

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA) conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, January 10, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Member John LeTourneau
 Member Wayne Skaff
 Member Jim Steffen (arrived at 7:35 a.m.) – Elected Chair 1/10/13
 Member Kristine Williams

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Patrick Brama, Management Analyst
 Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator
 Colleen Lasher, Human Resources Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Riley called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Chairperson Riley noted the addition of agenda item 4.07 – EDA staff position discussion.

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Williams, to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members Skaff, Williams, and LeTourneau.
Voting No: None. Absent: Member Steffen.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated December 13, 2012

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Skaff, to approve the minutes dated December 13, 2012.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members LeTourneau, Skaff, and Williams.
Voting No: None. Absent: Member Steffen.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Election of Officers

Management Analyst Brama stated the EDA is comprised of five at-large members and two members appointed by the City Council and the City Council recently appointed Councilmembers LeTourneau and Riley to the EDA, resulting in two at-large vacancies on the EDA which will be filled in April by City Council appointment.

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to elect Jim Steffen as Chairperson of the EDA.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members Skaff, LeTourneau, Steffen, and Williams. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Motion by Member Williams, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to re-elect Wayne Skaff as Vice Chair/Treasurer of the EDA.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members Williams, LeTourneau, Skaff, and Steffen. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Chairperson Steffen then presided over the remainder of the meeting.

4.02: Discuss Future Land Use Options for the General Business District Node at 167th Avenue and Trunk Highway (TH) 47

Management Analyst Brama stated this property has struggled to remain economically viable and the City has conducted a number of studies in the past including a TIF study. He indicated the City has been contacted regarding the property at 6001 167th Avenue and one user has expressed interest in establishing a gun range/archery range on the site; staff will be meeting with this user on January 11th. He stated the other user has expressed interest in establishing a metal and/or clothing recycling facility on this site. He noted the City also received an inquiry from the property owner regarding a possible rezoning which, by law, would require the neighboring properties to be rezoned. He advised the gun range/archery range and recycling facility would require a zoning amendment and these uses cannot be conditional uses. He stated the City was also approached about the property at 5909 167th Avenue for a possible day care center and this use is allowed under existing City Code. He stated the Planning Commission and City Council will be reviewing this property from a zoning perspective to determine whether to rezone this node and the surrounding properties or whether to permit an overlay district. He requested input regarding the EDA's role in this matter as outlined in the staff report.

Member LeTourneau stated he was pleased to see this item on the agenda and encouraged the EDA to carefully review the issue and resist doing something that is reactionary versus visionary. He indicated he would like to see further efforts on the master planning aspect of this rather than introduce uses to the site that would require zoning changes.

Chairperson Steffen requested further information regarding staff's recommendation.

Management Analyst Brama explained that any master planning effort would be coordinated by the Planning Division and reviewed by the Planning Commission/City Council and the EDA

would remain in a supportive role. He added that because users have come forward expressing an interest in the property, it is the responsibility of the Planning Division to make a recommendation regarding the potential uses.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the Planning Commission and City Council would review any rezoning request and the EDA would not be involved in the rezoning request. He noted the EDA can recommend that the current zoning not be changed until a Comprehensive Plan is completed.

Member Riley stated his agreement with staff's recommendation and felt the proposed uses would help make the site economically viable.

Member Williams agreed with the recommendation to play a supportive role but expressed concern about the proposed uses adding that the proposed recycling center is not consistent with the vision previously discussed for this node and is not consistent with the retail uses located across the street. She was concerned about the Planning Commission making a decision on this node without the EDA weighing in on the matter or at least providing input as to why the EDA does not feel the uses are consistent with the vision for this site.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed uses and the EDA's continuing role in the development of this node.

Chairperson Steffen expressed concern regarding a day care center next to a gun range.

Member Riley stated the City should make this property a priority to make it economically viable and stressed the importance of maintaining flexibility and not rezoning the property to anything that would limit the City in the future.

Member Williams stated the City should remain cognizant of the significant investment by the property owner across the street and felt the EDA should support the current zoning and any retail uses that comply with current zoning. She also felt the EDA should state it does not support light industrial on the site. She added the market has not supported redevelopment on this site until recently and suggested the EDA focus on comprehensive planning efforts in 2013.

