commercial area
- Instead of development of up to 5 stories, buildings are now capped in most places at 3 stories, with an opportunity to obtain 4 stories only where the nearby slopes are higher, or where no residences are nearby.
- Street setbacks have been increased from the original 8 feet to 12 feet to provide a wider street interface and to assure that, if needed, turn pockets and be provided for traffic access.
- The intersection of SR-104 and 100th Avenue W has a significant step-back requirement radiating from the intersection, to assure that a sense of place is provided at this key intersection.

The majority of public comments at the Planning Board public hearing were concerns with taller buildings in quadrants looking into the backyards of single family residences. He displayed a map identifying the steep slopes, advising slopes in the southwest quadrant are 50-60 feet high. Mr. Clifton emphasized adoption of form based code would not require any of the businesses to vacate the existing buildings.

Chair Witenberg commended the Planning Board and staff for their review of the plan and the revisions to the plan as well as their response to the public's questions at the March 12 Planning Board public hearing. Mr. Lovell advised details regarding the proposed changes are in contained in the rewrite of Chapter 16.1 in the Planning Board's March 12, 2014 packet on the City's website.

Discussion followed regarding concern with a point-based incentive plan, whether incentives to increase height from 3 stories to 4 stories will be sufficient to attract developers, ensuring incentives are acceptable to the community and the Council, concern with step-backs to achieve an additional story, providing visual examples such as 3D models of what could be developed in Westgate under form based code, increasing the public's awareness of the proposal for Westgate, increasing flexibility in land use, providing a mix of housing types, and developing the limited amount of land in an effective, efficient and attractive manner.

Mr. Lovell offered to discuss with Mr. Chave and Mr. Clifton how to display this via 3D models.

6. BUSINESS DISTRICT ENHANCEMENT SUB GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Rubenkonig reported the sub group discussed:

- The EDC providing a non-specific statement of support regarding the Westgate Plan when it goes to the City Council.
- Why the proposed Westgate Plan is important
- Business District Incentives including tailoring incentives to support the direction the city want to go
- Updating the 2006 Economic Development Plan.

7. TOURISM AND VISITOR SERVICES SUB GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Dewhirst reported the sub group has not met due to the change in the meeting schedule. He encouraged sub group members to submit drafts work elements a week before the sub group meeting. He reported the mobile app, VisitWA, has been placed on the back burner as there are other sites that reach more people such as ExperienceWashington. Although VisitWA has good potential, it lacks information and the app is not being promoted.

Commissioner Senderoff reported Rick Steves' website has one of the best descriptions of Edmonds as well as a great deal of information including all the restaurants in downtown Edmonds and places to visit.

8. STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Proudfoot reported the sub group has not met this month. He looked forward to receiving input from community liaisons regarding efforts related to the strategic action plan. He commented on the process of hiring consultant to assist with tracking implementation of the strategic plan. He and Mr. Clifton are updating the action items in the strategic plan. The first anniversary of the Council's approval of the strategic plan is April 2, 2014; he is preparing a presentation to summarize accomplishments during the first year.

9. CITY COUNCIL RETREAT REPORT

Councilmember Peterson reported the Council met with a consultant who was hired to assist with team building and working with staff, administration and each other. The consultant will begin his work the first week of April.

Councilmember Johnson reported the retreat included:

- Introduction of the new Finance Director Scott James
- Introduction of the new Development Services Director Shane Hope
- Team building will include Councilmembers, the Mayor and Directors
- Discussion regarding Highway 99, including the requirement for two floors of commercial being an impediment to development. Some Councilmember were okay with pursuing a revision to the code, others wanted to consider that change along with all Highway 99 regulations.
- Discussion regarding accelerating review of TOD within walking distance of Swift Station
- Mr. Clifton highlighted items the Council is the lead on in the strategic plan and the role of the consultant in facilitating implementation of the strategic plan
- Ferrell Fleming and Phil Lovell presented plans for a new senior center. The Council passed a resolution March 18 regarding rebuilding the senior center at its current location

Councilmember Johnson reported last year the City Council adopted a Code of Conduct for the City Council which also applies to all boards and commissions. Senior Executive Council Assistant Jana Spellman will be sending it to all board and commission members.

