

**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, November 14, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Jim Steffen  
                          Member Philip Brunt  
                          Member Glen Hardin  
                          Member Mark Kuzma, Alternate  
                          Member Wayne Skaff  
                          Member Kristine Williams

Members Absent:     Member John LeTourneau  
                          Member Chris Riley

Also Present:        Patrick Brama, Assistant to the City Administrator  
                          Tim Gladhill, Development Services Manager

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Steffen called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

**2.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Chairperson Steffen stated that agenda item 3 (approve minutes) has been removed from the agenda because the minutes were not included in the agenda.

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Hardin, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Steffen, Members Skaff, Hardin, Brunt, Kuzma, and Williams. Voting No: None. Absent: Members LeTourneau and Riley.

**3.     APPROVE MINUTES**

This item was removed from the agenda.

**4.     EDA BUSINESS**

**4.01:   Annual Fall Networking Event**

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama stated that the annual fall networking event is scheduled for November 21<sup>st</sup> at the Municipal Center. He advised that a representative from Vision Ease will provide the keynote and there will also be a panel of City officials. He reported that 70 RSVPs have been received to date and the EDA has allocated \$1,500 for this event.

#### **4.02: Discuss 'Statement of Goals' for the Area near the 167<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Saint Franchise Boulevard (TH 47)**

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama presented the Statement of Goals and stated the document has now been reviewed by the Planning Commission and has gone through a public input process. He provided a brief historical background regarding this commercial node and stated the EDA, Planning Commission, and City Council have identified this area as a priority and the Statement of Goals is intended to guide the City's participation in the redevelopment of this node. He reviewed the Statement of Goals parameters and stated the document indicates the City is not interested in supporting a purchase of property to redevelop the site but would facilitate a marketing effort if the property owners were interested. He noted this language is consistent with the EDA's earlier direction and has not been changed. He explained that the Planning Commission revised the language regarding zoning to indicate the Planning Commission would support reviewing all inquiries for potential land use changes. He stated the document outlines the financial assistance tools available for addressing the blighted properties on the north side and the language has been revised to state that a land write down would only be considered if the blighted properties were addressed. He advised the City was requested to commit funding to install a pedestrian underpass in order to increase public safety in this area, however, the City would not commit a dollar amount or funding source to address that pedestrian underpass; rather, the City would consider a specific request at the time a proposal is submitted and if the City wanted to participate, potential funding sources have been listed in the document, including the possibility of using park and trail dedication fees. He stated the City was also requested to extend the sanitary sewer line to this area and the Statement of Goals indicates the City is not willing to fully fund a special sanitary line for this node, however if the property owner was willing to share the cost, the City would be willing to consider this depending on the number of hookups. He advised the City's comprehensive sewer and water plan identifies where the City's infrastructures will extend and indicated the cost of a special trunk line in this area is cost prohibitive and the number of hookups is not enough to justify extending the line. He reported that a public input process for the general public took place on September 26, 2013, and 232 people were invited and approximately 26 people participated in the session.

Chairperson Steffen requested an update on the City's discussions with the golf course.

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama advised the golf course is waiting for the City to complete the Statement of Goals. He stated that Rum River Hills is not planning to act as the developer and would be the landowner, adding that if and when Rum River Hills steps forward, the developer would negotiate with the City, including funding for the trunk line.

Chairperson Steffen stated that one of the biggest things that has happened in this node is the sale of the Super Valu building and commented that the area looks much better now that the new owner has been putting some money into the project.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the new owner has a prospective tenant and the City is anticipating a land use application will be submitted in the near future and agreed to update the EDA when more information is known.

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Brunt, to approve the Statement of Goals as presented.

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama requested the motion be amended to authorize staff to make some edits to the Statement of Goals to address some inconsistencies in the document.

Member Skaff agreed to the friendly amendment. Member Brunt seconded the friendly amendment.

Member Williams stated that the document talks about blighted properties and questioned whether the City should have an opportunity to amend the Statement of Goals in the future if it is determined that improvements have been made to some of the blighted areas which may impact the City's willingness to provide assistance.

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama stated the document states that the City Council is the ultimate decision maker and the document does not commit or preclude the City Council from doing anything and the City Council retains discretion to change the policy. He suggested that the EDA revisit the Statement of Goals in approximately six months.

Member Hardin suggested that the second paragraph of the Background section on the first page be revised to delete the reference to "market failure" because of the negative connotation. He also asked if there was a conflict between the vision regarding apartments and the public's undesired uses that included apartments.

Member Skaff suggested "market failure" be replaced with "market challenges."

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama agreed to revise this section of the document. He also agreed to revise the document to reflect the strong public sentiment against apartments and delete the reference to high density in the vision portion of the document.

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

Member Hardin requested information about how many more units would be needed to make this area viable as a retail node or to entice a developer to come into the area.

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama stated that staff will look into Member Hardin's request and report back at the next meeting.

#### **4.03: EDA Updates**

Assistant to the City Administrator Brama reported that the first meeting of the study group regarding the old municipal center site was held on November 4<sup>th</sup> and the process should be concluded in February. He advised that Molin Concrete will be reopening operations in the City and has indicated they are considering a significant expansion next year that would double the size of their facility. He stated that Cullinan Rigging completed its 45,000 square foot expansion this summer and Diamond Graphics is working on its 30,000 square foot expansion. He reported

the City Council approved the hiring of Ted LeFrance as the new Economic Development Manager and Mr. LeFrance will attend the next EDA meeting as well as the fall networking event. He stated the City will be holding a public input session on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. regarding potential future land uses in the business park. He advised the City adopted a new RFQ process to solicit a preferred real estate broker to list City-owned properties and responses are expected the last week of November with a selection made in December. He stated the City has been working with the Met Council on the population and employment forecast and providing comment to the Met Council on this forecast.

Chairperson Steffen requested an update regarding McDonalds and The Residence at the COR.

Development Services Manager Gladhill indicated the City Council approved amended contracts between the HRA and McDonalds at its November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and construction will begin in spring 2014. He reported that Residence at the COR staff indicated they have 60 signed leases out of 230 units, adding City staff did not verify this information. He added that given the entire project was not done until recently, that number should increase in the spring of 2014.

Chairperson Steffen urged the City to monitor this project since it includes City funding and to make sure a system is in place for monitoring the City's payback.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the Finance Director is monitoring those timelines and key milestones were written into the development agreement.

Chairperson Steffen stated he has been asked about this project by residents, including how the project is working and when the City will be paid and requested that staff provide periodic updates to the EDA.

## **5. MEMBER/STAFF INPUT**

Member Skaff announced that the first service at Northgate Church will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. He stated that Northern Starz Theatre Company will be putting on a performance of "A Christmas Carol" on December 13, 14, and 15<sup>th</sup>. He invited the EDA members to an open house on Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kurtis G. Ulrich, City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Patrick Brama, Assistant to the City Administrator

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