

City of East Bethel
Economic Development Authority Special Meeting
March 18, 2013

The East Bethel Economic Development Authority (EDA) met on March 18, 2013 for a regular meeting at City Hall at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Butler Heidi Moegerle Richard Lawrence Brian Bezanson
Mike Connor

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Julie Lux John Landwehr

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

Call to Order Moegerle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Adopt Agenda Moegerle a motion to adopt the March 18, 2013 Economic Development Authority (EDA) agenda. Butler seconded. All in favor; motion carries unanimously.

Connor asked if we would have an opportunity to talk about 6.0. He can wait and ask his questions at that time.

Website Update

Basically Winter wanted to let the Commission know Carrie is working on website development. The responses we got from businesses for the website were in PDF not in JPEG. We have gone back to the businesses to ask for them the documents in the appropriate format.

Butler said he found something dysfunctional on the website. When he would go to a certain part of the website. It would flip him back to another page.

Moegerle said there are a lot of quirks.

Winter said there is sensitivity when you move around. She will ask about it. Moegerle said the website committee will reconvene for follow up and tweaks. When will the date be set for that meeting? She wasn't sure if it would be at the Council meeting or another time. Moegerle said if you have any of those tweaks let her know. Winter said if the EDA wants changes, she asks they be emailed to her to get it done. Different staff is working on different areas of the website.

Moegerle said the website says 'Boards and Commissions' and we don't have any 'Boards'. So that is a misnomer. Lawrence said it is hard to access the minutes. Moegerle said it is hard to find things. Lawrence asked "Who took the picture?" Winter said if you want different pictures, we could look into that. Moegerle likes her older picture.

Conner wanted to know if the businesses in East Bethel would be listed on the web site. Winter said yes.

**Sunrise
Business
Breakfast
Meeting**

Winter said we will be having a business meeting. There is a half sheet paper in your packet. We ask that you fill out. We have the business listings from the old website and we want to make sure the information is as current as possible. If a business doesn't attend the meeting, we will contact them. The reason we provided a sheet for everyone to fill out is so each business can determine what category they fall under. Connor wanted to know for his business, Unique Dining Experience, would people be able to go directly to him from this link. Winter said if you put down your website information, we will create the hyperlink. If you are listed under 'Catering', they would find you. Moegerle said Anoka County has a similar site.

Winter said you all received the invitation in the mail or in your packet. This is the business breakfast meeting continuation. She has not met a lot of the business owners, so at this meeting she will introduce herself to them. She will bring them up to date on interest items. It is a meet and greet and a great opportunity to hear about the formulation of a new Chamber in the City of East Bethel.

**Chamber
Update**

Butler met with Jolynn Erickson. They have an office in the development north of Northway Sports. They offered to head up the endeavor of recruiting and contacting to start up a Chamber. They have put together preliminary bylaws, and have talked with an attorney about reviewing them. Once they are complete, they will file a 503.6. Butler will put together a presentation for the businesses in the City. He will keep the EDA posted on further developments. Moegerle wanted to know the time frame. Butler said once we get the filing from the Secretary of State. Butler said he is in the process of getting a mission statement put together.

**EDA Vision
and Strategic
Plan**

At the Economic Development Authority meeting on February 25, 2013, there was a lengthy discussion regarding a water park development and the level of interest in this type of facility in East Bethel. The EDA reviewed and examined the water park proposal and the geographic advantages and amenities of East Bethel as a potential recreation destination for Anoka County. The EDA did not take any action on the presentation.

At a special work meeting of the City Council that was held on March 6, 2013, the City Council also discussed a water park development and directed Staff to put together a Request for Proposal for a marketing and feasibility study for a water park in the City of East Bethel. In addition to the water park proposal, the EDA may have other types of businesses that they are interested in attracting to the community.

Staff is requesting that the EDA put together a common Vision Statement and Strategic Plan that can be shared with City Council regarding economic development in East Bethel. In past meetings, the EDA has had several discussions regarding a Vision for the community, and each of the EDA members was asked at an EDA meeting in June 2012 to come up with a Vision statement. A copy of those minutes is attached for your review. The EDA has also spent time talking about the Ady Voltedge report and discussed a work plan for accomplishing economic development activities in the City. Portions of that report and what has been accomplished to date are also included.

