

CITY OF EDMONDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
December 18, 2013

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Bruce Witenberg, Vice Chair
John Dewhirst
Kevin Garrett
Darrol Haug
Roger Hertrich (arrived 6:05 p.m.)
Nicole Hughes (arrived 6:12)
Nathan Proudfoot (arrived 6:43 p.m.)
Doug Purcell (arrived 6:06 p.m.)
John Rubenkönig
Rich Senderoff
Darlene Stern
Douglas Swartz
Evelyn Wellington
Teresa Wippel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Debbie Matteson
Gail Sarvis

ALSO PRESENT

Gloria Evstatieva, Student Representative

PLANNING BOARD LIAISON

Phil Lovell

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilmember Strom Peterson
Councilmember Adrienne Fraley-Monillas

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Clifton, Community Services/Economic
Development Director
Jeannie Dines, Recorder

PUBLIC PRESENT

Ron Wambolt

1. OPENING REMARKS

In light of the busy agenda, Vice Chair Witenberg requested the time limits for each item be observed and Commissioners keep their comments succinct.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Due to earlier concerns that this meeting would not have a quorum, Commissioner Haug asked that the minutes reflect that there is a quorum for this meeting.

**3. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 20, 2013 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
COMMISSIONER DEWHIRST MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RUBENKONIG TO
APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 20, 2013 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION:

4. DISCUSSION OF TOURISM SUB-GROUP IDEAS FOR 2014, JOHN DEWHIRST, KEVIN GARRETT, & NATHAN PROUDFOOT

Commissioner Dewhirst reviewed items the Tourism Subgroup discussed:

- Change the focus of the subgroup to concentrate on communications to get tourists into town including adding Edmonds information to the mobile app “VisitWA.” The elements of the Strategic Plan cannot be accomplished by this group as structured. Without restructuring there is little interest in continuing with the current focus.
- EDC coordinate/liaison with other groups such as Port, BID, Chamber, etc. and get the flow of information between EDC and others
- Need a group to come up with crazy ideas – glass bottom boats, walking tubes at the dive park, cog railroad up Main Street, etc. – and filter them into possible programs/projects to present to the EDC. Would include some outreach to community/region. Motivation for this is to generate interest, discussion of the what ifs, and possibly even some excitement
- Spend more time/focus on the Highway 99 issues, regulations, promotions, plans, etc. since Highway 99 is Edmonds cash cow
- Better coordination is needed with other City departments like Public Works, Finance, Parks on certain issues like Westgate, Five Corners, pedestrian/emergency crossing over railroad, Sunset Avenue, etc.

Commissioner Garrett explained the subcommittee is reconfiguring its focus on visitors rather than tourism, getting people to come for the day or overnight to support businesses. The role of the subcommittee in moving the Strategic Plan forward could be a support role; there are many items that the subgroup could be involved in, with another group as the lead.

5. DISCUSSION OF DARROL HAUG'S IDEAS FOR 2014, DARROL HAUG

Commissioner Haug explained the motivation for forming the EDC was a levy group’s recommendation to increase revenue which included establishing an EDC. The Council subsequently approved the EDC’s six recommendations. He described issues that arose as some of those recommendations were pursued such as Port’s proposed development of Harbor Square. Major collision points in Edmonds are views, integration of housing with business, and slippery slope (allowing something for one will lead to allowing it for all). To avoid these collisions, he recommended focusing on basic issues such as:

- GMA, accommodating population growth, housing types to attract a certain demographic
- Create an economic model that considers the market rate for apartments, businesses, etc. to determine what type of development is economically feasible (without regard to location)
- Create economic model of what visitors mean to the City, the role of tourism in City’s economics
- Educate the public, provide information
- Track progress on Strategic Plan action items
- Inventory City assets, how they are being used, future plans, etc. and make that information available to the public

6. DISCUSSION OF LAND USE SUB-GROUP IDEAS FOR 2014, JOHN RUBENKONIG, DOUG PURCELL, RICH SENDEROFF, AND BRUCE WITENBERG

Commissioner Rubenkönig relayed topics the subgroup identified for the EDC to pursue in 2014:

- Housing and connection to GMA
 - Specifically, will Edmonds meet its mandated goals and where will new population be located, type of housing, etc.
 - Demographics
 - Affordable housing
 - Educating public regarding consequences of non-compliance with GMA
- Continued pursuit of hotels/motels and bed & breakfast inns
- Land use efficiency. Support the following plans, no action or delayed action is not a viable option:
 - Westgate

- Harbor Square
- Five Corners
- Highway 99 Corridor
- Downtown core
- Communication
 - With larger Edmonds community
 - Between EDC and Council such EDC liaison to meet with Council liaisons regarding what Council wants and what EDC can do
- Periodic educational session, videos and/or outside speakers at each meeting. Many new EDC members, some may be unfamiliar with terminology.