Councilmember Peterson reported on plans to develop a green resource room on the second floor once Ms. Hope joins the City. The intent is an interactive area at the front with new ideas for incorporating green concepts and incentives, staff that can answer questions, traveling displays from organizations, etc. He commented a majority of the Council was ready to revise regulations on Highway 99 that are holding up development such as two floors of commercial, parking requirements, etc.

Mr. Lovell pointed out the City's new Development Services Director Shane Hope comes to Edmonds from Mountlake Terrace where they use form based code.

(Commissioner Swartz left meeting 7:19 p.m.)

Chair Witenberg reported the owner of the property behind Safeway wanted to develop transit oriented development (TOD). Although TOD is a good idea, the neighborhoods that surround that parcel represent some of most affordable housing in Edmonds. He urged caution in transiting between a large development on that less than 2 acre site and the residential neighborhood.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Clifton reported on the interview process for the communication consultant and the consultant to assist with tracking implementation of the strategic plan. He was hopeful preferred candidates could be identified and the City could move forward with professional service agreements. He reported on the contractor's efforts related to Facebook, Google+ and YouTube.

Mr. Clifton expressed interest in meeting with the Community Technology Sub Group about a possibility for downtown. He reported on a potential business that would fill a significant vacant space downtown. Three uses are waiting for space to open up downtown and he is currently negotiating with four businesses who want to move into Edmonds. He summarized there is energy in the community; 2014 is seen as a transition to a more positive economic climate.

Mr. Clifton referred to Mayor Earling's announcement in his State of City about an art museum planned for former Antique Mall property.

Ms. Chapin reported the Third Thursday Art Walk is tomorrow. The second annual Chamber Arts Awards will be announced at the conclusion. Those being honored are:

- Business Leadership: Arts – Cole Gallery, owner Denise Cole
- General: Comprehensive Wealth Management, owners Gary and Cheryl Arford
- Individual Volunteer: Darlene McLellan, president of Edmonds Arts Festival Foundation
- Individual Leadership: Joe McIalwain, executive director, Edmonds Center for the Arts
- Creative Collaboration: Jazz Connection, Ron Keimer and Rotary Club of Edmonds Daybreakers, and Edmonds School District

Mr. Clifton reported Ms. Chapin, Ms. Cruz and he met with representatives of the Edmonds Historical Museum to begin working on the Scarecrow Festival. Cambria, California, who started with 30 scarecrows in 2009, had 400 scarecrows in 2013; in its first year, Edmonds had 54 scarecrows. Efforts will include marketing, involving students and artists, possibly holding a scarecrow-building workshop, encouraging scarecrows in residential and commercial areas and getting a significant concentration of scarecrows downtown. He relayed some people came downtown specifically to see the scarecrows; it is a significant month-long tourism draw.

Ms. Chapin reported another community contacted Mr. Clifton about Edmonds' scarecrow program. The City has also received a call from Langley about the artwork on the flower poles. She summarized the Edmonds community is getting some attention.

Councilmember Johnson reported the topic of next week's Chamber luncheon is Working Arm and Arm with Main Street and will feature a Regional Small Business Administrator. Anyone interested in attending can contact the Chamber to register.

Commissioner Garrett encouraged Commissioners to submit liaison reports regarding other groups' efforts related to strategic plan items.

Commissioner Senderoff reported one of the Edmonds Backyard Wildlife Habitat's projects is expanding the native plant garden near the hatchery. He encouraged Commissioners to visit the garden. Commissioner Proudfoot reported the next workshop is April 5.

11. AUDIENCE COMMENTS – None

12. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.