Staff Recommendation: To develop a common Vision and Strategic Plan that can be presented to the City Council for their consideration.

If you turn to the attachment, EDA recommendations.

- Review City Codes, Ordinances and Plans to determine their value and relevance to economic development goals.
- Review code enhancement. An ordinance committee has been formed. The

Planning Commission will be working on them.

- Prepare an executive summary to update the Comprehensive Plan.
- Review the Zoning Ordinance for consistency, significance and application in regards to economic development within the TH 65 Corridor. This is ongoing, and City Council has also addressed this.
- We also talked about preparing a corridor plan. We did look the corridor at our first meeting with Winter when we put things down on a white sheet. That information has been provided to staff. It has been talked about at Planning Commission.
- Develop City policy and strategy as it relates to business attraction and recruitment, existing business expansion and retention, and prepare an incentive plan for business assistance consistent with the City's financial ability to sustain these types of programs. This is EDA business expansion, incentives; in addition to that it is targeting very specific developers that could help market the sewer and water district.
- Insure the review and permitting process is streamlined. For a time, we were short staffed. We will be fully staffed in Community Development. Nick Shultz has been with the City since July of 2012. We have also hired a second building inspector, Steve Lutmer, and he will be starting on Monday. He will be reporting directly to Nick. We also have Joan who is the support person. Carrie is also helping support Economic Development activities.
- Work Force development – Develop a collaborative effort with the local school districts and colleges. Again this is something that staff has begun to work on. We have a positive relationship with St. Francis School district.
- Civic infrastructure – Winter really sees that as the new Chamber gets up and running, this will be a great ambassador relationship and positive press. Consider ways to market and manage events for eco-tourism. This will be something to work with the Park Board and the Chamber. Council member Moegerle will talk about this.
- Consider developing a new city logo. There was a lengthy discussion at one time on this.
- Other marketing activities, such as the website. We are currently working on that. We are also working on the economic development packet.

Winter wants to revisit key areas.

Business attractions – We need to develop the work plan. Parts of that might include keeping website up to date, and keeping in contact with available property owners, so they know we are here and will help market their properties. This is the first strategy that she will be asking for input on.

Butler said first of all, attraction. We need to put our best foot forward. The City Council has to be more amenable towards one another in meetings. They need to be professional in their appearances. Professional appearances at the City Council are important. The

demeanor also needs to change and it has to be forward looking and proactive, versus backward looking and reactive. In terms of attracting business and recruiting, he will travel a five state area and knock on doors. He has mulled over sending out packets, social media, but thinks if we want our packet to the head of the line, we need to knock on doors. He just thinks the impact on personal meetings is important.

Moegerle said that is a labor-intensive effort. At what point do we do the personal visit? Butler said we make phone calls and we roll up our sleeves and do whatever is necessary. If we go in person, it makes a huge impact. They will carry that back to whoever the powers are. If we want people to come to East Bethel, they have to know that we want them. Moegerle said that sounds like something out of a sweat room call center that you get calls from the mortgage companies.

Winter said it works if you have already done your first contacts. The businesses you know that will take advantage; such as we meet their demographics or maybe their CEO is a huge birding person and would like to be located near where we are, based on the red headed woodpeckers. That is when you make the face-to-face meetings. Moegerle asked what is involved at the strategic evaluations. Winter said she is not talking about everyone; the Target's, the Wal-Mart's, the CVS, etc, they know way more about our community than we do. What is going to tip the scale for them? At that point seeing someone face to face will make a difference.

Butler said in terms of the types outlined in the Ady Voltedge, retail and service markets in their presentation in terms of trading area. He is remiss in the fact that he didn't review that before tonight's meeting.

