

**CITY OF EDMONDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
November 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
Darrol Haug
Roger Hertrich (arrived 6:37 p.m.)
Doug Purcell
Jamie Reece
John Rubenkonig
Michael Schindler
Rich Senderoff
Darlene Stern
Finis Tupper
Teresa Wippel

PLANNING BOARD LIAISON

Phil Lovell

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Kristiana Johnson

PORT OF EDMONDS LIAISON

Bob McChesney, Executive Director

STAFF PRESENT

Patrick Doherty, Econ. Dev & Comm. Serv. Dir.
Shane Hope, Development Services Director
Jeannie Dines, Recorder

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Nicole Hughes
Debbie Matteson
Douglas Swartz

1. OPENING REMARKS

In response to Chair Witenberg's inquiry, a majority of Commissioners indicated they were able to attend the December 17 meeting.

Chair Witenberg introduced Jamie Reece, appointed by Mayor Earling to fill the vacancy created by Gail Sarvis' resignation. Mr. Reece described his background and his interest in joining the EDC.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA - None

3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 15, 2014

COMMISSIONER SCHINDLER MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DEWHIRST, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 15, 2014. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Commissioner Hertrich was not present for the vote.)

4. PRESENTATION BY ELLEN HIATT, MARKETING CONSULTANT, ON MARKETING TOURISM FOR CITY AND UPDATED TOURISM WEBSITE

Economic Development & Community Services Director Patrick Doherty introduced Ellen Hiatt who has been working with the City since July on communication strategies particularly related to tourism, arts and cultural events and advertising as well as a new tourism website. The proposed 2015 budget includes using lodging tax funds to continue Ms. Hiatt's services next year to help with tourism-strategic advertising, maintaining the tourism website and a Facebook page that accompanies the tourism, and other strategies related to promoting tourism, arts and culture events, festivals, etc.

Ms. Hiatt, a marketing and public affairs consultant working primarily with non-profits and public agencies, explained she was hired primarily to market Edmonds as an arts and cultural designation. The plan is to create a strategic marketing plan for Edmonds and to assess that tools that are being used. The page on the City's website that contained some tourism-related information is being rebuilt and will be launched early next week. The webpage is just the beginning of a 2-5 year plan to market Edmonds.

She described tools to engage the community such as the website's City-hosted interactive calendar that includes an app, addition of a Facebook page in 2015 that will link to the tourism website and the calendar, and creating a strategic advertising plan. She demonstrated the Visit Edmonds website, explaining it is interactive, highly visual, includes a calendar with auto RSS feeds from other organizations, and Edmonds Top 5 for a variety of activities. An interactive map will be added to the website in a few weeks.

Mr. Doherty advised a group of community volunteers will each be assigned to community organizations to assist them with adding events to the calendar. Ms. Hiatt emphasized the importance of keeping the calendar and advertising fresh. She encouraged Commissioners to visit the website when it goes live next week and provide input including regarding Edmonds Top 5. Mr. Doherty advised there have been press releases to businesses asking for images and content for their business listing on the website. There will also be a press release announcing the launch.

Discussion followed regarding a suggestion to include a restroom map; what type of events will be included on the calendar; a suggestion to include bands, book signings and Rick Steves events on the calendar; ability to filter the calendar to a certain day; separate City and Visit Edmonds calendars; using existing links in Visit Seattle, Experience WA, Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, etc. due to the same VisitEdmonds.com URL; automatic translation of the website via a language icon; well-accepted law and case law regarding the use of public funds for economic development; including businesses/events outside the bowl; and listing lodging facilities that contribute lodging tax.

5. TOURISM AND VISITORS SUB-GROUP UPDATE WITH POTENTIAL ACTION ON DOWNTOWN RESTROOMS

Commissioner Dewhirst referred to the paper on downtown public restrooms that was discussed at the October meeting. The Planning Board recommended including downtown public restrooms in the draft Capital Facilities Plan (CFP). He distributed an EDC resolution recommending the City Council include downtown restrooms in the CFP.

He relayed research done by the Parks Department 1-2 years ago that determine the cost of a very basic, unheated, metal modular unit would be \$150,000 - \$200,000. He is meeting with new Chamber Executive Director next week; the Strategic Plan identifies the Chamber and the City as leads in for a downtown restroom. The Downtown Alliance is very supportive of the site next to City Hall. He was hopeful partners could be identified to participate financially in the annual maintenance. There also may be an opportunity to use water utility fees to pay for a restroom.

Councilmember Johnson relayed in accordance with the Planning Board's recommendation, downtown restrooms were included in the CFP with an estimated cost of \$300,000 and a description prepared by Ms. Hite.

COMMISSIONER STERN MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PURCELL, TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGARDING DOWNTOWN RESTROOMS.

Commissioner Senderoff suggested removing 2014 in the last sentence. Commissioner Stern agreed.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. BUSINESS DISTRICTS ENHANCEMENTS SUB-GROUP UPDATE

Commissioner Purcell commented there is often concern that economic development means change; people don't want downtown to change. The intent is to identify tools such as historic preservation, form-based code, design standards, zoning, etc. that can be applied to protect the integrity of what citizens think of as downtown Edmonds without blocking the ability to develop downtown in desirable way. The question is to what extent the EDC should get involved in helping to develop guidelines in a way that preserves the "Edmonds state of mind" and ease tensions that the outcome will be to Ballard-ize or Kirkland-ize downtown Edmonds.

