

## EAST BETHEL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

The East Bethel Economic Development Authority (EDA) met for a regular meeting on February 23, 2015 at 7:00 P.M at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:      Dan Butler\*                      Brian Bezanson                      Steve Voss                      Julie Lux  
   Brian Mundle                      Doug Welter                      John Landwehr

MEMBERS ABSENT:      None

ALSO PRESENT:              Colleen Winter, Community Development Director  
   Jack Davis, City Administrator

\* Chairperson

**Call to Order**                      Mr. Butler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Adopt Agenda**                      **Mr. Butler motioned to adopt the February 23, 2015 agenda. Mr. Welter seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 26, 2015**                      **Mr. Bezanson motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Voss seconded; all in favor. Motion carried to approve the minutes.**

**Open to Business**                      This program is designed to help entrepreneurs and small business owners grow in the communities where they live and work. (Attachment 1) It is offered through the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD). As a community in Anoka County we are able to participate in this program at no cost to the City for the first year. Business service specialists are deployed out in the communities and are able to provide one-on-one assistance customized to meet individual business needs. MCCD also offers financing but this is not their primary focus.

Kathleen DuChene is our local contact. She has extensive experience both as a small business owner/entrepreneur and working for large corporations. Ms. DuChene will have office hours at City Hall. She will be available to meet with individuals or groups who have a business idea, or is interested in starting a business, or may have a business in the community. She can assist them with marketing, finance, business plans. Once a project has been developed they can then meet with the City's Economic Development staff.

Ms. Winter met with MCCD representatives two weeks ago to learn about the program. Ms. DuChene has already met with a community member who has a small business and is hoping to expand it.

Members discussed options for getting the word out about this resource. It will be advertised on the website and brochures are available at City Hall. The Chamber is expected to have it on their website as well.

Mr. Welter asked how information would be shared between the MCCD staff and the City. "How do we know what they're doing and who they're talking to?"

Ms. Winter stated that she was not aware of a formal method of communication so far but she believes their follow up process is very good. Ms. DuChene let the staff know as soon as she met with the community member. Ms. Winter plans to contact Ms. DuChene to discuss the communication process.

Mr. Voss asked how future years would be funded once the initial year is past. Ms. Winter reported that the total fee is \$5 – 10,000 but she did not know how much if any of that might be picked up by the county. Mr. Voss suggested that additional information might be helpful for including funding for the program in the FY 2016 budget.

Mr. Welter asked how this program works with the Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program Ms. Winter stated she felt this program is similar to the “SCORE” (stands for Service Corps of Retired Executives but “That acronym has not been used for many years”) program where retired executives meet individually with business people to offer business advice. The BR&E Program works more at a macro level where this program is more at the micro level. There does not appear to be any redundancy in the programs.

Mr. Butler wondered how the MSSD staff might interact with City staff to help build materials and brand for the city. We can call the program “East Bethel is Open to Business”.

Ms. Winter plans to invite Ms. DuChene to present at the next EDA meeting.

### **Future Service Roads**

Jack Davis, City Administrator discussed future service roads projects and the latest developments as it relates to MNDOT and Met Council.

City officials and Staff met with representatives from MnDOT, Anoka County, Met Council and Ham Lake on January 29, 2015 to discuss Highway 65 issues and needs between 181st Ave. and Viking Boulevard. Among the items discussed were service road projects on both the east and west side of Highway 65, traffic lights, need for the upgrade of the intersection of Viking Boulevard and Hwy. 65 and an updated study for Hwy. 65.

There was discussion at length in regards to the history of and the short and long term needs for a signalized intersection between 181st Ave. and 187th Lane. While none of these intersections in this area currently meet MnDOT standards for a light, a traffic signal was not ruled out as an option for traffic control should development occur that would generate the traffic volumes required for the installation of a signal.

There was a review of the potential sites for development in this area and the need for service roads to access these properties. The necessity of the service roads was stressed as a means to stimulate additional interest in this area from developers. Staff reviewed the service road options with the group.

Staff requested that MnDOT and Met Council consider additional and new funding for these projects. MnDOT advised, that in addition to the Cooperative Agreement Grants, Safety Capacity Funds are available to the City in the amount of \$1,000,000 in 2020 and there is a possibility that these monies can be

advanced. MnDOT will advise us of the availability of these funds at our next meeting in March. Representatives from Metropolitan Council were requested to provide funding information and stated that they would look to see what options exist in their system for funding service roads and utilities.

Tom Collins, City Engineer for Ham Lake, attended the meeting. Both Cities indicated they will coordinate their plans for service roads in and around 181st Ave. to avoid any issues with alignments and schedules.

City Staff scheduled another meeting on February 25th to continue discussion on MnDOT and Met Council funding options and provide these groups with additional information on potential projects. Staff and City Council will be developing preliminary cost estimates for the options previously presented for the West Side Service Roads and prepare a project and estimated costs for the East Side.

MnDOT suggested \$500K for two portions of the project, one to exit the north side of the property via Buchanan St NE, Taylor St NE or 189th Ave NE to Jackson and another \$500K to possibly fund an exit via Buchanan Ave S. They left the choice of projects to use the funding for up to the City as long as it does not include an exit to Hwy 65.

Another option that was presented was for a service road on the east side of Hwy 65, coming down south from Viking Blvd to Briarwood. This might be a possibility in place of using the money for an exit south to 181st on the west side of 65. Attendees at the meeting also discussed the possibility of upgrading a stoplight at County Road 22. There has been an issue with people having difficulty getting across and it was felt that adding a frontage road would lead to increased problems.