Bezanson said he had hoped for more from Ady Voltedge. When you say 'retail', that is a broad spectrum. Retail is a real common denominator. In his mind, the problem with retail is it can eat up a lot of land for what it can yield in ERUs. They have large parking lots. If you have a type of business, hopefully you will have one sharing a parking lot, day and night time clientele. In some cities, they adjust the parking lot requirements so you had fewer pavements.

Winter said we are in the process of working with the U of M and Emmons Eco Engineering on minimum impact design standards. We are having a work meeting tomorrow night. With the minimum impact design standards, we are trying to minimize the pavement, stay away from wetlands, and have higher density and not as many parking lots.

Bezanson said he looked at the sewer and water project. He was always anti-project, and it was forced. It was put in too soon and wasn't market driven. He just sees when the market is ready; things seem to happen. Our responsibility is to be ready ahead of time. So that when someone comes calling, we can react properly to it.

Winter said, to paraphrase, we need to have flexible standards in our zoning and a streamlined process. Bezanson said we didn't have PUDs when he was on the Council. Davis said we have identified there is about 2,000 developable acres. We need 6500 ERUs for this project. Of that, we need that 5,000 need to come from residential, 1,000 commercial, 500 industrial. We need employment for residential. These are the precursors that attract residential.

Connor said he has some comments and questions. He wants to preface by making a comment about the EDA. He is very excited about what we are doing. The last two years there has been progress. Tonight, he would summarize the EDA as 'a work in progress'.

We are continuing to learn our role, as we work with the City Council. He read the background information pertaining to the water park. Obviously the EDA didn't take any action, yet he reads the Council did authorize that a RFP be prepared to be submitted. We are a work in progress. We are learning our role in how we support Winter, Davis and how we can be of value to the City Council. What prompted the City Council to take up this item on the 6th of March? The EDA sat here on the 25th of February choosing not to take any action. Was there an implication that the EDA was in support of the action that the Council took on the 6th? We want to be partner and a value to the City Council. He wants to make certain that we are a valuable partner to the City Council. We didn't talk about a feasibility study, yet the Council chose to go forward. He is not questioning their right as a Council. He questions if we, as an EDA, are a genuine and a legitimate value to the Council and if we are not, let's recognize what we are in support to the Council, and not spend a lot of time talking about the what ifs. The second point he wanted to make - the vision statement; on our website, we define the purpose. Is that our mission statement? The third point, what he truly believes would be valuable for this EDA is to read Winter's job description and understand what it is you're doing. Butler talks about relationships and pounding on doors. Is that a function of your responsibility? He believes it would be of value to know what you do.

Davis addressed the water park question. It has been bounced around at the staff level. We are not going to do any further work on this until we receive direction from City Council. At the work meeting, it was discussed. We, as staff, requested City Council to give us direction. They directed staff to put together an RFP to see how much it would cost to do a feasibility study.

Butler said to Connor's point. It seems odd they are doing a feasibility study. This is an economic development idea. Davis said this has been talked about at EDA and City Council. We, as staff, are caught between things. If there was no interest in pursuing it, it will die. Connor said he appreciates what you are trying to do. Staff simply needs direction. He doesn't want to overreact. What we are doing is a work in progress and very committed and quite proud. Recognizing we are a work in progress, he thinks this conversation is a good example on 'Where do we fit in?' He doesn't want to stay here until 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. He wants to do something constructive with his time. We want to have dialogue if we are going to have discussions of value, so we can be of support and value to the Council and staff.

Moegerle wanted to know if Connor has watched the City Council meeting. Connor said yes, he believes he has. Bezanson said he hasn't had the opportunity to watch the City Council meeting. Could someone paraphrase it for him? Moegerle said there was some discussion by certain individuals that there needs to be a joint meeting of the City Council and EDA for a turf meeting. There was a rhetorical discussion of what the EDA is working on. There are individuals that believe the EDA is the idea engine for the City Council and others thought it wasn't that way. Butler said he is glad we are here to settle the mass confusion.

