



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Thursday, June 10, 2021
Council Worksession Room
7:00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. March 11, 2021 & April 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. Old Business
 - A. Downtown Outdoor Seating Update
5. New Business
 - A. Farmers Market
 - B. Real Estate/Development Project Update
 - C. Summer Events
6. Communications and Reports
 - A. Marketing & Communications
 - Discover Anoka
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - ABLA
7. Miscellaneous
 - A. Discuss July Meeting Agenda.
 - B. Staff Update
8. Adjournment



Memo

To: Economic Development Commission
From: Doug Borglund, Community Development Director
Date: June 3, 2021
Re: Thursday, June 10, 2021 Agenda

1. **Call to Order.** This meeting will be held in the Council Worksession Room at 7:00 a.m. at Anoka City Hall.
2. **Roll Call.** Staff will record the names of those present at the meeting.
3. **Approval of March 11, 2021 and April 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes.** Minutes from the March 11 and April 8, 2021. Action required.
4. **Old Business**
 - A. Downtown Outdoor Seating Update
5. **New Business**
 - A. Farmers Market
 - B. Real Estate/Development Project Update
 - C. Summer Events
6. **Communications and Reports**
 - A. **Marketing & Communications.** Staff and Commissioners will provide an update on the following.
 - Discover Anoka Update
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - ABLA
7. **Miscellaneous.**
 - A. **Discuss July Agenda** – Staff would like to ask if the EDC has any special presentations they would like or information they thought might be useful.
 - B. Staff Update**
8. **Adjournment.** Let's plan to adjourn no later than 9:00 a.m.

CITY OF ANOKA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 11, 2021

Call to Order: Acting Chairperson Rekstad called the EDC meeting to order at 7:11 a.m. at Anoka City Hall, 2015 First Avenue North in the City of Anoka.

Oath of Office:

Roll Call: EDC Members present were: Allen Acklund, Jeff Lee, Curt Rekstad, and Julie Smith, Quinn Garrick (arrived at 7:21 a.m.), and Matthew Finn (arrived at 7:38 a.m.). EDC members absent were: Brendon Eason. Staff present: Community Development Director Doug Borglund

Approval of Minutes: Acting Chairperson Rekstad noted that there are a few spots to fill in details.

Mr. Borglund noted that the beginning of the meeting was not recorded. He gathered details from the Commission to fill in the blanks. It was noted that the motion to approve the minutes should be motioned by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Rekstad.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER REKSTAD, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 2021 EDC MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS:

Business Survey Follow Up: Mr. Borglund stated that he did not have anything new to share with the group.

Commissioner Lee commented that since the last meeting he has not had anyone reach back out to him. He stated that he did have the conversations discussed at the last meeting and people shared their plans but nothing new to report.

Downtown Outdoor Seating Update: Mr. Borglund reported that he has been working with the local bars and restaurants along Jackson Street and today infrastructure will begin to go up. He noted that the existing items will be removed to make way for the new plan. He stated that they have painted the jersey barriers and repurposed old planters to give the area more of a planned look rather than a construction area. He stated that all the bars and restaurants are still operating at reduced capacity under COVID regulations. He stated that in 2022 they plan to return to traditional sidewalk seating and extended seating, using the example of 201 which choose to expand its outdoor seating in the past with a platform. He stated that the challenges of the past year have provided the City and business owners to try some new things.

Highway 10 Sign Regulation Changes Council Action Update: Mr. Borglund stated that the Council approved the changes as previously discussed by the Commission. He noted that these changes will assist businesses in updating signage consistent with the Highway 10 project.

Commissioner Garrick arrived.

NEW BUSINESS:

Highway 10 Acquisitions: Mr. Borglund provided an overview of the property acquisitions for the Highway 10 project and redevelopment opportunities that will arise. He noted that there are other small sliver acquisitions along with easements and right-of-way for the project.

Development Sites/Projects: Mr. Borglund provided background information on the Historic Rum River District (HRRD TIF) which will expire in 11 years. He identified sites that have redeveloped, have potential for development and those that are City owned within the district. He provided additional details on the current potential development opportunities within the HRRD. He stated that the Council is split in its support for mixed use with market rate rental apartments as some members would like to have an owner-occupied residential component. He noted that the development community is stating there is a demand for market rental housing in Anoka.

Chairperson Finn arrived.

Commissioner Lee asked if there has been interest from senior coops.

Mr. Borglund replied that for that site he has only received interest from market rate apartment rentals. He noted that the American Club will begin construction early this summer and will fulfill that market for Anoka.

Commissioner Lee commented that he would like to see a limit on senior coop housing as that product continues to be built but there will not be a constant demand in that market as that population shrinks in size over the next generation.

Chairperson Finn asked if that site would be appropriately sized to manage snow storage and stormwater needs.

Mr. Borglund replied that snow is often hauled out of the downtown area through contractors. He recognized that ponds will most likely not be the method chosen for stormwater management of downtown development and other options would likely need to be explored. He continued to review City owned parcels in the downtown area and potential development opportunities. He provided details on the TOD TIF district, again identifying the developed properties, potential development, and City owned properties.

He continued to provide an update related to development and potential development opportunities within the Greens of Anoka district.

EDC Vacant Positions/Member Attendance: Mr. Borglund stated that Joe Riley resigned from the Commission and is set to appear on the consent agenda for the City Council at its next meeting. He noted that there will then be two vacant positions on the Commission. He stated that Zoom is a tool available for participation when members are not able to attend in person.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

Marketing and Communications Updates:

- Discover Anoka: Commissioner Garrick stated that he has not received any communications or Zoom meeting links for Discover Anoka and noted that he would follow up on that.
- Chamber of Commerce: Commissioner Lee commented that he did not believe he was added to the distribution list as of yet and noted that he would follow up.
- ABLA: Mr. Borglund reported that he provided a development update to the group the previous week and the group discussed the lighting district and related annual budget. He noted that 25 to 30 banners are planned to be replaced.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Discuss April Meeting Agenda: Commissioner Acklund asked how the self-storage business is doing.

Mr. Borglund commented that he believes the business is doing fine, noting that the ownership is out of Chicago. He commented that the development blends into the adjacent commercial development and is low use, so it has not caused any neighborhood traffic issues.

Commissioner Rekstad stated that he would be interested in discussing the East River Road area of Anoka.

Mr. Borglund commented that there are most likely properties ripe for redevelopment in that area with perhaps higher medical use type opportunities. He stated that the group could discuss that corridor.

Commissioner Lee commented that 7th Avenue could be another redevelopment opportunity.

Mr. Borglund stated that the gun shop has submitted its building permit to construct its adjoining range. He stated that the HRA has been working to determine a use for the 7th

and Main parcel. He noted that the City owns four lots on Washington that will most likely be marketed soon. He stated that the group could discuss the possibility of a development bus tour but recognized that will be dependent upon COVID and how comfortable everyone is with that idea.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner Reckstad, a second by Commissioner Acklund, and a unanimous vote of those present at 8:38 a.m.

Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

CITY OF ANOKA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 8, 2021

Call to Order: Chairperson Finn called the EDC meeting to order at 7:10 a.m. at Anoka City Hall, 2015 First Avenue North in the City of Anoka.

Roll Call: EDC Members present were: Mathew Finn, Jeff Lee, and Julie Smith. EDC members absent were: Quinn Garrick, Curt Rekstad, Allen Acklund, Brendon Eason, and Joe Riley. Staff present: Community Development Director Doug Borglund and City Planner Clark Palmer

Chairperson Finn stated that there is not a quorum present, so formal action will not be taken.

Approval of Minutes: This item delayed for lack of quorum.

OLD BUSINESS:

Downtown Outdoor Seating Update: Mr. Borglund stated that the spring/summer plan has been rolled out and provided an update. He stated that the City attempted to provide materials for the businesses and some businesses chose to make additional outdoor seating investments as well.