Mr. Davis related the options included two projects for the East side of 65 and two for the West side. The project going north to Viking Blvd or Jackson St is the most “ready to go” at this time. The Road Commission previously made a recommendation for a project going out to Jackson St to access the theatre and the Classic Commercial Park. There have been some suggestions and even opposition to this recommendation. An option to build an access road straight north along Buchanan to County Road 22 has been deemed the least appropriate option due to the extensive excavation required in order to get a substantial subgrade for the road and it is also the most expensive option.

An alternate proposal is the route north on Buchanan to 189th, west to Taylor St and north on Taylor to County Road 22. This would be better than the Jackson St option because it would intersect with County Road 22 closer to Hwy 65 but it is also a more expensive option. The cost estimate is approximately \$2.3 million which includes a stoplight at County Road 22. Mr. Davis stated that Anoka County standards no longer require a stoplight at this intersection which would bring the cost down closer to \$2 million. The Jackson St option would be about \$1.4 million. The cost of the Taylor St option would be funded through MSA and Street Capital funds and possible Intersection Safety funding and

### Cooperative Agreement Grants.

The Road Commission has changed their recommendation to the Taylor Street option. This will eliminate concerns about additional traffic on Jackson St, particularly heavy trucks and the Taylor St option would come out closer to Hwy 65 possibly making it a more viable frontage road with the eventual possibility of continuing on Buchanan south to 181st at some point in the future.

Mr. Bezanson asked about funding the utility changes required. Mr. Davis stated that the utilities are part of the plan.

Mr. Butler asked about the potential for extending a service road to continue south from Taylor St. Mr. Davis responded that it would be less expensive but there would be no secondary benefit from this option. There is less property available for development in the area and it is already accessible. It would require more negotiations with property owners for right of way, etc. and the road would ultimately come out on 181<sup>st</sup> at an uncontrolled intersection.

Mr. Butler asked what the chances are of getting a stoplight at the planned intersection of Taylor and Viking Blvd. Mr. Davis estimated the cost at \$3-400,000 for a stoplight. He explained the formula for funding a light with the County paying approximately 25%.

Mr. Landwehr asked if the businesses on the East side of Hwy 65 would receive any benefit. The businesses are on property that is fairly deep and might consider subdividing the property with access roads on both sides. Mr. Davis stated that the current frontage road will need an overlay in the next 2-3 years and there are some drainage problems in the area.

Mr. Butler related strong interest among businesses on the East side to get hooked up to sewer and water and asked about this possibility. Mr. Davis agreed that the businesses would like to have sewer and water which would cost \$15 – 20,000 to hook up. It would cost the City \$2 million (fix drainage problems, repair road surface) but would return only \$180,000. The decision was made not to pursue extension of sewer and water.

### **Business Development Report**

- Shaw Trucking has begun the preliminary grading work at Viking preserve.
- Classic Commercial Construction applied for and received an Interim Use Permit for a major mining operation (black dirt) at 1965 Briarwood LN NE
- Rivard Companies, 19801 Hwy 65 NE constructed a new 5,400 ft. storage facility
- MN Fresh Farm, 20241 Hwy 65 NE is constructing a new storage building, and refacing their existing barn for the expansion of their operations
- Issued an Interim Use permit, home occupation to Justin Donnell, 3601 228th Ave NE for a hydrographics business
- Issued a Conditional Use permit to Dan Schulz (dba: Builders by Design) for the relocation of their business to 21058 Davenport St (former Flex Fitness bldg).

Ms. Lux asked how much of the space in the Flex Fitness bldg. had been purchased. Ms. Winter related that Builders by Design purchased the whole

building but may have 3,000 sq ft available to lease out.

Mr. Butler noted an article regarding grocery stores and asked about the status of adding a store to the community. Mr. Davis stated they had met with potential business owners and further discussion is ongoing.

Ms. Winter presented the Piwik Analysis. (Attachment 2)

Mr. Voss noted that Hunter's Inn received their liquor license and will be re-opening in the near future.

### **Chamber Report**

Mr. Welter reported a meeting was held on February 12<sup>th</sup>. There were presentations on City finance, Mayor Voss spoke and Mr. Dan Richardson shared information about his business. There were several new people in attendance. Mr. Voss noted that he met someone at the meeting who is considering restarting their business in the community.

### **City Council Report**

Mr. Mundle reported that the Council meetings will begin at 7pm starting in March. Mr. Troy Lachinski trained members of the Council and others on CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) and AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) use prior to the last Council meeting. This is part of an effort to have East Bethel named a "Heart Safe City". Mr. Lachinski's goal is to have 10% of the City population trained by the end of the year. Mr. Mundle suggested the Chamber might consider inviting Mr. Lachinski to a meeting to present his project.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Mundle shared that the new Chair of the Met Council was interviewed recently on MN Public Radio. He felt the interview was interesting and encouraged members to consider listening to it online. Mr. Voss related that he and Mr. Davis will be meeting with the Chair of Met Council for a tour of the wastewater plant and offered to bring any information put forth by the EDA to the Chair for discussion.

Mr. Davis shared with members that there have been statements made in the past that East Bethel is not good for business owners. He related two recent events where owners benefitted from staff working very hard to expedite issues that were required in order for the owners to proceed with their plans. Mr. Landwehr suggested asking if those owners and others might be willing to provide comments/testimonies sharing those good experiences with the community and other potential business owners. Mr. Davis agreed this should be considered for the City website.

Mr. Butler requested a demonstration of the GIS system at the next meeting. Ms. Winter agreed to provide a presentation.

### **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