

**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, December 13, 2012, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Chris Riley  
                          Member John LeTourneau  
                          Member Colin McGlone  
                          Member Wayne Skaff  
                          Member Jim Steffen  
                          Member Kristine Williams

Members Absent:     Member Jeffrey Wise

Also Present:         Patrick Brama, Management Analyst  
                          Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to approve the agenda.

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

**3.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**3.01:   Approve Meeting Minutes Dated November 8, 2012**

Motion by Member Steffen, seconded by Member Williams, to approve the minutes dated November 8, 2012.

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

**4.     EDA BUSINESS**

**4.01:   Consider Proposal – Hwy 47 and CSAH 116 Intersection Study**

City Administrator Ulrich stated a proposal was received for an engineering study on the intersection of Highway 47 and CSAH 116 in light of Anoka County's policy of closing down access points at intersections and concerns expressed by local businesses of having their access closed. He stated the City reached agreement with the County that if open median cuts or additional access cuts are to be considered, an engineering study is needed to determine that traffic can be accommodated and businesses kept open. He advised the City received a proposal from WSB & Associates for approximately \$24,000 to study the intersection and noted that the City of Anoka would pay for half of the cost of the study. He stated the City Council reviewed the proposal on December 11, 2012, and voiced concern primarily regarding the potential that Mn/DOT might require the closure of additional access points. He stated the City Council referenced in particular the access at 142<sup>nd</sup> Street, which intersects with a State Highway and questioned the need to spend money on this study. He indicated the City Council did not approve the study and directed staff to meet with Mn/DOT to discuss the possibility of additional access closures. He also recommended that the EDA take no action on this item today.

Member McGlone stated his opinion that this issue should be addressed at the legislative level and did not feel the City should spend money on an engineering study.

Motion by Member Williams, seconded by Member Skaff, to take no action regarding the proposed engineering study pending further action by the City Council.

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

#### **4.02: Business Retention Program Update**

Management Analyst Brama explained that staff compiled a list of 50 businesses and approximately 25 businesses responded that they were interested in a visit with City staff. He stated that 14 business visits have been completed, four visits are currently scheduled, and 2-5 visits are pending. He indicated that overall, the visits were positive and well received and a number of businesses stated their appreciation for this initiative by the EDA. He noted that a number of businesses have asked to keep their information confidential; as a result, the monthly written update provided to the EDA will not contain public information. He indicated that three businesses have expressed an interest in expanding in the City and 14 businesses indicated they expect to expand their business in the coming years. He stated that a lot of follow-up was requested from the businesses and staff will continue working with the businesses to address their concerns and answer their questions. He stated after all the initial visits are completed, staff will provide the EDA with an executive report. He reminded the EDA about the Life Fitness tour and business visit on Thursday, January 10, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. and encouraged the EDA to attend. He added that the EDA is welcome to attend any of the business visits.

Member Skaff advised he attended the business visit at Allina and Allina representatives indicated they have an issue with their building's signage on Ramsey Boulevard and Sunwood. He stated Allina has posted a 4x4 banner in their lawn because the building has no signage on that corner. He indicated they talked about how to help them increase their visibility and the Allina representative expressed gratitude for meeting with them.

Member McGlone stated the issue at this location is that the switchboxes were installed so close to the corner of the property and suggested allowing Allina to have signage on the top of its building facing Ramsey Boulevard and Sunwood.

Member LeTourneau thanked Management Analyst Brama for his efforts and felt this process was going well.

Member Steffen asked if the City received any negative feedback or criticism.

Management Analyst Brama replied there were comments received regarding the Flaherty and Collins project, as well as the City's involvement in The COR, City politics, and Highway 10. He added the overall process has been positive and has helped build respect and mend relationships.

City Administrator Ulrich thanked Management Analyst Brama for his leadership role on this project.

Management Analyst Brama stated the executive report will include recommendations based on the comments heard from local businesses as to how the City might make changes to accommodate those comments and requests.

