

CITY OF WEST LINN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2018

Call to Order

6:42 Call to order by Gail Holmes

Members Present

Bev Burke

Jennifer Harmon

Shannen Knight

Russel Williams

Rachael Vidin

Richard Sakelik City Councilor

Members Absent

Kazi Ahmed

Staff

John Morgan

Review of Agenda

Moved election of officers to later in agenda after additional committee members arrive.

Minutes

Correct scrivener's error of spelling of Stearn to Sterns, Ray to Rae, Rachael "will talk to" instead of "talked to" in item so interest and OCB discussion add "12th they," to "testimony on this will". Shannen Knight moved to accept minutes with changes, Russel Williams seconded; approved unanimously

Old Business

Mixed Use Task Force:

Shannen Knight is now the Chair and Jim O'Toole is Vice Chair, first meeting reviewed the binder. Shannen Knight discussed the Task Force has requested the Council to add David Lawrence to the task force as he has a lot of background knowledge, part of the group that created the mixed use zoning thirteen years ago. Believe an odd number of participants is better than an even. If the Council does not approve Gail Holmes would be willing to step off as a Willamette Neighborhood Association member and have David take her place.

Waterfront Project/WLP Mill Update:

John Morgan stated the project has been waiting to hear from the property owners about their intentions. The owners now saying they will not have any news until March due to the financial issues. They are not preempting the idea if someone want to use the Mill and not removing the core items. They are mothballing and wrapping some of the machines and rolls; some sensitive items covered in heating pads. Forty-seven employees still working to work with the mothballing and will not be laid off in the near future. The owners are reemphasizing their commitment to the redevelopment of Mill A and west end of island sites. Now we have a dilemma on how to proceed with master planning. Plan A is assumption it is there other than the buildings they might reuse and Plan B is to look at what happens if not. Public open house late March that focuses on the transportation options and land use patterns. We are taking the lead and laying ideas on the table; they will continue to work with us. Is there any interest from Council into discussing any other kinds of pressure to decide? One reason to move ahead is to provide leadership to the Mill owners and framework of thinking. We used Leland Consulting early on these land to evaluate the market realty, we will continue to work with them and these land use alternatives will have a financial analysis attached to them. The mill area now looks dead and they is a strong sense that everyone understands the redevelopment potential.

Other player is PGE that owns all the land other than the upland. PGE has recommitted to the Sullivan Plant and honor its heritage and take seriously the fish passage responsibility. They are trying to figure out what to do and we have invited them to participate with us. PGE has a strong mission element that is community based, the new community outreach director Brooke Brookland. We have two absolutes to bring to table; infrastructure that we need to finance and put in that relates to circulation parking; and the other is zoning. To pursue any kind of redevelopment there has to be city approval of an infrastructure plan and zoning.

Question on whether Stern wants to be involved or not? Deep engagement, very interested but not willing to commit right now. Here is a perfect example of where a development agreement would make sense. This has potential for a world class tourist destination that is not just the West Linn Waterfront project but the Willamette River project. This is already a Heritage District and can bring a lot of attention, look for 2018 to be a big year. Other entities anxious to become involved but we need to keep this as much as possible in house, getting it done better and faster. Discussion around METRO, what their interest is and how much control would they try to take. Hopefully this a consistent EDC agenda item, take leadership in this project. EDC needs to understand the entire Cities' vision not just this committee. John Morgan explained he is the lead for staff and should be the EDCs contact rather than Bev Burke suggestions other committees need to send reports to the EDC.

Next open house will we be using social media to inform citizens of the events and early contacts? Rachel Vidin invited John Morgan to come speak at the Transportation Advisory Board meeting to discuss the transportation options that will be focused on at the next Waterfront Open House.

Old City Hall/Tourism Update:

Jody Carson told the WNA that the tourism board has leased a suite off Blankenship. Where does this leave the old police station, maybe this is something the EDC would like to work on. This is on the City's historical roster not the designated nationally. Has anyone started applying for grants for the building or anything on the waterfront? Will go after grants when there is a plan.

