



22500 Salamo Road
West Linn, Oregon 97068
<http://westlinnoregon.gov>

Economic Development Committee Meeting Notes

Thursday, July 11, 2019

6:30 p.m. – West Linn City Hall – Willamette Conference Room

Members Present: Rachael Vidin, Russel Williams, Jim Stallcup, Matt Lorenzen

Members Absent: Shannen Knight

Staff/City Representatives Present: Darren Wyss (staff), Jules Walters (Council)

Guests Present: Keesha Browster

1. Review of Agenda

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm. No changes to agenda.

2. Public Comment

Question: What was the outcome of the Clackamas County Tourism Grant program the EDC reviewed?

Answer: The EDC made a recommendation and passed it along to the County Tourism decision-makers.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes

Meeting notes for the May 9, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously with one correction to the spelling of the Chair's name.

4. Staff Liaison Transition

John Williams, Community Development Director, and Darren Wyss, Associate Planner, will be sharing liaison duties until a new planner is hired. At that time, a decision will be made on the permanent EDC liaison.

5. Old Business

a. Review/Prioritize Economic Development Action Plan

The EDC discussed prioritizing their efforts to ensure they are not spread too thin and get nothing accomplished. The staff liaison outlined several economic development related projects in which the City is currently engaged:

- Renovation of Old City Hall to house tourism/heritage center

- Historic Review Board is working on updated design standards for the Willamette Falls Drive Commercial Design District
- The City's business license software has reporting capabilities the EDC could use to help prioritize efforts (it was noted there are some issues with the software and the IT Department is working on fixing the issues)
- West Linn's Waterfront Project
- Willamette Falls Drive Main Street Redesign Project

The EDC discussed the impact of construction on the business community in old Willamette and the conceptual design of the project. Public Works staff are engaged in a public outreach effort by visiting businesses to talk to them about the project. The EDC received feedback from the Chamber of Commerce that the business community is worried about possible attrition due to customers not being able to access the storefronts during construction. The Chamber was wanting to know how the City would support businesses during construction and wants to advocate for them. The EDC discussed some measures the City could entertain to support the businesses such as: Open for Business During Construction signage and Parking Available Here signage.

The EDC discussed a possible role for the Chamber of Commerce and the Historic Willamette Main Street Group in the public outreach efforts to help support businesses during the construction phase. The EDC requested the Public Works Director be invited to a future meeting to discuss the project in more detail.

b. Waterfront Project Update

The EDC asked about the impact of the mill reopening on the project. Staff stated the project will continue to move forward as the critical component for the mill buildings is access and not necessarily the use of the buildings. Staff addressed the preferred transportation option (roundabout/realigned Willamette Falls Dr.) and the design work underway. The goal is to adopt the preferred option into the Transportation System Plan in early 2020 so it is eligible for various transportation funding sources. The next phase of the project is to move to land use discussions in Autumn 2019. The focus will be general Comprehensive Plan land use designations that Council will support in order to move forward with detailed zoning (setbacks, building height, design standards, permitted uses) efforts. Staff will focus on the Old City Hall District first because of better transportation access, lack of environmental resource issues, and engaged property owners. The goal would be to have a zoning package for the Old City Hall District by end of 2020.

Staff provided the EDC with an overview of the transportation improvements proposed for the Old City Hall District. A question was asked about public transit and staff recommended reading TriMet's Unified Service Enhancement Plan found on its website. The main issue for the Waterfront Project is to ensure a transit bus can navigate the roundabouts.

c. Summer Shuttle Program Update

Staff relayed information from an email from EDC member Knight. The tourism grant recommended by the EDC was not funded by Clackamas County because they do not allow funds to be for management expenses. Without a paid program manager or a shuttle driver, the project is on hold. Main Street just hired a new manager and they will be asking the County to release the funds as there would no longer be a need to use the grant funds for a project manager. Main Street Group is also discussing the possibility of using the grant funds to run a shuttle during construction of the Main Street improvements.

6. New Business

City Council was interested in a property inventory tool on website so the EDC reached out to the City's IT Department. The City's website is being updated/refreshed and this should be revisited after it is complete.

Discussion of regulatory framework of the City related to economic development. Staff distributed a zoning/permitted use table to the EDC to review and have a better understanding of what business types are allowed within the City. The EDC also discussed the location of Campus Industrial/Neighborhood Commercial zones and the current zoning of the Sunset Market. A question was asked about the recent state law passed regarding requiring allowing higher densities within single-family residential homes. Staff provided clarification on the law and that the City will address meeting state requirements in the coming year.

The EDC agreed to revisit the zoning/permitted use table at a future meeting and requested Staff help focus attention its attention on where recommended improvements could be made in the code.

7. Other Items of Interest

1. Update from Chamber of Commerce: they are interested in partnering to update the business survey that was sent out a couple years ago (Staff will look into finding the 2016 survey); they are interested in a City annual report on business retention and attraction rated; rolling out a "Best Of" program to recognize businesses that go above and beyond; doing the Shop Local campaign again this year; planning a wellness event in early autumn to highlight businesses in West Linn focusing on wellness; Music on the Mountain Event to promote West Linn as a winery destination; Chamber membership is growing and an updated directory is under way.
2. CNBC annual report on business climate ranked Oregon 22nd overall and 43rd for "friendliness towards business". In comparison, Washington ranked 5th.
3. Jennifer Harmon has resigned from the EDC.
4. The EDC thanked John Morgan for his work with them over the last couple of years.
5. Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation is looking to start up tours of the mill site once again.

8. Announcement of Next Meeting

August 8, 2019 meeting cancelled
September 12, 2019

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm.