

**CITY OF EDMONDS**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**January 21, 2015**

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  
Jenny Antilla  
John Dewhirst  
Darrol Haug  
Jamie Reece (arrived 6:09 p.m.)  
John Rubenkönig  
Michael Schindler  
Rich Senderoff  
Darlene Stern  
Douglas Swartz  
Teresa Wippel

**PLANNING BOARD LIAISON**

Phil Lovell

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Councilmember Joan Bloom

**STAFF PRESENT**

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

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Roger Hertrich  
Nicole Hughes  
Debbie Matteson

**1. OPENING REMARKS**

Chair Witenberg reported Commissioner Matteson has an excused absence. He reported the Council has tentatively scheduled interviews for the vacant Council position on February 17 and 18. Recognizing that Commissioners may want to apply for the vacancy or attend the interviews, the February 18 CEDC meeting was tentatively rescheduled to Monday, February 23.

**2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – None**

**3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2014**

**COMMISSIONER DEWHIRST MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RUBENKONIG, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2014. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Commissioner Reece was not present for the vote.)**

**4. ELECTION OF 2015 CHAIR & VICE CHAIR**

Chair Witenberg described the procedures for election of Chair and Vice Chair, advising those elected will serve a one year term commencing with the conclusions of this meeting and lasting until the conclusion of the January 2016 meeting, assuming the Council extends the current December 31, 2015

sunset date of the CEDC. He advised neither he nor Vice Chair Garrett would accept a nomination as Chair or Vice Chair. He opened nominations for the position of Chair.

**COMMISSIONER GARRETT NOMINATED MICHAEL SCHINDLER AS CHAIR. COMMISSIONER STERN SECONDED THE NOMINATION.**

There were no further nominations and Chair Witenberg closed nominations for Chair.

**NOMINATION OF MICHAEL SCHINDLER AS CHAIR CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Witenberg opened nominations for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Haug thanked Vice Chair Garrett and Chair Witenberg for their leadership during the past year.

**COMMISSIONER HAUG NOMINATED JOHN RUBENKONIG AS VICE CHAIR. COMMISSIONER GARRETT SECONDED THE NOMINATION.**

There were no further nominations and Chair Witenberg closed nominations for Vice Chair.

**NOMINATION OF JOHN RUBENKONIG AS VICE CHAIR CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**5. STATUS OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENTS UPDATES INCLUDING HOUSING, LAND USE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Development Services Director Shane Hope explained the Comprehensive Plan update is due mid-2015. Due to limited time and resources, the intent is to be focused and concise and not create a new plan but to improve, update and modify the existing plan where appropriate. The process is an element by element review, providing opportunity for public input, and ultimately all the elements will be considered together along with public hearings prior to final adoption. The Sustainability, Housing, and Land Use Elements have been reviewed so far; the Economic Development element is the next element to be reviewed. She advised of an open house on the Comprehensive Plan update on February 25.

Economic Development & Community Services Director Patrick Doherty explained this draft follows the same format as the existing Economic Development Element. The goals and policies have been updated based on input from staff, a CEDC subcommittee, and the CEDC. He updated the narrative to reflect current demographics such as income, sales, jobs, etc. as well as updated the implementation section to reference the Strategic Action Plan. The performance measure is related to employment; Snohomish County has allocated 2,269 new jobs to Edmonds for the planning horizon of 2035. The final draft of the element that incorporates the CEDC's comments will go to the Planning Board next Wednesday and to the City Council in February.

Mr. Doherty and Ms. Hope responded to questions and discussion ensued regarding how the Economic Development Element is implemented, plans for an annual report on implementation, revisions to the Comprehensive Plan limited to once a year with minimal exceptions, required Comprehensive Plan update every 8 years, examples of implementation, actions by the Port to attract business activity, tracking/measuring how code changes affect business inquiries, how City services affect quality of life, revenue generated by the hospital, sales tax generated by car sales, new car dealerships' trade areas, volatility of revenue from vehicle sales revenue, retail leakage, and available parcels in Edmonds' portion of Highway 99.

Mr. Doherty commended the CEDC on the great process to review the Economic Development Element. Vice Chair Garrett asked staff to keep the Commission informed regarding the Planning Board's and City Council's review of the element.

#### **6. HIGHWAY 99 TASK FORCE UPDATE**

Commissioner Rubenkonig explained the Highway 99 Task Force has been meeting for several years; he is a newcomer to the group. A short length of Highway 99 is located within City; the hospital district at the north end and Burlington Coat Factory property at the south and smaller parcels in between. The Task Force discusses topics such as the likelihood of a new tenant at Top Foods and updates on the hospital and the Burlington property. Council President Fraley-Monillas also attends the meetings.

Mr. Doherty referred to two key properties, the Burlington Coat Factory property and the Behar property at 220<sup>th</sup>. The two uses on the Burlington property occupy less than half the site. There are plans for a new restaurant at the corner of the Behar property and conceptual plans for the remainder of the site. Tomorrow Finance Director Scott James and he are meeting with Carl Zapora, Verdant, to discuss plans for their property.

Ms. Hope added the Task Force also discussed funds appropriated by the City Council for a Highway 99 Plan which will begin in late 2015. Discussion followed regarding the potential sale of the Edmonds Conference Center, ownership of the Conference Center by Edmonds Community College, whether the Edmonds Conference Center is required to be available for public use, and interest in having the building continue to be a community resource.