Discussion followed regarding Commissioners as liaisons to other groups they are involved in, concern with the EDC advocating for density under the guise of GMA, local politics are about neighborhoods/streets, citizens' preference that change be consistent with surrounding neighborhoods, other aspects of GMA such as intelligent environmental use of land, economic value of working on GMA issues and Comprehensive Plan updates, increasing density without changing the City's character, Edmonds meeting its growth targets, and the importance of the Westgate Plan.

7. DISCUSSION/BRAINSTORMING OF GENERAL IDEAS FOR 2014

Commissioners' comments/suggestions include the following:

- Informing the public about the dive park
- Determining desirable amenities in exchange for bonuses
- Estimated housing units that could be developed via build-out on SR104 and other areas
- Adding density on Highway 99
- Encouraging development that attracts a certain demographic
- Form-based code with amenities that allow a slight height increase as an incentive
- Role of the EDC in promoting/overseeing implementation of Strategic Plan and system for tracking progress
- Status of Technology subgroup and Citizen Technology Advisory Committee (CTAC)
- Understand the audience – who visits the City and why. Surveys done early in Strategic Plan progress
- Reward to encourage people to take a survey. Talk to Rick Steves, Savvy Traveler, ECA, and others about reward for taking survey
- Mobile App for Edmonds
- QR code
- Information available from IdeasUnfold.com
- Advocate at Council for limiting office space in BD1
- Advocate for Westgate Plan at Planning Commission and Council
- Mechanism for promoting development at Westgate
- Options for Westgate plan are adopt as proposed, reject or moratorium
- Tourism marketing class at Edmonds Community College do a survey for Edmonds
- Gather survey data from other businesses in Edmonds
- Transportation ideas for going up hills and connecting with Sound Transit stations
- Events/activities:
 - Downhill bike races
 - Bluegrass festival
- Think out of the box
- Need more young people on EDC
- Land use planning for Firdale Village and Perrinville
- Update from Highway 99 Task Force

- Do planning for Highway 99 such as was done for Five Corners and Westgate
 - Makers did a study in the past dividing Highway 99 into sectors
 - International district
 - Hospital district
- Have discussion after speakers/video webinars and determine what could apply to Edmonds
- City purchased rights for Roger Brooks video library – schedule evening viewings
- Subgroup to review and consider updating Economic Development Plan (would need Council approval)
- Pursue business incentives and how to make them happen
- Determine how to make a hotel happen
 - Facilitation committee comprised of leads on Strategic Plan items held initial meeting. A consultant is being hired. Committee is interested in continuing to meet.
- Communication is important but government is dry and boring to most people
- Film speakers at EDC and air on Channel 21, YouTube, My Edmonds News
 - Make videos short and interesting
- 21,000 registered voters, only 13,000 vote – create energy that engages public
- Next subcommittee meeting, each subcommittee consider reconfiguring themselves – name, subject, and focus in early 2014
- At January meeting look for gaps
- Coordinate tourism ideas between Mr. Clifton and the Edmonds Downtown Business Improvement District
- If want to know what happening in other groups, attend their meetings
- In 2014 the Highway 99 Task Force will be working on zoning, transit oriented development, etc.
- Incorporate Highway 99 updates into Land Use Subcommittee updates
- Edmonds Bicycle Club working with Brier and other cities to identify bikeways
- How to control leakage (money leaving City),
 - Identify businesses needed in Edmonds
 - Recruitment efforts to attract business to fill need
- Tourism subcommittee consider internal tourism, educate the public about what’s available in Edmonds, buy local campaigns, etc.
- Downtown businesses spend advertising dollars to attract outside visitors, little advertising to attract local

8. MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Clifton advised the Council public hearing for limiting office uses in the BD1 zone is January 7, 2014.

Commissioner Haug requested the EDC’s Annual Report to Council be distributed to Commissioners.

Chair Witenberg requested subgroups identify a list of what they want to work on in 2014 based on the comments made tonight.

9. AUDIENCE COMMENTS – None

10. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.