

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

The Citizens Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Frank Yamamoto in the Brackett Room, 121 5th Avenue North, Edmonds.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Paul Anderson  
Tim Crosby  
Bruce Faires  
Don Hall  
Darrol Haug  
Evan Pierce  
David Schaefer  
Rich Senderoff  
Bruce Witenberg  
Rebecca Wolfe  
Frank Yamamoto  
Marianne Zagorski

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Stacy Gardea  
Mary Monfort  
Beatrice O'Rourke  
Kerry St. Clair Ayers  
Evelyn Wellington

**PLANNING BOARD LIAISON**

Kristiana Johnson

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Councilmember Diane Buckshnis

**STAFF PRESENT**

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

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Phil Lovell, Planning Board Chair  
Ron Wambolt

1. **INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTS BY CHAIR – NONE**
2. **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA – NONE**
3. **APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2011**

**COMMISSIONER ZAGORSKI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2011. COMMISSIONER WITENBERG SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **CONTINUANCE OF EDC AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

Chair Yamamoto requested Commissioners email Cindi Cruz regarding their interest in remaining on the EDC. Discussion followed regarding the future of the Commission, length of an extension, options for appointing Commissioners, adding an attendance requirement, staggering Commissioners' terms,

returning to two Council representatives on the EDC, establishing a process for replacing Commissioners who resign, the need for Councilmembers to have representation on the Commission, the importance of retaining as many of existing Commissioners as possible for continuity, synergy between the strategic plan and the EDC's mission, the EDC's success to date, concern with terminating a Commissioner when their appointing Councilmember leaves the Council, maintaining the EDC's momentum, the Planning Board's absence policy, and excused versus unexcused absences.

Mr. Clifton suggested asking the Council to extend the Commission for 3 years at a minimum, preferable 5 years, recognizing it takes time to lay a foundation for future economic development. He suggested requesting the extension in December and Councilmembers make reappointments in January. Staff can advertise openings and existing Commissioners who want to remain on the Commission and other citizens can apply. He suggested stressing to the Council the importance of retaining as many existing Commissioners as possible to avoid a learning curve with 17 new members. He agreed with suggestions to stagger terms, create an attendance policy such as three unexcused absence will result in a Commissioner's removal, and allow a Commissioner to remain on the Commission for their full term regardless of whether the appointing Councilmember remains on the Council.

It was agreed in December Councilmember Buckshnis will propose to the Council that the EDC be extended for at least 3 years. Ms. Cruz will email Commissioners asking if they want to remain on the Commission. Existing members who want to continue will submit an application.

## **5. REPORTS FROM SUBGROUPS**

### **a. Land Use Update**

#### **ii. Westgate & Five Corners (Phase 4)**

Mr. Chave explained staff has been reviewing the form based code drafted by the UW group and will submit initial comments before Thanksgiving. There are two separate codes, one for Five Corners and one for Westgate. Although there are commonalities, the two codes are different. In talking with the UW about the best way to proceed, it was agreed it would be appropriate for the codes to progress separately.

Mr. Chave explained one of the complicating factors with Five Corners is the discussion occurring regarding the roundabout. In talking to the UW group as well as engineering, it was agreed to delay the formal public review process of the form based code for Five Corners until the roundabout design is available to the public in January. Mr. Chave relayed engineering's indication that minimal property acquisition will be required for the roundabout.

Mr. Chave suggested proceeding with public discussion regarding the Westgate form based code, anticipating there will be less controversy. He offered to present the Westgate materials at the EDC's January meeting. Further discussion regarding the Five Corners materials will be delayed until the roundabout design is available to the public. Mr. Chave explained form based code contains much more descriptive language, illustrations and pictures than codes typically have.

Mr. Clifton offered to resend Commissioners information regarding what is form based code. Mr. Chave anticipated having a more in-depth discussion with the Council regarding form based code at the Council retreat. Mr. Clifton suggested the EDC submit a recommendation to the Planning Board regarding form based code.

It was agreed to schedule a presentation regarding the Westgate form based code on the EDC's January agenda and to provide Commissioners the materials well in advance of the meeting.

**i. Proposed Code Amendments to Downtown Business (BD) Zones**

Mr. Chave reported an ordinance with the BD zone code amendment that the Council agreed to previously will be on the Council's December 6 agenda. Those amendments include the designated street front and a consistent 45-foot commercial setback. The Council discussed but did not take action on the step-back provisions or the retail-only zone. A Council Committee recommended to the full Council that they have a special session regarding development agreements.