Connor said his comments were not driven by the discussions at the City Council meeting. Just in the last sixty seconds, this conversation supports the work in progress. There has to be dialogue. The question he raises on how the water park was part of the work meeting provided a dialogue. He is trying to learn and understand what we are going to do as a body that will support the City. He isn't upset because the City Council went forward on something the EDA chose not to take action on. He doesn't want to sit here and talk about ideas when things are a moot point.

Moegerle wanted to know what Connor's thoughts were on a future for the City. Connor

said months and months ago he suggested we hire an expert to help us understand who we want to attract. Moegerle asked, 'In addition to what Ady Voldedge did?' Connor said utilize the work that Ady Voldedge did, he doesn't want to be involved in micromanaging. It seems to him, this would be clearly be a function of what Winter should be doing. As an EDA we should take four steps back and listen and look at things from a broad perspective. He is frankly more interested in what you recommend, not what we think. He doesn't profess to know. He doesn't want to get too involved and give his input on what we need.

Moegerle said the more information the better. Connor said that is all. He respectfully asks, that sharing your job description with us that is simply intended to inform us. Winter said she is happy to send her job description. The City had a Planning Department before and Davis took care of economic development. When she was hired, she was hired to handle both. The City Administrator and Winter are meeting together with developers. Her job is to promote the city. In the form of new business, or different types of housing. It also means working with our existing business community. We need to foster our current businesses.

Connor said the website identifies the purpose of the EDA. Are you on board with that the statement? She is on board with it. Would you agree that is our mission statement? Winter said yes, it is certainly something that sums up what the EDA does. Connor said he would be interested in learning how you would describe the mission statement of the EDA. Winter said the EDA can be creative and innovative. We have to sustain the community. We have to be innovative in a different way, think outside the box. Connor asked if it is a fair statement to say that you would want to position yourself with the EDA, you drive that bus. You manage this EDA Commission to get what you want and are getting paid for results. How can we support you to get the results you need? Winter said she has been in both roles where the EDA chair drives the bus or the staff drives the bus. She is new and is trying to sort it out too. Connor said he recognizes she is new, and we all want to work together.

Lawrence said the water park issue has been floating around for over two years. It is not something that has been brought up quickly, and the staff needed some direction.

Connor said the issue of senior housing has been discussed in previous meetings. We have identified senior housing or more housing along Hwy 65. Winter said Anoka County has done a recent study. It was a comprehensive study of housing in Anoka County. She is going to review the study and will provide the EDA with a summary. Moegerle said she knows there has been research done by Anoka County. There was a need for senior housing. They did have some areas that had need for senior housing, but not since there were vacancies in Oak Grove, the Anoka HRA wouldn't undertake more projects.

Butler said the need for readily accessible services to the seniors in those developments; we have talked about that in the past. Davis said that is a good point. If you don't have certain types of public transportation, health care, and certain commercial opportunities. That is why Oak Grove might not be successful. The population of people over 62 is only 9% in East Bethel. Certain people have advocated that a building with 60 to 70 units would fill quickly in East Bethel. Butler said the counterpoint; if there is no senior housing available, the median age won't be there. Bezanson said you should amend your statement to quasi-public transportation.

Moegerle said that when we looked for a marketing consultant; there were four firms we interviewed. SBP group out of St. Paul, their big point was you need to create 'A Sense

of Place,' so you can call East Bethel home and be proud of it. If this is not a place that represents the essential part of East Bethel, we won't be anything more than 'the North Blaine'. It doesn't seem to be homey or what EB could be. For her, when she sees the vision, we need to focus on the rural amenities. There are people who say they are vacationing when they are here. The recreation destination is very compatible to what East Bethel is, with our natural resources.

Butler said that he was jumping ahead due to time. We have a number of things that are listed on the review. He knows that point three; we have dealt with to prepare a plan for businesses. He doesn't know the minutia on what the Council wants to delve into on SAC and WAC loan funds. In review of City Council, we are not moving forward on that point. It is frustrating to him, and doesn't understand what the hold up is. Is it a matter of lack of understanding, history, etc? Why is the Council not doing anything on it? It was an issue that was put to bed by the EDA. The City Council is beating it to death. Moegerle said this is the turf war. Butler said this is knowledge issue. We have much bigger fish to fry. Mayor said it can be difficult for people to understand. Davis said it would be discussed on Wednesday night. Moegerle said she is at a place in her life where she has too much time to read on EDA. She is deeply concerned about economic development in East Bethel. She subscribes to emails from a variety of places.