Election of Officers:

Russel Williams moved with a second from Bev Burke to elect Gail Holmes as Chair. Gail accepted, vote unanimous. Bev Burke moved to nominate Rachael Vidin as Vice Chair, Gail Holmes second. Rachael accepted; vote unanimous.

New Business

Chamber Report:

Russel Williams stated the Chamber ended the year with a Holiday Happy Hour, they also doubled their profit for the year. The Chamber has relaunched their website. New memberships and registration for events can now be done online. The next big event on January 30, 2017 is a preparing for disaster event; cohosting with Marylhurst University. You can sign up for e-blasts that goes out once a week. They are looking for a new location for the office.

2018 County Tourism Grants:

John Morgan reported that it is basically the same as before with \$20,000.00 allocated to West Linn, great criteria got to be something that increases overnight stays. Discussion of how many B&B's in West Linn but only one is legal, by registering with the County. What happened to the lodging tax that the EDC is looking for; Richard says on Council's list to look at not at the top. This is a revenue we should be looking at. Rachel says the Main Street group is looking at it and could give information this the EDC. Discussion on how to get the Airbnb's to comply. Can we work with Airbnb so not to alienate the home owners? Inform them they need to have a city business license and register with the County. Put on City website, put in the weekly newsletter. Russel Williams moved with Bev Burke as a seconded to recommend to Council consider imposing a transit occupancy task; passed unanimously. Grant applications have to be by March 5th, so needs to be on the EDC March agenda. Need to announce that we have grants that need to be applied for. John Morgan to pass to Courtney Flynn to post to social media.

Economic Development Committee Retreat:

Gail Holmes discussed said we talked about strategic plan before and be putting toward their vision of what they want this committee to be. Gail believes that the retreat needs to be more structured. It would be fun to do personality test learning how to communicate, a team building concept. What does the committee want to do, evening might be best. Rachel Vidin thinks that these is a bonding experience and be light, not have an agenda. If we are talking strategic planning she is concerned they have the right idea about what the retreat is. Maybe agenda should be to have fun. Gail Holmes thinks we should discuss hope and dreams, why are you on the committee? John Morgan has authorization to pay for a reasonable food bill. Retreat should be off site, how about a room in a restaurant. Discussion around timing. Gail Holmes will call the 503 for a room and do a doodle poll for best time. Suggest three hour time frame.

Other items of interest

EDC Members

Shannen Knight:

There was a really interesting history lesson s from a WNA members who is English on the origin of a “public house”. The member also discussed traffic issues that are similar in England and how they took to the water as they could not expand the roads, interesting to think about that; tourism, commuting.

Bev Burke:

Bev was contacted by a neighbor about an Arts Council in the City, the neighbor asked if Bev could bring to the EDC not just art around the City and also reach out to local artists for arts tours around the City. Richard Sakelik discussed that an Arts Commission (advisory board) is on the Council’s retreat agenda especially with the waterfront project. Bev asked Richard to let council know that this was brought to the EDC; there is a study that art in a city encourages economic development. Richard believes this will get traction. We need a good social media campaign to get this moving.

Bev wondered why the city does not look at more condo development in the City. This would be a good source of revenue. As we only have some much industrial land that condos could bring a different socioeconomic base. Discussion around there are some lands that would work for this such as HWY 43 and would fit into that concept plan. Infrastructure is an issue and we need to work on transportation along with this. It is a low priority for Tri-Met to have a bus go up Salamo so it would be best for the City to establish our own shuttles and maybe partner with Oregon City or Mary’s Woods as they talked with the City last year. Maybe we could do a year test to see if this would be a success.

Richard Sakelik:

Asked if everyone got an invitation to the January 29th Citizen Advisory Group Training.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned 8:24 pm.