Chairperson Finn stated that if the City expects conformity in the future, he would encourage the City Council to communicate that with businesses to ensure investment is not spent on materials that will not be allowed to be used in the future.

Mr. Borglund explained that this temporary seating is COVID related, and the intent would be to return to the previously allowed outdoor seating in the future. He noted that perhaps some of the loan programs could be redirected to allow businesses to use that program to invest in outdoor seating. He noted that even if restrictions are lifted, the City is going to allow the outdoor seating currently in place to remain throughout the full season. He stated that staff has met with the bar and restaurant owners multiple times this year to continue these discussions and ensure everyone is on the same page. He stated that everyone understands that long-term the road will not be shut down in the current manner. He noted that they have had discussions on the long-term vision for the Jackson Street corridor to make it more pedestrian friendly and to better accommodate outdoor uses.

Chairperson Finn asked and received confirmation that the old Post Office building establishments would have the same opportunity for outdoor seating if desired.

Mr. Borglund confirmed those businesses would have an opportunity, but staff would need to review that with the businesses. He stated that Mr. Palmer has been having discussions with Mr. Abeler about outdoor seating at that location.

Commissioner Smith stated that it has been great for businesses to have an opportunity for outdoor seating.

Mr. Borglund commented that this has been a great test for businesses to experiment and determine whether it would make sense to invest in the outdoor seating patio in the future.

Commissioner Lee stated that he likes that there is a long-term vision for Jackson Street to make it more pedestrian friendly and change the scale to focus more on entertainment.

Mr. Borglund stated that Gary Serum put together a proposal for live outdoor music in downtown on Friday and Saturday nights starting this summer. He noted that staff will meet further with him before it goes to the City Council.

Chairperson Finn stated that it would be great to have that opportunity. He noted that if there is not agreement with both weekend nights, perhaps one weeknight could be added that would help to bring more people in.

Mr. Borglund noted that they currently have a summer concerts in the park on Tuesday nights and they will be moving the farmers market downtown near the grain bins this summer as well to increase activity.

Commissioner Smith asked if it would make sense to add food trucks for some of these events.

Mr. Borglund replied that there is a food truck event, but the City does not allow food trucks to openly come into the area because of the competition it creates for the brick and mortar establishments.

Mr. Palmer agreed that there are a lot of established restaurants in the area, and they would not want to create additional competition.

Mr. Borglund explained that food and beverages from local restaurants are allowed to be brought into the park for the summer concert series, so customers can get drinks and something to eat from a nearby business and bring that into the park.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion – East River Road Commercial Area: Mr. Borglund stated that the East River Road area is zoned neighborhood commercial.

Chairperson Finn asked if there is a fear of traffic flow if that area is more developed.

Mr. Borglund commented that it is a County collector road that is meant to service a higher level of traffic.

Commissioner Lee commented that there is not a large section of the roadway within Anoka and most of the traffic drops off before Anoka.

Mr. Borglund provided an overview of the corridor. He noted that as you move down the corridor there are issues with utilities and some commercial properties are still on septic.

Chairperson Finn asked if rezoning to light commercial for some properties along the corridor would create issues for the homes behind those parcels on Elm Street. He stated that if he lived in one of those homes, he would not be happy with that type of change.

Commissioner Lee commented that those parcels are already zoned for neighborhood commercial.

Mr. Borglund identified the border of the different zoning areas.

Chairperson Finn referenced the low-lying commercial lot and asked if raising that site would cause drainage problems for the adjacent residential homes.

Mr. Palmer replied that the area was previously zoned B-1 highway and was rezoned to neighborhood commercial in the early 2000's in order to have less conflict between the existing residential and potential commercial uses that could be developed. He stated that there are also performance and architectural standards in place to help mitigate any potential issues.