Conner said he appreciates the comment from Lawrence on the significant role of the EDA is to think outside the box. Connor said his statements make him realize he needs to reflect on his thoughts. Our issue with brainstorming, will it be on the agenda each month? It would be valuable to get a summary from Winter on where she is at. Where are we at? What have we brought forward? He will conclude by saying he senses that this brainstorming will be something that we have on the agenda each month.

Davis said he thinks senior housing is a high priority. It is not implementable or achievable unless we have stuff (transportation, retail, medical) to support them.

Bezanson said if there is not a non-profit that wants to do it, it is a dead issue. To cut to the chase, when Our Saviours feels there is an enough demand, it will happen. Butler said if you look at Wyoming, the Fairview Wyoming operation, within the 500 yards away, it is a four level structure with probably 50 units on each level. Those two definitely go hand in hand.

Moegerle said all of this builds upon itself. While we are on the ground floor, we need to bring in new people like John and say, 'This is where we have gone. Let's move forward.' She would like to see us moving forward a lot faster.

Bezanson motioned he is not in favor of revising, and spending time and resources on a new city logo. Butler seconded. Discussion: Connor supports that. Moegerle does not support it. All in favor, motion carries (Moegerle opposed.)

Winter said the vision for the EDA is to be progressive, responsible and sustainable. That means what Butler talked about. Responsive – customer service. Sustainable – social, economic and environment. It is balancing the needs of the community. The things that we are doing with the MIDS will really help. This is what her vision is for the EDA.

Other Reports

Lawrence said he thinks the EDA is on a good track. He is excited to hear about the Anoka County vision of housing. He would not be supportive of senior housing. He is looking for younger bodies.

Davis said Met Council park recreation and natural resources persons met with the City to

be discussing how to obtain Legacy Funds. Met Council administers those for proposed regional trails. Met Council doesn't administer the grant program. They distribute money to the County, and to be eligible, we have to be on the County's Master Plan. We have a meeting with the County on Thursday night to remedy the plan. We did talk to Met Council on transportation. Anoka County was doing a three-year study on busing they might take over if successful. We also did talk to them about partnering with them on different areas. Butler asked if there is any possibility on trails Legacy Funds to get Anoka County Parks people to get them in tune with other counties' trails, such as Hennepin County, or Washington County. What we had proposed would link Linwood, Island Lake and Lino Lakes trails that go into Ramsey County. If we tied into Wyoming, it would tie into the trail to North Branch and White Bear Lake. Moegerle said she also talked to the Mayor from Oak Grove.

Moegerle said on Saturday she had a meeting with State Senator Michelle Benson. She sent her an email on what she sent to the Met Council for the 1/4 % sales tax. She believes it is tomorrow there will be a conference on transit tax. She also talked to her about legislation that would limit the actions of a lame duck council.

Butler said the topic of the tax: he did speak with the County Commissioners, Robin West and Anoka County withdrawing from the vote that was taken a few years back. Once you are in the taxing district it is hard to get out of it. Butler said it was put to the counties a few years ago, and Carver and Washington opted out. Now they are getting a benefit and aren't part of the district.

Butler said again, back to City Council, Planning and Zoning and EDA both suggested that summary minutes were the way to go. Moegerle said she asked for a cost analysis for summary minutes. The difference is \$5,000 to \$6,000 a year. He thinks he wants it on the record that the EDA is for summary minutes versus verbatim minutes. It doesn't make any sense.

Davis said we are currently not in the metro taxing district. Our tax difference is part of the metro taxing district. Ham Lake, Oak Grove, St. Francis, Bethel, etc are not part of it.

Adjourn

Conner made a motion to adjourn the Economic Development Authority meeting at 8:45 p.m. Lawrence seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jill Anderson
Recording Secretary