

EAST BETHEL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

November 17th, 2014

The East Bethel Economic Development Authority (EDA) met for a regular meeting on November 17, 2014 at 7:00 P.M at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Butler Brian Bezanson Bob DeRoche Julie Lux
John Landwehr Doug Welter

MEMBERS ABSENT: Heidi Moegerle - excused

ALSO PRESENT: Colleen Winter, Community Development Director
Jack Davis, City Administrator
Sue Irons, Recording Secretary

Call to Order & Adopt Agenda Mr. Bezanson motioned to adopt the November 17th, 2014 agenda. Ms. Lux seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes October 20, 2014 Mr. Landwehr motioned to approve the minutes with Mr. Bezanson to be listed as "excused". Ms. Lux seconded; all in favor except Mr. Bezanson who abstained due to his absence, motion carried to approve the minutes.

Welcome New Member Members welcomed Mr. Doug Welter as the newest member of the Economic Development Authority. Mr. Welter read and accepted the oath of office.

Business Development Report Ms. Winter reported the following:

- CDBG program at Coon Lake Beach is progressing. Currently two systems are being installed.
- Classic Commercial Park 3rd Addition Plat approved.
- Applied for a Met Council grant to assist with the decommissioning of the Castle Towers wastewater facility
- To date there have been 15 new residential home permits issued in the City of East Bethel
- Year to date the Community Development Department has received over 14,398 phone calls, emails and counter visits.
- Rivard Companies is constructing a new 5,400 square foot cold storage facility. They have their permit and anticipate expansion next Spring.
- Misc. inquiries regarding commercial and residential property in the City.

New Businesses in the last two years:

Aggressive Hydraulics

Floor Refinishers (located in the Valder Motors building)

Tin Man Fabrication

North Country Concrete (located at 229th and 65) – 75 employees and growing

Cambridge-Isanti Insurance (located in the building north of Galaxy Gymnastics)

Lucky Paws (4349 Viking Blvd.)

Hwy. 65 Liquor

Tattoo Shop (located in the NACE building)

Moonshine Whiskey

The following are prospects that will propose or have proposed projects for development:

Viking Preserve Subdivision

Senior Housing

New business in the Classic Commercial Park

Expansion of existing business in the Classic Commercial Park

Grocery store/strip mall at 65 and Viking Blvd.

Businesses that have closed or relocated to another city:

Flex Fitness (closed)

Sowada and Barna Plumbing (relocated to Ham Lake)

Valder Motors

Mr. DeRoche asked about escrow balance for Bob King. Mr. Butler plans to contact Mr. King to discuss this and see if they want the escrow money back. Ms. Winter reported that it would be a good opportunity to call him. The amount is fairly substantial.

Mr. DeRoche requested the status of Don Shaw's development. Ms. Winter reported he is waiting to see what will happen on the corner and waiting until Spring to move forward in hopes of getting more competitive pricing.

Mr. Butler reported that a plat was approved for expansion for Aggressive Hydraulics. He spoke with Paul the owners whose plan is to start the operation in the existing location and as it moves forward they would use the approved plat to expand.

Roger Ricky is "hooked up" to city sewer and water. There was a late construction start.

Mr. Welter requested a list of current businesses which Ms. Winter agreed to send to all EDA members as there have been several updates since the list was provided to the members. There are over 200 businesses currently licensed by the city.

Mr. Butler related his disappointment in not receiving any phone calls from residents after his article was published in the newsletter. Members discussed ways to encourage residents to contact the EDA with questions/concerns/suggestions and how to make it as easy as possible. Ms. Winter agreed to add contact options including email to the website as well as include the information in the newsletter which comes out quarterly. Members suggested an automatic email response acknowledging receipt of the resident's communication.

Mr. Butler reported that he had done some research on other community websites and found that some do have the ability to pay online, especially larger cities. Mr. Landwehr stated that he has used this function to pay for permits online and there is usually a user fee and sometimes even an application fee. Ms. Winter noted that staff had done some research into the online pay options but felt that the costs didn't justify implementing this option. There may be a way through Civic Plus or Permit Works to have an application for this. They will be looking

into this option more closely. There is concern that some people will believe that once they have completed the application and paid for it online their permit is approved. Mr. Landwehr suggested that the New Hope and Coon Rapids are good sites to look at for ideas on this issue.

Survey Results

Members reviewed Piwik analysis for October.

An opinion poll was posted on the website from October 30th to November 13th and results were shared with members. The sample size was very small, less than 30 responses. The most requested business was a grocery store and the majority would like to see information about East Bethel's Nature Reserves on the website.

Members discussed ways to get a larger sample size and suggested sending the survey to Chamber members for their input.

Chamber Update

The Chamber of Commerce hosted a Sunrise Business Breakfast where there were over 60 people in attendance. The topic was Highway 65; Doug Fisher (Anoka Co. Hwy Engineer) and Sheila Kauppi (MNDOT north metro director) presented their vision for Highway 65 and Highway 22. The Chamber is very interested in partnering with and helping out the EDA in any way they can to plan and move forward on service road projects, etc. related to Highway 65.

Mr. Butler reported that Julie Braastad is planning a meeting in January with the county and MnDOT and Met Council and representatives of the city staff and/or businesses. The purpose is to strategize on the transportation issues facing the city, especially in the southwestern sewer district area and the east side.

Council Report and Other Business

The members thanked Mr. DeRoche for his service to the city.

Mr. Davis addressed the members regarding the "North Trunk Highway 65 Corridor Coalition" whose mission is "to work in cooperation and collaboration with transportation and transit agencies in identifying and planning for transportation safety improvements in the North TH 65 corridor". Its members include people from Anoka, Isanti and Kanabec Counties. Ham Lake and Blaine are not currently members. They are working to come up with data and recommendations to alleviate congestion on Highway 65 with the focus on the section between Highway 10 and 117th Ave in Blaine.

Blaine has met with the Coalition twice and is interested in working with the group. They are currently working on a study (included in meeting packet) to measure freight demands on Highway 65 in hopes of qualifying for grant funds from the Corridor of Commerce. The city has communicated its goals and needs related to this issue and hopes that the Coalition will support/endorse requests made by the city for funding. This would focus primarily on the area of 181st Ave and Viking Blvd as those areas continue to expand. It was noted that the priority for the county is Highway 10 with Highway 65 a lower priority.

Mr. Davis stated that the city needs to push to keep Highway 65 as a focus for the county ensuring they are aware of the issues of the city. The city needs to be proactive to work on supplemental projects that will enhance an interchange at Viking Blvd.

Mr. DeRoche commented that it is imperative that MnDOT work with the city at some point. He believes that if there is no access to the properties along Highway 65 then it won't be developed. The congestion at 181st is already very bad.

Mr. Davis reported that the latest traffic count at the intersection of 187th and 65 is 2900 which includes many heavy trucks and busses but was taken before the new bus route started at the theater and before Aggressive Hydraulics opened so these numbers are expected to increase exponentially. There will have to be a light at this intersection and it can't be 30 years out. The Coalition plans to focus on working with MnDOT to get some of the service roads and frontage roads done. They have reviewed several proposals to increase access to Classic Park and have a meeting scheduled with MnDOT later this week.

Members reviewed email communications from Greater MSP regarding companies looking for potential locations to establish their business. Mr. Davis noted that some of the requests for interested communities to reply come with impossible deadlines of less than 24 hours. The organization has not provided any viable opportunities for the city but it does not cost anything as the county pays the required fees for membership.

Adjournment

Mr. Bezanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Ms. Lux seconded; all in favor, motion carried.

Submitted by:
Susan Lori Irons
Recording Secretary