Mr. Borglund stated that there is a huge economic development across the border in Coon Rapids further down the corridor and perhaps there can be something done to spark adjacent redevelopment geared towards those office and/or medical uses.

Chairperson Finn suggested that perhaps review should be done as to what the Mayo Clinic did in Rochester in order to make that area more medical focused.

Mr. Borglund agreed that perhaps other day services could be developed related to medical services performed at the hospital, such as clinics or day surgery centers.

Commissioner Lee stated that for the whole section of East River Road, the biggest impact the City could have would be street and sidewalk improvements. He stated that when looking at West and East Main, the City did a great job of improving the road and sidewalks and with the light posts, which helped to transform the whole area. He stated that the zoning seems appropriate for the corridor, but the City could make a huge impact with the street and sidewalk in terms of streetscape and make it more like Main Street.

Mr. Borglund commented that East River Road is a County road and therefore the City would have to work with the County.

Commissioner Lee commented that Coon Rapids was able to do it. He stated that cleaning up that area would help to bring in development interest. He noted that it would be the

same with the section of 7th Avenue from East River Road to Main Street, or even Highway 10. He stated that the light posts with the banners would be a great addition as well. He recognized that there is a cost but stated that perhaps that could be phased over ten years. He stated that when you come down East River Road from Coon Rapids, it does not give a good impression.

Commissioner Smith agreed that would help to attract better businesses.

Mr. Borglund stated that the starting point would be to speak with the County and find out where East River Road is on its radar for improvement. He stated that the updates to Hwy 47 and Highway 10 projects will likely consume the next three years.

Commissioner Lee commented that improving the streetscape would be something that would really help that corridor. He commented that the segment of 7th Avenue from East River Road to Main Street, or even Highway 10, would similarly benefit from streetscape improvements as that is a heavily used area that does not provide a good impression.

Mr. Borglund provided details on possible redevelopment opportunity across from the new Kwik Trip on 7th Avenue. He explained that for the City to be involved in land acquisition and redevelopment is not cheap, noting that the investment in Highland Park is already at \$8,000,000. He recognized that there are underutilized parcels throughout that 7th Avenue area.

Commissioner Lee stated that he would prefer to focus on the areas where people are coming into Anoka and the impression that gives people.

Mr. Borglund noted that 7th Avenue is a County road as well, which would require the City to work with the County. He stated that there are improvements planned to 7th Avenue to the north in preparation for the Highway 10 project but was not aware of any plans for the southern segment.

Commissioner Lee commented that in terms of economic development, improving the streetscape would be the action the City could attempt to take to bring forward redevelopment.

Commissioner Smith agreed but believed that East River Road should be higher priority.

Commissioner Lee agreed that he would place East River Road above 7th Avenue.

Mr. Borglund summarized that the EDC would recommend that improvement be focused on streetscape along the East River Road corridor rather than suggesting a change of use. He stated that staff will gather additional history and information related to the County schedule for improvements, again noting that Highway 10 and Hwy 47 will be taking up the majority of the next few years. He recognized that this would be a longer-term goal/vision.

Chairperson Finn agreed that the least amount of investment the City could make to clean up the area would help to attract additional investment through development and redevelopment.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

Marketing and Communications Updates:

- Discover Anoka: No update.
- Chamber of Commerce: No update.
- ABLA: Mr. Borglund replied that he provided a development update, and the group conducted their typical business. He noted that ABLA is preparing for Riverfest but recognized that will look different with the increased outdoor seating in the downtown area.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Discuss May Meeting Agenda: Chairperson Finn stated that it could be great if there is an update on any of the matters discussed today and if not, perhaps a summary could be provided of the discussion for the members that were not present today. He stated that he would be curious to have an update on the driving range.

Staff Update: Mr. Borglund stated that staff will be speaking with the property owners, noting that there is one interested property owner. He stated that the Council supports moving forward in attempt to pursue a driving range.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner Lee, a second by Commissioner Smith, and a unanimous vote of those present at 8:27 a.m.

Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*