Management Analyst Brama advised that staff will prepare a summary of the EDA's comments and concerns for presentation to the Planning Commission and City Council which indicates that the EDA is interested in the long term viability of this commercial node and is interested in what happens with the existing users as well as the overall use of the site but is concerned about the proposed uses and proposed rezoning request.

4.03: 2013 Annual EDA Business Expo and Consideration of Annual Outdoor Expo/Event (RV)

Management Analyst Brama explained that planning is underway for the Annual Business Expo scheduled for May 4, 2013, at the Fountains of Ramsey. He stated that staff contacted the local RV dealerships about joining this expo and all of the RV dealerships indicated they were interested; since that time, the RV dealerships have proposed a separate event that would allow the dealerships to remain at their locations and presented a draft of a proposed "Great Outdoors

Sale Extravaganza of Ramsey.” He reviewed costs and staffing resources needed for an additional event and requested input from the EDA regarding adding another event as requested by the RV dealerships.

Member Skaff noted it was the EDA’s intention to invite the RV dealerships to the annual business expo to provide the RV dealerships with exposure to their businesses. He stated he would be okay with the RV dealerships bringing in a couple of their units to the business expo and the City could offer a map of the RV dealership locations to people attending the expo.

Chairperson Steffen agreed and stated he would prefer that the City move forward with the business expo and invite the RV dealerships to participate.

Member Riley agreed and stated he would encourage the RV dealerships to hold their own outdoor sale event. He suggested that the City continue to work with the RV dealerships on promoting their dealerships at the business expo.

It was the consensus of the EDA to direct staff to move forward with the traditional business expo.

4.04: Business Retention Program Update

Management Analyst Brama advised that 17 business visits have been completed and three business visits are scheduled for today, including Life Fitness, Lakes Region RV, and Arrow Components Corp. He indicated that a summary of the meetings will be contained in the February EDA agenda.

4.05: Updates: Old City Hall Development (data center), Nordvick Property Demolition, Kuro Fitness RLF, 6701 Highway 10, Windsorwood Sale, 8019 146th Ave.

Management Analyst Brama advised that a change order request will be submitted for the Nordvick property demolition for removal of an oil separation tank. He stated that further details regarding the change order will be provided at a later date. He advised that the shovel ready application for the old City Hall site will be submitted next week. He added that the cost-benefit analysis for this site will be presented in February.

4.06: Prospect Update

This item was noted but not discussed.

4.07: EDA Staff Position Discussion

Human Resources Manager Lasher presented the draft job description for the EDA staff position.

City Administrator Ulrich stated one of the primary changes to the job description from the former position includes the requirement for real estate expertise.

Member Riley indicated he had some suggested revisions and would provide them to staff.

Human Resources Manager Lasher stated that staff hopes to post the position by February 4th with an early May hire date. She indicated that City policy allows the City Administrator to make the decision whether to post the position internally prior to posting the position externally and it is recommended that the City use one recruitment period and invite internal applicants to apply if interested. She stated that she would be conducting interviews along with City Administrator Ulrich and Development Services Manager Gladhill. She added that second round interviews may include City Councilmembers if desired by the City Council.

Chairperson Steffen stated he would prefer to have Councilmembers included in the interviews.

Human Resources Manager Lasher invited the EDA members to forward any comments or questions regarding the job description and stated the City will advertise through the EDA Association, City website, League of Minnesota Cities, cable TV, and City email notifications.

5. Member/Staff Input

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the City Council approved the hiring of an organizational assessment consultant and the EDA members will be contacted to obtain input on the survey. He advised that the City will hold a joint City Council meeting with the City of Anoka on March 11th to discuss Highway 10 and other mutual issues. He also advised that the Wiser Choice property was on the HRA agenda this week and was continued to the January 22nd meeting after further follow-up by staff. He stated that Riverdale Drive is moving forward and a feasibility study was presented to the City Council.

Chairperson Steffen stated he visited Kuro Fitness on Saturday and they were getting ready to open on Monday.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Steffen, Members Skaff, LeTourneau, Riley, and Williams. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich, City Administrator

ATTEST:

Patrick Brama, Management Analyst

Draft by Barbara Hughes (*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*)