**4.03: Updates: Fall Networking Event, 167/47 Node, Old City Hall Development, Nordvick Property Demolition, Kuro Fitness RLF, 6745 Highway 10, CDBG Opportunity, EDA Board Structure/Timeline, Pro Power Sports Property, 8019 146<sup>th</sup> Ave.**

Management Analyst Brama reported the Fall Networking Event on November 29<sup>th</sup> was attended by 60 people and was a positive event with a lot of good feedback received and he felt it was worthwhile to continue holding the event. He reported that interest by potential users has been received for the commercial node at 167/47 and staff has been in discussion with one property owner about rezoning as a solution to make this property economically viable. He added an update will be provided to the EDA in January. He reported that staff is moving forward on obtaining shovel ready certification for the Old City Hall site and staff is also continuing its planning efforts for different scenarios as well as a review of the effects on neighboring properties. He reported that progress continues on the demolition of the Nordvick property and staff is waiting for a final report and updates will be provided in January. He reported that the RLF for Kuro Fitness was approved in November and staff is waiting for the business to open in order to close on the loan. He reported that staff is prioritizing opportunities for applying for CDBG grants for a local project in 2013 and this will be wrapped in with the EDA's work plan process with further details provided as the EDA completes its work plan. He reported that a Chair and Vice Chair for the EDA will be elected in January and staff will be looking for recommendations from the EDA. He stated the City Council representatives on the EDA will be appointed in January and the two open seats will be filled in April. He reported that the Pro Power Sports building was recently sold to Mr. Todd Amar who is the main tenant in the

building. He stated the City recently demolished the property located adjacent to the EDA property known as the Schmidtbauer property, which is part of the Armstrong realignment.

Management Analyst Brama suggested holding the 2013 business expo on Saturday, May 11, 2013.

Member Skaff noted that that weekend is the fishing opener and suggested holding the annual business expo on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Management Analyst Brama agreed to schedule the 2013 business expo on Saturday, May 4, 2013.

Member Skaff requested an update on the COR.

City Administrator Ulrich advised that both McDonalds and SuperAmerica are planning to begin construction in the spring and are moving through the final document phases. He also advised that the Ramsey Raceway at the corner of Armstrong and Highway 10 requested an amendment to the lease to coincide with its interim use permits and wanted to eliminate the early-out clause. He explained the discussion held at the City Council regarding the early-out clause and stated the road is the driving factor; the City Council postponed action on this item until January.

City Administrator Ulrich provided an update regarding rail ridership and stated the average ridership is 260/day, which exceeds the 230/day bus ridership at this station. He also provided an update regarding a virtual library facility proposed by the County Library system that would be housed at City Hall. He stated services would include book checkout and drop-off and a vending machine where people could download books. He stated this virtual library system would expand the library's reach and provide an additional level of service to the City's customers.

Member Skaff encouraged staff to continue to press legislators regarding the Highway 10 issues.

City Administrator Ulrich indicated there was a lot of interest expressed at the recent meeting with legislators in doing something with Highway 10 and legislation was authored to provide \$17 million for the Armstrong interchange project. He added that Mn/DOT is doing a study that will identify the more immediate safety concerns.

Member Steffen requested an update regarding a potential senior housing project in the COR.

City Administrator Ulrich advised the parties have until December 15 to let the City know which site they are choosing, either the site on the corner of Ramsey Boulevard and CSAH 116 or a site located on the interior of The COR near Center Street. He stated the development on the north side of Bunker Lake Boulevard north of The COR is scheduled for spring construction. He reported the City received a \$600,000 grant from the Met Council for construction of Center Street as well as a \$100,000 grant to plan for walkways and pedestrian access across Highway 10 to connect to the rail station. He added the Diamonds property and Hope Fellowship property have been put under contract to purchase which will result in one consolidated parcel of land.

#### **4.04: Prospect Update**

Management Analyst Brama stated a manufacturing business ("Alpha") is considering a large expansion within Ramsey and is considered a strong prospect with decisions made over the next year. He stated an industrial supply business ("Beta") with two locations in the City is looking for an additional 5,000 square feet for a specialized portion of its business. He stated a manufacturing business ("Charlie") is looking for an additional 10,000 square feet but is considered a weak prospect. He stated a data center business ("Delta") under consideration for the old municipal center is considered a weak prospect. He added the City is working through Connexus on this prospect. He stated there are three additional prospects that the City has met with but staff has not heard back from any of these prospects.

#### **5. Member/Staff Input**

Member Steffen requested an update regarding a meeting with local recreational vehicle dealers to plan the expo.

Management Analyst Brama stated that a meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Member Steffen asked if the January agenda will include the hiring of an economic development manager.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that staff hopes to have a strategic planning session with the City Council during the first part of January to confirm strategic direction, staffing, and tasks. He stated that the roles and responsibilities of an economic development staff person is not yet known but remains a top priority.

Member Steffen thanked Chairperson Riley for his many years of service on the EDA.

#### **6. Adjournment**

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

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

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kurtis G. Ulrich, City Administrator

**ATTEST:**

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Patrick Brama, Management Analyst

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