Discussion followed regarding zoning that controls development, role of the EBID, encouraging development on Highway 99 to relieve pressure on downtown, what Kirkland offers, broadening the sense of Edmonds, the importance of walkability, ability to preserve downtown even with development, focus of the Main Street Program on revitalizing old downtowns, development improving the quality of downtown, opportunity to engage absent a specific proposal via the Comprehensive Plan update, limited development potential downtown with the existing 3-story height limit, and interest in the multifamily tax exemption program.

7. HIGHWAY 99 UPDATE

Chair Witenberg reported the Highway 99 Task Force meeting included:

- Presentation by Community Transit.
 - 5-year anniversary of BRT line; ridership is up
 - 7% of ridership board with bikes compared to 1% on other routes
 - Increases in bus service in the coming year
- Swedish-Edmonds' redevelopment will include a walkway from the campus to 216th
- An Asian restaurant is underway on a site at 220/Highway 99
- Work is occurring inside the former Top Foods building, no announcement yet
- Owner of property behind Safeway on 84th between 236th & 238th is interested in redeveloping the property for transit oriented development.

Development Services Director Shane Hope added the EDC, the Council and others recognize the potential of Highway 99; the City Council's 2014 retreat recognized Highway 99 as a top priority. The Council requested the Planning Board consider providing more flexibility; the Planning Board's recommendation allowed more flexibility with regard to uses, deleted the second story commercial requirement and amended parking requirements. The Council made some amendments to the Planning Board's recommendation and requested staff provide a report on the changes in a year. The Council is

considering options to fund a plan, standards and a Planned Action EIS but she was uncertain it would be funded in the 2015 budget.

Mr. Doherty relayed after the amendments were approved for Highway 99, he was contacted by a developer interested in partnering with Swedish-Edmonds to provide housing for employees. That could be an opportunity to consider the multifamily housing tax program; a local option for cities to provide an 8-10 years exemption from property taxes for the residential improvement value.

Chair Witenberg requested demographic information for employees at Premera and Swedish-Edmonds.

8. OVERVIEW OF PROCESS OF UPDATING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

(Commissioners Schindler and Rubenkonig left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.)

Ms. Hope explained the Comprehensive Plan update is due by mid-2015. A lot of the data in the Plan needs to be updated; the timeframe and resources do not allow an entirely new visioning effort. Work has been done on the Sustainability Element; the most work has been done on the Housing Element via the City's partnership with the Affordable Housing Alliance. The Land Use Element is next followed by the Economic Development Element. The data in the Economic Development Element needs to be updated and the goals and policies need to be reviewed. After each element is discussed individually, the entire Comprehensive Plan update will be considered at once as State law requires the Comprehensive Plan be adopted as a whole.

Ms. Hope reviewed the schedule, advising the Planning Board will consider the Economic Development Element in January. She suggested the EDC would need to meet in early January in order to provide a recommendation to the Planning Board. She distributed the existing Economic Development Element goals and policies to Commissioners for review.

(Commissioner Wippel left the meeting at 7:31 p.m.)

Mr. Doherty offered to provide Commissioners a track-change version of the goals and policies by December 12 for the EDC's December 17 meeting.

(Commissioner Tupper left the meeting at 7:37 p.m.)

Discussion followed regarding timing of an EDC recommendation to the Planning Board, dates of Planning Board meetings, keeping Comprehensive Plan goals and policies broad, vision provided by the Comprehensive Plan, requirement for regulations to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, consistency between elements, the Economic Development Element as a policy document, issues to be addressed in the update of the Economic Development Element, recognizing the Strategic Plan in the Economic Development Element, plans to include one performance measure for each major Comprehensive Plan element and possibly some implementation actions, and a suggestion to do brainstorming at the December 17 meeting.

It was agreed the Business Enhancement Group would discuss the Economic Development Element at their December 8 meeting and the EDC will review the track-changes of the goals and policies at their December 17 meeting. Brainstorming may be postponed to January or February.

Mr. Doherty reported all Commissioners' reappointments have been accepted; one Commissioner has not responded. Councilmember Bloom will be appointing two new positions.

9. COUNCIL LIAISONS' COMMENTS

Councilmember Johnson reported this is a very busy time of the year for the City Council with the budget and the CIP/CFP. The Council agreed last night to forward the Shoreline Management Program to the Department of Ecology for review with two significant changes, one related to the Senior Center and one related to Harbor Square.

10. PLANNING BOARD UPDATE

Planning Board Member Phil Lovell reported the following:

- The Board is reviewing Comprehensive Plan elements
- Mike Nelson, an architect, was appointed to the Planning Board, replacing Ian Duncan
- The Board recommended consolidating the requirements related to the keeping of domestic animals in Chapter 17.35 of the ECDC with Chapter 5.05, Animal Control, of the ECC
- Two Edmonds-Woodway High School students will be attending Planning Board meetings
- The Board forwarded the Housing Element to the Council with a recommendation that the variety and affordability be enhanced by introducing zoning tweaks to enable more multifamily housing

Ms. Hope advised Staff plans to seek policy direction from the Council regarding the draft Tree Code recommended by the Tree Board before is forwarded to the Planning Board in 2015.

11. PORT OF EDMONDS UPDATE – None

12. MISCELLANEOUS – None

13. AUDIENCE COMMENTS – None

14. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.