

EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL WORK MEETING

April 25, 2012

The East Bethel City Council met on April 25, 2012 at 6:30 PM for a work meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob DeRoche Richard Lawrence Heidi Moegerle
 Steve Voss (6:44 PM)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Boyer

ALSO PRESENT: Jack Davis, City Administrator
 Stephanie Hanson, City Planner

Call to Order **The April 25, 2012 City Council work meeting was called to order by Mayor Lawrence at 6:33 PM.**

Adopt Agenda **Moegerle made a motion to adopt the April 25, 2012 City Council work meeting agenda. Lawrence seconded; all in favor, motion carries.**

Discuss Ady Voltedge Marketing and Branding Davis explained that we are meeting tonight discuss recommendations that the EDA is making to Council. This is a work session meeting; no official actions can be made. But, this can be taken under consideration at future Council meetings.

Recommen- Ady Voltedge completed and presented the Marketing and Branding Plan for the City of East datoins Bethel on April 2, 2012. The plan was submitted to the EDA for their review and comment on the recommendations of the study. The EDA discussed this subject at their April 19, 2012 meeting. As a result of the meeting, upon completion of review of the material, EDA consolidated many of the strategies proposed by Ady Voltedge into four main goals. The EDA's recommendations are included in attachment #1.

The EDA established a priority of high on all the main goals with the exception of the sub-goal., the development of the Town Center Plan. The EDA and staff are of the opinion that the cost functions assigned to the Ady Voltedge recommendations can initially be handled in house. Should any of these items require additional assistance, staff will present that request to City Council.

The EDA recommends that City Council consider adopting Ady Voltedge's recommendation of Action Plans A and B with the priority changes as noted on Attachment #1 and consider allocating \$4,000 from the EDA budget to update the City website at a future date.

As all of us are aware, Ady Voltedge reviewed their recommendations as far as Economic Development Implementation, Work Force Development, Civic Infrastructure, and Branding and Marketing. The presented goals and recommendations to the City on April 2, 2012. The EDA reviewed the goals and priorities and are of the consensus that all of these are high. It is just a matter of which way we want to attack which one first. In your packet we have consolidated these under five categories: Economic Development Implementation, Work Force Development, Civic Infrastructure, Branding and Other Marketing Activities.

Davis said we can talk about these one by one.

Review and enhance code enforcement activities. Discuss this in relation to improving the appearance of the City. This may be something that we may have to hire a part time code

enforcement officer to assist us on. Moegerle, "You are the code enforcement person right now?" Davis, "Actually, we have three or four; it just depends on who gets the phone call."

Prepare an Executive Summary to update the Comprehensive Plan. We agree that there are some things that need to be updated and addressed.

Review the Zoning Ordinance for consistency, significance and application in regards to economic development within the TH 65 Corridor. I think this is one of the more important items. We have had discussions with the EDA, with Council Members, with staff and this is something we are going to start doing now. I think it was discussed at Planning Commission last night. Something we want to get done as soon as possible to start laying these recommendations out on the table.

DeRoche, "As far as review and enhance the code enforcement activities, I have had conversations with different people. That is easy for someone like Ady Voltedge to come in to town and say, "It looks like crap down there you need to be more stringent on your enforcement". A lot of those people have been in the City doing business for a long time. One of the problems of hiring an outside enforcement persons, is they are going to be out of touch with the City and the people. And I don't think you can just come in and say you have to fix it or we are going to fine you or you got to go. Moegerle, "I don't think that has been suggested. I see it at the far, far end." DeRoche, "If you see it at the far, far end it is better to address it now as to how it is going to be approached. My question is what is the vision? What do people see as far as the 65 corridor?"

Davis, "You and I had a long discussion on this. To me, it is not a matter of coming in and telling people it is an either or situation. It is a matter of working with them. One of the things we want to do is sit down with everybody and identify some problems and see what we can do to work them out, especially with things that are lacking as far as code enforcement goes. We will sit down and work out a reasonable solution, one on one; not make it where we are in a dictatorial position to tell them you have got to do this or got to do that. I think we have to take into account the situation of each one and work out a solution."