Mr. Clifton explained he emailed the City Council regarding the benefits of the retail-only code amendment and some Councilmembers expressed interest in further discussion. His research found the city closest to Edmonds with a retail-only zone is Kirkland. Downtown Kirkland has a core area with 1-2 story buildings where only retail, restaurants, art galleries, etc. are allowed, similar to the proposed retail-only BD-1 zone. Planning Board Member Johnson offered the inventory that Planning Board Member Stewart and she conducted that identifies existing businesses.

Commissioner Senderoff recalled Councilmember Petso requested the City Attorney provide a report regarding development agreement versus contract rezone. Mr. Chave relayed the Council Committee recommended development agreements be discussed separately including a work session with input from the City Attorney. That has not yet been scheduled. Commissioner Senderoff suggested the EDC be provided that report or be informed when that discussion is scheduled with the Council.

Discussion followed regarding formed based code and development agreements as tools for future development, the EDC's earlier request for a workshop on development agreements, and development that occurs while planning is underway.

**b. Strategic Planning and Visioning Update**

Mr. Clifton provided a restructured timeline for the Strategic Plan that has the second retreat occurring on January 24. Between now and then, the surveys and interviews will be conducted. He reviewed the timeline for the coming months:

- November
  - Adult, youth and employee internet surveys
  - Press releases
- December
  - Business survey for all employees
  - Notice inviting employees to take an internet survey will be mailed with 1800 business license renewal notices
- January
  - Stakeholder interviews and meetings
  - Customer surveys
  - Retreat #2 (January 24) – agenda to include introduction of internal/external scans followed by presentation on budgeting for outcomes
- February
  - Retreat #3 (February 28) – agenda to include presentation of early public input such as surveys and stakeholder interviews followed by discussion of March 7, 2012 charrette agenda

Commissioner suggestions included placing a message regarding the availability of the survey on water bills, and providing a link to the survey on My Edmonds News, Komo4Edmonds, and Edmonds Patch.

Commissioner Pierce inquired whether there was value in conducting surveys at summer events/festivals. Mr. Clifton relayed the consultant's indication that surveys can be conducted at any time including during the festival season and integrated into the Strategic Plan in the future.

Commissioner Zagorski commented another important group to survey is shoppers. Mr. Clifton advised the surveys include customer, business, stakeholder, and internet adult, youth and employee. Businesses will also be encouraged to hand out surveys to customers. Chair Yamamoto suggested contacting the Downtown Edmonds Merchants Association (DEMA) regarding distribution of customer surveys.

**c. Technology Update on Fiber and Website – No report**

**d. Tourism**

Commissioner Senderoff recalled a My Edmonds News article regarding an opportunity to apply for Snohomish County tourism grants. Mr. Clifton responded he routed the Tourism Promotion Area application to organizations that may be able to apply for the funds including the people working on the 3-on-3 tournaments, the Edmonds Center for the Arts (ECA), the City's Parks and Recreation Director, etc. The criteria for granting those funds is generating "heads in beds" because the funding is generated by the \$1/night charged by hotels within the Tourism Promotion Area.

Ms. Chapin explained Tourism Promotion Area funds are one of several funding sources for tourism related to lodging. Another funding source is Snohomish County Lodging Tax; those grant applications are due next week. With the completion of their Tourism Plan, Snohomish County will grant funds based on the priorities in the Tourism Plan. Edmonds also has some lodging tax funds that are allocated to local arts/cultural organizations that bring people to the City from outside the community. Mr. Clifton noted a tourist is anyone who visits from outside the community, not necessarily staying overnight.

A brief discussion followed regarding events that could qualify for lodging tax funds and the ECA's marketing efforts.

**e. Communications**

Commissioner Zagorski reported the Communications Committee meets the last Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. in the Port Commission meeting room. The Port has agreed the committee can continue to meet in that location even after she leaves the commission. At their last meeting, the committee requested an update on fiber issues. Commissioner Hall recently provided an update to the City Council regarding the EDC's work.

**6. UPDATE: FIRE DISTRICT 1 REVENUE**

Commissioner Haug reported he will make a presentation to the Public Safety/Human Resources Committee at their December meeting. He will also offer to forward information and/or make a presentation to the Council as the two members of the Public Safety/Human Resources Committee will no longer be on the Council.

**7. POSSIBLE INITIATIVES (HWY 99 TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) NODES, DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT ACTIVITY CENTER)**

Mr. Clifton reported the Highway 99 Taskforce has been discussing Hwy 99 TOD nodes located around the two Community Transit Swift Stations. He suggested to the Task Force that they partner with the EDC on initiating that process. Mr. Chave and he have met with Forterra (formerly Cascade Land

Conservancy) staff who are very interested in assisting the City with initiating a process to create a redevelopment district in the area between SR104, Railroad Street, Dayton and Main. Forterra would assist with creating a stakeholder group and a public process to create a vision for redevelopment. The property owner may be more receptive now.