#### **7. BUSINESS DISTRICTS ENHANCEMENT SUB-GROUP UPDATE**

Commissioner Rubenkonig reported the subgroup's recent meeting included discussion regarding:

- Draft Economic Development Element
- Westgate and what area of the City to consider next; the most likely being Five Corners.
  - Five Corners is relatively close to the Hospital District. What could be done in Five Corners to provide housing that would be more affordable for hospital employees
- Requiring frontage improvements, roads, utilities when properties develop/redevelop
- Developing a business website

The Commission discussed how to move forward with a plan for Five Corners, Commissioners familiarizing themselves with the UW Green Future Lab's proposal for Five Corners, the City's current reactive versus proactive approach to planning, next step in the process for Five Corners and developing a vision and plan for Five Corners to attract developers.

#### **8. TOURISM & VISITORS SUB GROUP UPDATE**

Commissioner Dewhirst reported the sub group's February 3 meeting will include discussion regarding projects for 2015, past activities/accomplishments, and updates on projects such as downtown restrooms. The sub group is seeking new members and he invited Commissioners to inform him of ideas for potential projects. He has heard some interesting things when inquiring in the community about ways to enhance Edmonds for visitors and residents.

Chair Witenberg referred to an email from Greg Urban, Chamber of Commerce, and his offer for their Economic Development Committee to provide a quarterly report to the CEDC to coordinate efforts.

Mr. Doherty reported lodging tax funds must be used to promote tourism, events and advertising. The City contracted with Ellen Hyatt to assist with the Strategic Plan and this week she delivered a strategic

advertising plan. That plan and staff's research found the need for not only a regional presence to attract day trippers but to attract visitors from further away such as Canada. He also reported:

- The new tourism website and Facebook page have been up since early December
- The tourism website contains a new, more concise video narrated by Rick Steves
- Edmonds was not selected to host the Washington State Historic Conference in May; he will continue to attract them in the future unless the reason is not enough hotel rooms
- An investment group is interested in building a boutique hotel in downtown Edmonds
- Cindi Cruz and Ellen Hyatt plan to a presentation to Canadian organizations that bring charter buses and shoppers to Edmonds

A brief discussion followed regarding ability for Canadians to take the train to Edmonds, and the outlet mall attracting visitors from Canada.

**9. CONTINUE BRAINSTORMING IDEAS TO CONSIDER FOR 2015**

Commissioners who were not present at the December 17 meeting suggested the following topics:

- Public restrooms downtown
- Sculptures throughout the City
- Tackle items on Strategic Action Plan
- Car rental company – Zip Car, Car-to-Go

Discussion followed regarding the Tourist Sub Group's efforts regarding downtown restrooms, cost of maintaining public restrooms, partnering with other organizations on maintenance, offering provision of public restrooms to a developer as an incentive, Council decision not to fund temporary restrooms, and inclusion of restrooms in the CIP.

Chair Witenberg requested subgroups identify what they wanted to work on in 2015 and report at the next CEDC meeting.

**9. CEDC COMMISSIONERS/LIAISON/STAFF**

**10. COUNCIL LIAISONS' COMMENTS**

Councilmember Bloom reported Councilmembers Petso and Mesaros are the new liaisons to the CEDC; she is filling in for Councilmember Petso.

**11. PLANNING BOARD UPDATE**

Phil Lovell Planning Board reported on the Planning Board's activities:

- Continue to review Comprehensive Plan elements. Staff is doing an incredible job providing edited and clean copy of the update.
- Planning Board also acts as Parks & Recreation Board; Ms. Hite recently provided highlights regarding parks:
  - Five Corners artwork installed
  - Edmonds Marsh received \$157,000 grant to create 60% design and to begin permitting for daylighting Willow Creek, outfall in Marina Beach and developing Marina Beach Master Plan
  - Yost Pool had an excellent year
    - Replaced boiler
    - YMCA operated the pool during the 2014 season; consideration being given to expanding that partnership
  - City Park volunteer effort to install new playground
  - City Park spray park redesigned

- Will have a water treatment/recirculating system
- Construction this spring
- Fields at the former Woodway High School
  - Cost: \$4.2 million
  - Cooperating with Edmonds School District (ESD) on development
  - Design in place for two multiuse turf fields and track
  - Construction begins in the spring
  - Partnership with ESD for maintenance.
- Civic Stadium
  - City in discussion with ESD, the current owner, about acquiring the property including Boys & Girls Club building
  - A Master Plan will likely be created
- Veterans' Plaza
  - Council approved a plan Tuesday night
  - Will need to coordinate with the Garden Market
- A subcommittee has been discussing the potential of a Metropolitan Parks District (MPD), a separate taxing district that would fund and operate parks and recreation
- Over 90% of park levies in surrounding cities have passed in recent years

Discussion followed regarding how the fields at the old Woodway High School could enhance sports tourism and attract tournaments.

**11. PORT OF EDMONDS UPDATE – None**

**12. MISCELLANEOUS**

Commissioner Reece suggested contacting blogs that list places to go and request the inclusion of sites in Edmonds such as Marina Park and City Park. Mr. Doherty described a feature on the new website that lists top five things to do under many headings.

Commissioner Antilla suggested a brass band competition at various parks.

Commissioner Haug explained the CEDC serves at the pleasure of the Council and direction is provided via the ordinance. The Council revised the sunset clause once; the CEDC is due to sunset again at the end of 2015. He suggested initiating discussion with Council, possibly via the new Council liaisons, regarding the role of the CEDC, what the Council wants the Commission to do this year and what they envision if the sunset clause were removed.

Chair Witenberg acknowledged the support he and the CEDC has received from current and former staff members. He thanked Vice Chair Garrett and Commissioners for their hard work, perseverance and dedication to economic development issues facing the community. He acknowledged the support and encouragement Commissioners have provided him in the last 2½ years during his leadership role. He expressed his confidence in Mike Schindler and John Rubenkönig.

**13. AUDIENCE COMMENTS – None**

**14. ADJOURN**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.