DeRoche, "What prompted that question is I have caught a couple meetings, and listening, and you catch a lot of things. Coming into this, the sewer and water project is Hwy. 65 and 22. And now you are talking going north and south. What did Ady Voltedge say do we need to do to sustain the sewer and water project, to get that project going?" Moegerle, "They are marketing and branding, they are not the people to say this is how you need to deal with your infrastructure." DeRoche, "If they are marketing and branding they should be able to say, "We have been to other cities and this is what we have seen", not "We are coming into your City and it looks like crap on the south end." Moegerle, "That is a little exaggeration. But, they had David Boyd and he talked about the land usage from the standpoint we have to get away from thinking highest and best use and go to form based land development, so that there is more consistency and conformity through our developments, as opposed to here and there, different types of style and those types of things. But as far as what goes where and planning the City, that really wasn't what they were engaged to do."

DeRoche, "Well then I guess I thought that was going to be part of it. What do people see as the vision for that area? How do you want to see in that area that is going to help us get out of this pickle?" Hanson, "We already have this form based development. We have Planned Unit Developments, which is the exact same thing. When 22 and 65 come in, that is a Planned Unit Development. It is going to be what the City Council wants it to be." DeRoche, "They put what their priorities were, but we have to have a vision of what we think is going to be in that area. Because if we go and do changes now and then down the road we say, "Oh, by the way this is

what we are going to do” then we are back doing it again.”

Butler, “That is number two, update the comp plan. He doesn’t know how much enhancement needs to be done on code review, but does the whole comp plan need to be updated? If you look at the comp plan for that area you have an Amphitheater in there. We have also spent a lot of time talking about if we go on the east side with the sewer, what is the effect on businesses in Ham Lake? What will the effect of the comp plan be then? I think these aren’t listed in priority. We need to redo the comp plan and see what we want.” DeRoche, “It was my understanding that we needed to review the executive summary of the comp plan. At the stakeholders meeting it wasn’t redo the comp plan right now, that was kind of low, but the summary was something that needed to be looked at.”

Moegerle, “When you are talking about that area, part of the disorganization of that area has to do with the appearance of some of the signs. We have the tied on signs and those kinds of things. I know at some time there was a debate about the sign ordinance and there was a moratorium on signs. Where are we with signs down there? Are they mostly in conformity with our sign ordinance, or are they legally non-conforming? How does that work?” Hanson, “Most of the monument signs are legal non-conforming. There are people down there that have banners and trailers and technically they are not allowed.” Moegerle, “With the banners can we gently go tell them that they are not allowed?” Hanson, “We do have a provision for temporary signs.” Butler, “The other thing we talked about was we don’t want to be too onerous, because people are struggling with their businesses. And we don’t want to be too hard on them and coming down to hard on them.”

DeRoche, “Part of the big thing was retaining the businesses we currently have. The businesses are struggling and there has to be a way of working with people, without dropping the hammer on them. Moegerle, “We aren’t talking about dropping the hammer on them, but coming down gently on them. Bringing them gently into the new vision. It doesn’t do us any good if we start harping on these people about the signs they have had forever. That is not friendly to business, which is not what we are trying to do as far as being a warmer and better City. And, knowing Jack, I can’t imagine that is something he would allow under his watch.”

Davis, “To retain business you have to be able to work with them. Work with them on solving problems. If there is an enforcement issue, you don’t just send them a letter. You involve yourselves in the process and try to sell them on what we are trying to achieve. Those are my goals and how I see this as being handled.”

DeRoche, “You have to remember in the past this hasn’t happened, enforcement was selective. If someone pissed off somebody then the enforcement was a little bit more aggressive then if they liked you. Development has to happen. Also has to coincide with people who have been here most of their lives. I think it really needs to be handled with a balance.” Voss said in terms of the businesses on the east side and with the signs and I agree to enforce this significantly is not the best way to go yet. But, why not work with the businesses and to him it seems like a viable aspect to fund. Voss said Ham Lake has their beautification thing, not sure how the implement it. If we make some kind of overture to these businesses, such as a loan through the EDA or grants. Voss said if these are business that we want to keep and there are ways we can help that.

Davis, “A lot of these things are so inter-related, business retention, may have to offer some plans, revolving loan fund, other assistance, technical assistance.” Butler, “When we talked about this code enforcement issue in the EDA meeting, we were mostly talking about blight and empty buildings. If they are vacant and unoccupied, that is what we are talking about. What could we do ordinance wise.” Bezanson, “These were given high priority, life safety issues,

don't want something to happen in your City where someone got killed or hurt. How would you like to get in the news for something where someone got killed? ADA issues. I thought in the EDA meeting, my impression of that side of the highway is we have a bunch of rough businesses, but we have a bunch of new businesses that have come in there and I have revised my view on it and we also have some that are in trouble over there it appears. Vacant, one that moved to Ham Lake and now back here. You have a wide gamut of appearances and expertise." DeRoche, "There is a tentative breakfast planned with those businesses and I think it is better to put the ball in their court. Let them try and figure this out. Rather than to go to them and say, "We haven't enforced this for a long time but now we are going to."