Commissioner Witenberg recognized the importance of TODs but recommended they be sensitive to the established, affordable, single family neighborhoods that abut Highway 99 and could be impacted by large TOD.

Commissioner Crosby commented Puget Sound Regional Council has been doing a great deal related to TODs. One of the facts that has emerged is that TODs increase housing prices around light rail centers. Although increased housing prices generate more property taxes, they also decrease the amount of affordable housing. Councilmember Buckshnis relayed Snohomish County Tomorrow is discussing smaller, more affordable TOD units. Mr. Clifton explained Edmonds does not have a designated urban center thus a TOD in Edmonds would be appropriately scaled and not the type that is constructed around light rail stations in cities with urban centers.

Commissioner Wolfe referred to the proposed increase in coal trains through Edmonds, suggesting the business community, particularly Harbor Square and the Port, should be very concerned and should join the conservation community in opposing that proposal. Mr. Clifton advised the City Council plans to adopt a resolution opposing an increase in coal trains through Edmonds. Commissioner Senderoff suggested fishermen and anyone else interested in the environment should also be concerned with the impacts of coal dust on Puget Sound.

#### **8. NEW CITY WEBSITE (EdmondsWa.gov)**

Mr. Clifton reported once the bugs are worked out, a formal press release will be issued. The most common complaint has been that migrating between pages is very slow; comments about the look and feel of the website have positive. One of the benefits of the new website is department staff can update the website rather than a centralized IT person. He invited the Commission's input regarding any problems. Commissioners' suggestions included:

- Having a link on the Chamber of Commerce's website to the City's website
- A "get involved/stay involved" tab with a link to community organizations
- Collecting marketing data from the City's website via dynamic pull downs

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

The following were identified as future agenda topics:

- Land use: Westgate and Five Corners
- Strategic Plan
- Development agreement workshop
- Extension of the EDC
- TOD

It was agreed to cancel the EDC's December meeting. Staff will update the Commission regarding the Council's decision on extending the EDC.

#### **10. MISCELLANEOUS**

Commissioner Wolfe invited Commissioners to the Snohomish group Sierra Club meeting on December 18.

Ms. Chapin reported the Chamber of Commerce has established an Arts and Culture Committee. The goal is to promote economic development through arts and culture, focusing on advocacy, best practices and promotion/marketing activities. The Chamber recognizes a large number of their members are engaged in arts and culture activities. The committee is inclusive and is working with everyone in the community not just on behalf of Chamber members. The overall goal is assisting with endeavors that enhance economic development, promote cultural tourism and maintain a strong and vital community.

Commissioner Hall reminded of the Holiday Open house and Art Walk on November 17 and Small Business Saturday on November 26 sponsored by American Express to support small businesses. Mr. Clifton reported the Council adopted a proclamation regarding Small Business Saturday. Kirkland and Edmonds are the only two cities in the Puget Sound area that are participating in Small Business Saturday. He relayed 60% of all jobs in last two years were created by small businesses. He encouraged Commissioners to support small businesses throughout Edmonds.

#### **11. AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

**Ron Wambolt, Edmonds**, asked about the status of a presentation by the City Attorney regarding development agreements. He relayed Doug Speed, owner of the post office property, does not plan to pursue development until further information is provided to the Council regarding development agreements. He suggested the EDC promoting development agreement could result in tangible economic development. Mr. Clifton agreed if the EDC supports development agreements, they should encourage the Council to continue exploring a development agreement process. He suggested development agreements could first be allowed in the BD2 - 5 zones to see how they work before allowing it in the downtown core.

**Phil Lovell, Edmonds**, offered to provide additional information to staff regarding development agreements. He also offered a possible resource to make a presentation to the EDC regarding development agreements. With regard to coal trains, he anticipated that issue would proceed to the federal level and Edmonds should be involved.

Mr. Clifton relayed he prepared a letter for Mayor Cooper to the Governor asking her to inject Washington State into the EIS process regarding coal trains and requesting the State not allow Bellingham to be sole responsible SEPA official and instead have the State be the responsible SEPA official on the EIS. Commissioner Wolfe relayed several Mayor's Climate Protection Committees are very involved in opposing the increase in coal trains. The public needs to support that effort.

#### **12. ADJOURN**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.