

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2009 ROOM 2404-7:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ald. Rainey, Ald. Tisdahl, Ald. Burrus, Ald. Fiske, Ald. Grover, Ald. Tendam, Dan Mennemeyer, Raymond Zenkich

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ald. Jean-Baptiste, Ald. Wynne, Robert Creamer, Seth Freeman

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Rainey, Chair

OTHERS PRESENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Dennis Marino, *Interim CD Director*, Morris Robinson-*Economic Development Planner*

OTHERS PRESENT: Jonathan Perman, Exec. Director-*Evanston Chamber of Commerce*, Carolyn Dellutri-*Executive Director, EVMARK*
Laura Folkl, Marketing & Communication Manager-*EVMARK*

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING:

I. Chair Rainey called the EDC Meeting to order at approximately 7:36 P.M. Because of the number of new members to the EDC, introductions were made including staff members present.

II. APPROVAL OF THE EDC MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2009

Chair Rainey asked for a motion to approve the May 27, 2009 EDC and the EDC voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

III. Jonathan Perman, Evanston Chamber of Commerce Executive Director: Economic Trends Presentation

Chair Rainey announced that the first business agenda item was a power point presentation on local economic trends by Jonathan Perman, the Executive Director of the Evanston Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Perman introduced himself and mentioned that Ms. Carolyn Dellutri was present also and that she would be providing a similar presentation on the state of the Evanston's downtown when he concludes his remarks.

Mr. Penman's wide ranging presentation included slides on census demographics; income medians; Evanston's top 10 employers and the job climate; lost employers; jobs growth which have remained relatively constant in spite of businesses that have left; the current unemployment rate; retail taxes dynamics; land use; growth of property values and property tax rates. Much of the data was presented as compared to other Illinois communities with comparables to the city of Evanston.

After a brief discussion between the EDC members with regard to certain aspects of the presentation, Mr. Perman concluded his comments with a pledge to provide each member of the Economic Development Committee and appropriate city staff with hard copies of the slide presentation. He asked the committee to withhold questions until Ms. Dellutri finished her presentation and if time permitted, the two of them would participate in a joint question and answer session.

IV. CAROLYN DELLUTRI, EVMARK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
DOWNTOWN GROUND FLOOR RETAIL TRENDS PRESENTATION

Chair Rainey next asked Ms. Carolyn Dellutri, the EVMARK Executive Director to introduce herself and her assistant, Ms. Laura Folkl, the recently hired Marketing Manager for Evmark. Ms. Dellutri stated that she has been on the job for almost a year and that her efforts to improve Evmark are still evolving but she has introduced a number of initiatives. In time, the ability to deliver data electronically will be vast improved and the re branding process will begin to show benefits. Ald. Burrus and others commented on how difficult it is for potential economic development opportunity representatives to search the Evmark and city websites for information.

Ms. Dellutri began by advising the EDC, staff and those present in the audience that EVMARK is the marketing organization for the downtown special assessment district which both are engaged in a "re-branding" process. Ms. Dellutri also distributed document packet pertaining to her presentation which did utilize the power point format and a new Downtown Evanston brochure. Among the documents distributed and discussed was information on: Costar, which allows Evmark to identify for lease/sale information, and Loopnet which allows for identifying the listing agent property detail; the upcoming International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) deal making conference which will have a booth shared with city staff; (Ald. Rainey expressed her desire to see the booth); Retail Lease Trac for online retailer database system search for businesses wanting to relocate to Illinois; a weekly newsletter on retailing and real estate called Dealmakers; data on new or relocated and closed business for the past year; retail and office space availability reports; an Evmark publication depicting color pictures of real estate listings in downtown Evanston with descriptions and contact information; the new Destination Evanston brochure and other useful information.

Member Mennemeyer observed that the new brochures did not reflect any of the city's iconic landmarks such as the lighthouse and that they should not be eliminated in the re branding efforts. The EDC members launched into a discussion on the need for a centralized area for all economic development inquiries with links to Evmark, the Chamber and other pertinent organizations. Member Mennemeyer mention that there is a concept for a synergistic economic development team that is taking shape which city staff and the chamber are involved. The EDC members expressed their desire to see a centralized method to handle economic development inquiries which will allow for generating metric reports. After continued discussions the EDC thanked Mr. Perman and Ms. Dellutri for their informative reports. Ms. Dellutri advised the EDC that she is scheduled to give a progress report soon and will strive to have information on the implementation of several new and beneficial ideas.

ACTION TAKEN: No action by vote was required.

V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Chair Rainey announced the next agenda item concerned the city's economic development strategy. Staff member Dennis Marino advised the EDC that included in their packets were two informative documents; the first was the Strategic Plan with reference to the economic development section and the second was the comprehensive Plan focusing on the economic development section. Staff member Marino mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan which is approximately 10 years old is slated for updating revisions.

VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Also included in the Economic Development Committee packets were a number of documents pertaining to economic development trends. These documents consisted of: a Federal Reserve Bank Economic assessment Power Point Presentation; Monthly Real Estate Tax Transfer Report; Recently Completed Projects status Report; New Retail Business Status Report; Urban Land Institute Marketing research data; Available Facilities Report; TIF Workshop PowerPoint Presentation; Where Workers Work Report; Connecting to the Economy booklet and a Shop Evanston brochure.

VII. OTHER COMMUNICATION DOCUMENTS

Other documents included in the EDC packets were the aforementioned Strategic plan and the Comprehensive Plan as well as 12 months of EDC minutes designed to aid the new members of the committee in their efforts to be best informed on economic development matters.

Ald. Burrus commented that the information provided was good and in the future she would like to see more data on the day to day economic development activities with a centralized data collection/inquiry area and the production of more metric reports. Member Zenkich expressed similar sentiments. Staff committed to these objectives and will provide progress reports.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Chair Rainey adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:30 P.M.

The next scheduled Economic Development Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 22, 2009 at 7:30 P.M. at the Civic Center in Room 2404.

Respectfully submitted,

Morris E. Robinson
Economic Development Planner