Moegerle, "We need to encourage them to be active. If we can get them as a group of business owners to take the steps so that it is not us all the time. Because peer pressure is often more valuable than if we come from the outside no matter how kindly and gently we approach it."

Davis, "So that first goal, we are looking at the priority of the first three is doing the executive summary of comp plan to give us a little more vision for that area and make sure that everything we have now is current." DeRoche, "Because to review the zoning ordinance before we don't know where everything is going to go or even where we think might go where." Davis, "There are certain things we need to review the zoning ordinance for. Like there are issues on 22 as far as commercial zoning and maybe look at some of our B-3 zoning to see if it is truly B-3. Just to make sure we are still current with what the vision was in 2007 when this was done and relate it to 2012-2013 with our existing situation."

DeRoche, "Over the weekend, I did read the comp plan and City Center plan and I'm not sure how the whole City Center plan with the amphitheater is going to fit in that area." Davis, "I think the City Center plan in concept is a good idea. My issue with City Center plan is it has a lot of public spaces in there, which unfortunately aren't going to produce ERUs or taxes. I think if we do something more along planned use development it would be better." Voss said you have to remember that the City Center plan is literally a cartoon. He said those who are criticizing it are taking it far too seriously, It is a conceptual plan. Voss said the way it was put together was through the community meetings, here are the things that the residents thought were important to have. The first problem was that there wasn't a downtown. He said but I don't remember a whole lot of discussion about putting things here and there. The only big discussion was about a big box going on the corner. Voss said but we are not going to see one business going in there. They will be developing the whole piece and they will have a plan and will be working with the city. He said and I thought the energy should be focused on where it should go Viking or 221st. I fought that. But now they could be put here or there because both are PUDs."

DeRoche, "Has the EDA given any thought to a City Center plan? Or looked at it or talked about where it is currently?" Lux, "In her opinion that will be demand based. That will come from the developers." DeRoche, "What or where do you think should be East Bethel's downtown?" Moegerle, "You are assuming East Bethel should have a downtown." Davis, "East Bethel will never have a downtown (as far as a traditional downtown). Development will occur at intersections, places that don't have a traditional downtown, they don't develop one." Lux, "There is a really good example of an urban downtown, where Apache Mall used to be. It is very architecturally pleasing."

Lawrence, "Do we have a plan for the Highway 65 corridor?" Hanson, "Not a specific plan for the corridor, just what is zoned there." Voss said regarding the downtown point, which is all everyone had 40 years ago, we may call it a downtown, but we want a place where we can walk to a bunch of stores. Where we can walk to shops.

Davis, "The next items on the list are: Business attraction and recruitment and Existing business

expansion and retention. These items are going to require some assistance. We would like to find out what others are doing such as Greater MSP and the State and gain from their experience. DeRoche, "To work with a consultant is one thing, but we don't want this to be someone else mold the City. I would like this to be, "This is what we want to do, how do we get there?" Davis, "I agree with you on the marketing and business side. But, not on the planning side."

Voss asked Lux if she works with many communities that have business developers? Lux, "I work with MSP. If we can just get connected with this group, I think it would really be helpful." Hanson, "I get the e-mails all the time, I have contact with them."

Davis, "This leads us to the next goal, have up-to-date data and present it in a form that is meaningful. There may be 10 or 12 recommendations and as we work on one we may be working on others." Moegerle, "This is a real important part of it. It shows we are going the extra mile." Voss said well that brings up the website, we seem to be stuck on the same placer, when are we going to make the next step to create a new website. Davis, "This will be the last item we address." Moegerle, "Part of it is we haven't gotten to the marketing and branding part of it. How we market our brand and identity." Lawrence, "We talk about identity. We all want the same thing the other cities around us have, but we don't want to look like that. That is going to be the challenge."

Davis, "Next item is Work Force Development. This is developing relationships with local school districts and community and technical colleges to facilitate training programs and enhance cooperation between the City and these entities. Not that we haven't done that in the past." Hanson, "I have had contact with Rasmussen College and Anoka Technical College." Davis, "If there is an industrial business that wants to come to East Bethel and they have 50 employees that they want to train in a certain area, these technical and community colleges will facilitate these training programs for them. They are not going to provide trained people; they will provide a program for the employees at little or no cost to the firm that is coming in."

DeRoche, "On here this is listed as a high priority. There are other things he has seen that should be a higher priority until we start seeing some businesses coming in." Moegerle, "I read this as building relationships." Davis, "This is something that takes a minimal investment and then you have the groundwork taken care of." Butler, "I would like to have them relocate their college right here."

Davis, "Next is the need to create an economic development demographic packet including education levels, employment fields, etc." Bezanson, "It should include traffic count links to properties." Butler, "A lot of what Davis is talking about is available on the US Census website. The growth of the City, it is all out there." DeRoche, "If we had something on the website to indicate to people we had this great pool to draw from that would be good." Lux, "We could work with the Minnesota Workforce Center."

Moegerle, "Is there something always running on our community cable channel?" DeRoche, "There is always something on there." Moegerle, "Can we put quick facts on there?" Butler, "Such as a crawler?" Moegerle, "Yes that would be nice." Davis, "Some additional census information you have to pay for, as far as tracts." Lux, "I can pull it for you." Butler, "You don't just want to pull it from East Bethel." Allenspach, "I think the more information you give the residents the better. They are going to talk to each other, to their co-workers. It might be in a conversation that comes up that they wouldn't have even thought about before." DeRoche, "I have heard that from residents that they would like more information." Butler, "How about televising the Planning, Road and Park meetings? And we used to rotate those meeting around the City, have them at different locations."

Davis, "One of the other things mentioned under communication was creating an East Bethel Ambassadors group. This committee would be composed of community leaders, banking, all the leaders needed so that when a developer comes in here and wants to build something in East Bethel, they can meet with these people all at the same time and get all the information they need. Each person on this committee would go over their area of expertise and help the developer or prospect with their needs. These committees/programs are especially successful." Moegerle, "Do you envision this as the warm personal touch of the economic development package?" Davis, "This is a way they can get all the information in one process. It is a matter of identifying the right people and asking for their assistance on this."

Davis, "The next consideration was policies for marketing, managing and participating in community events and eco-tourism activities. We talked about Booster Day. What could be done to make this more of a success? Is it part of East Bethel's identity?" DeRoche, "Most cities that have this they have something they are known for." Hanson, "Staff took a survey of the metro area and the majority of cities have nothing to do with the festivals." Davis, "The areas they contributed to were providing city staff such as public works for clean-up. Our City does the Friday Night Movie with donations. Some other cities have overrun." Moegerle, "The question becomes Booster Day is a 501C3. Do we need to get involved for two years to raise the attention and then give it back?" Voss said the Booster Day Committee needs volunteers and funding. Davis, "The best thing that could happen is we get a infusion of volunteers and sponsors. If you get sponsors for the event, you can increase activities. Is this the main community event? If it is, is there a way to promote it?" Moegerle, "What do we want to be known for? Do we have a bike ride? Or something else?" Davis, "This is something that bears further discussion, even though it is listed as a high priority."

Moegerle, "Our relationship with Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve is really important." Voss asked from what aspect? Moegerle, "They are our largest landowner." Voss said and they don't pay taxes. Moegerle, "They have been Knighted by France on their research on global warming. We have students living out there that will shop here. And significant research is going on out here." Voss asked why is it valuable to the city? He is playing devil advocate. Butler, "This is an amenity that the City has, that many other cities don't." Moegerle, "Corney wants to talk about making it more like an arboretum out there. More public." Butler, "Part of their problem is not a lot of people know about it." Moegerle, "We are trying to change that hidden resource." Bezanson, "That is what is driving this; they need more man hours so they can get more funding from the University. They weren't friendly for a long time." Moegerle, "We can grow together and have a good relationship or we can grow separately." Bezanson, "I agree with you, but I wonder when the policy is going to change again and you are going to get kicked to the curb."

Voss said we have trails there and if it wasn't for Boyer pushing and pushing, we wouldn't have them. He said research has been going on there for 80 years and they didn't want people there. Moegerle, "They said East Bethel didn't follow though on the MOU and maybe Cedar Creek didn't either, but we are starting anew." Voss said it will be a lot of work for a little reward. Bezanson, "They have done some wonderful things there, no doubt about it. But they closed East Bethel Blvd., because they were tired of cleaning it, and it is a life safety issue."

Davis, "One of Ady Voltedge's conditional recommendation was we look at considering a new City logo." Voss asked what was the basis for suggesting this? Davis, "They state it is a conditional recommendation, it all boils down to how we see our identity." Voss said I know that is part of what they do and it was part of their presentation dealing with logos. The comment he will make is for those that have been around long enough and seen the old logo, what we did is we found someone within the community to develop the logo. Voss said we ran a contest to get the logo. We had numerous submissions and then residents voted on them at Booster Day.

Voss said I not sure I want to change a relatively fresh logo just because a consultant says.

Moegerle, "I don't see that it says we can't do the logo the same way we did it before. I went through 50 different website and logos. And the logos peak for themselves, I believe. When you compare ours to other cities, our is not bold. Our infrastructure is nothing if not a bold stroke. The sandhill crane is not representative of our City. This would be part of the bold step and challenges we are facing, the new project we are developing." Lawrence, "When he sees this logo it does not signify East Bethel. It is a little weak how it presents itself. That is my opinion on the logo."

DeRoche has no comment at this point.

Lux, "The elements are what we are about. I think it is dated. I think we need something a little crisper. Companies are updating their look all the time, so we could still have the crane, but with the yellow and everything it is pretty busy. Maybe something more streamlined, would be better."

Butler, "Connor is not here, but at the EDA he said we have bigger fish to fry than the logo. And I would agree. I like the logo."

Brian Mundle, "The logo is nice, not as simple as it could be. There is a lot there, as some others just have a tree. I do like it, and as far as what the survey of the residents said they want rural and simple and this incorporates that. It is a decent logo, but there could be room for improvement. It is not the biggest thing to talk about right now. We could paint the water tower blue and then in five years put something on it."

Bezanson, "At the EDA meeting, I said the same thing. I can't think of any bigger waste of time than worrying about a change of logo. When we get things done we can look at this logo and other logos. A mechanic doesn't see a huge difference."

Allenspach, "I like the logo. It says East Bethel. The cranes come back and nest here every year. I think it is representative."

Moegerle, "This is about marketing, reaching out to people. It is not just about cranes, but a bigger, bolder vision. It needs to be done in a stronger way." Allenspach, "But those logos you have from other cities are just trees." DeRoche, "Coon Rapids is just a little cleaner." Bezanson, "We have bigger problems to deal with. I don't think a logo is going to change the way people look at our city. From a fiscal financial responsibility, I don't want to see the city spend the money on this." Butler, "I would rather spend another \$5,000 to improve the website." Voss, "We talked about what happened with Forest Lake and their new logo when we started with Ady Voltedge. We would be taking a huge risk changing the logo."

Lux, "In hearing the pros and cons, I am thinking, who is the logo important to, businesses vs. the residents? Probably the residents." Moegerle, "Businesses update their logos." Allenspach, "Why don't we ask the residents at Booster Day this year? Set up a table and ask them." Butler, "There will be a lot of cost with changing the logo, signs all over the City, a lot of implications. Just because the consultant says we should consider it. Okay, we considered it. How about we let the residents vote on it." DeRoche. "One thing about asking the residents, they are not bringing new development into the city. But, I think we have bigger fish to fry. We can ask the residents and get their opinion and make a decision after that. Don't think you can ask "Do you like the logo or don't you?"

Bezanson, "The question is does it do its job? But I don't think you have to poll the residents. That is why you have the elected council." Voss said City Council had the same discussion when we changed the logo. That is why we let the residents come up with something and that was a monumental change.

Davis, "As part of the other marketing activities we would like to update and maintain the website. And create an economic development information packet. This is a general catch-all to increase community engagement activities. It is about relationships and communication. We would like to Council to appoint committee to update the website." DeRoche, "Didn't we already do that?" Moegerle, "That was the Deputy City Clerk, City Planner, City Administrator and I." Davis, "We are requesting additional funds for this. \$4,000 from the EDA budget."

Butler, "We should have someone from Planning, Park, and the Road Commissions on this committee." Davis, "This should only take one or two meetings." DeRoche, "What is the \$4,000 for?" Lux, "That would be to implement what we decide. For the work, design and programming of the page." Voss said what is important for that is not just folks that are users. He does a lot of research on city websites. He said it is the utility that is important. Moegerle, "Part is technology." Voss said 90% is utility. He said if you can't find something within 30 seconds you have lost them. Moegerle, "I agree, but there also has to be something at the end of your search." Voss said when I think about websites and helping users, it is also helping staff to give information so it is less calls you have to take because people can find the information they are looking for. It will save on staff time. Butler, "There has to be additional functionality."

Adjourn

DeRoche made a motion to adjourn at 8:42 PM. Voss seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Attest:

Wendy Warren
Deputy City Clerk