

**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, March 8, 2018, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Jim Steffen
 Member Brian Burandt
 Member Glen Hardin
 Member Dominic Kanaventi
 Member John LeTourneau
 Member Chris Riley

Members Absent: Member Wayne Skaff

Also Present: Patrick Brama, Econ. Dev. Mgr/Assistant City Administrator
 Tim Gladhill, Community Development Director
 Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Steffen called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Member Hardin, seconded by Member Burandt, to approve the agenda.

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

3. APPROVE MINUTES

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Hardin, to approve the January 11, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

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

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Burandt, to approve the January 25, 2018, special meeting minutes as presented.

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

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Presentation: Open to Business Program Update Presented by Kathleen DuChene

Kathleen DuChene, Open to Business, provided background information on the program which provides technical advice to help entrepreneurs to establish and grow their businesses. She provided the statistics from the program in 2017. She stated that almost \$1,000,000 in loan funds were already approved in the first quarter of 2018. She advised that six businesses in Anoka County received loans through the program in 2017, which makes up 28 percent of the loan funds for 2017. She noted that one Ramsey business received loan funds in 2017 to assist in their expansion and fill a gap in funding. She advised that more than half of the businesses are in the service industry and most of the other businesses are within the retail and food industry. She encouraged the City to continue to market the program, noting that the marketing helps to make businesses owners aware of the assistance the program can provide. She provided examples of requests that she receives and assistance that she is able to provide, noting that she is also able to provide microgrants in some instances in order to help people launch their businesses. She noted that two Ramsey businesses presented at the networking and resources event during 2017.

Chairperson Steffen asked for additional details on two numbers listed in the report.

Ms. DuChene replied that the first number is the number of people interested in opening businesses in Ramsey and the second number is related to the number of Ramsey residents interested in opening businesses, inside or outside of Ramsey.

Member Hardin asked the primary sources for the loans that the organization offers.

Ms. DuChene replied that the program receives funding from outside the McKnight Foundation, earned interest on loans, borrowed money through loans from banks, and DEED.

Chairperson Steffen asked if Ms. DuChene is still keeping hours at the Ramsey City Hall.

Ms. DuChene replied that she is phasing out the office hours at city halls, as she was keeping hours at many different city halls. She stated that she can meet with people at Anoka County, at their business, at a coffee shop, or wherever is convenient.

Member Hardin asked for information on the organizational structure of the organization.

Ms. DuChene replied that she works for a nonprofit and there is a Board of Directors made up primarily of community development individuals. She stated that the staff is composed of 16 members, most involved with Open to Business while about three or four members are working with affordable housing.

Chairperson Steffen thanked Ms. DuChene for the update and noted that interested residents can find out more information at www.opentobusinessmn.org.

4.02: Maple Investments LLC (Sharp and Associates) Purchase Agreement (Portions of this case may be closed to the public)

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

Dennis Sharp, Sharp and Associates, stated that the rental space available to small businesses in this area are almost full and therefore it is time to look at building additional space. He stated that all of his buildings have been on speculation and that has worked out well. He stated that he has looked at options for the lot in the past, but they have not been able to find a successful fit. He believed that this would be a good fit and would provide more rental space for tenants. He stated that this building would house up to five tenants with about 2,000 square feet each. He noted that tenants could grow to larger sizes and occupy more than one space if necessary.

Member Riley asked if this plan rendering would account for stormwater management on site.

Mr. Sharp replied that the civil engineer has submitted plans to the engineering department for review. He confirmed that they are attempting to infiltrate as much water as possible.

Member LeTourneau referenced the listing price and the range, asking where this offer falls within the City's range.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama provided the listing price and noted that the City has an accepted deal range that identifies a high and low expected price. He stated that this offer price is within the higher end of the adopted deal range.

Chairperson Steffen stated that he remembers when the City took over this property in 2006 and believed that there was a blighted building on the site. He stated that in his opinion this would be a great opportunity to improve that parcel and get it back on the tax roll.

Member LeTourneau thanked Mr. Sharp for his ability to take remnant parcels and add development for small businesses. He stated that this is a great project and appreciated Mr. Sharp coming forward.

Member Riley agreed that this is a great project and thanked Mr. Sharp for continuing to provide great opportunities within Ramsey.

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Hardin, to approve the purchase agreement between the City of Ramsey and Maple Investments LLC for 0.95 Acres of City-owned land.

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

4.03: Review Updated Draft Economic Development Chapter of Comprehensive Plan

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report.

Chairperson Steffen referenced the Rum River Hills section and noted that perhaps that section was slimmed down a bit too far. He suggested including a map.

Community Development Director Gladhill agreed that a map identifying the residential and retail opportunities would be helpful.

Member Riley asked why only one specific node/project is highlighted on the Rum River Hills section and asked if there should be additional nodes highlighted.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that this node/project was highlighted to show the work of the EDA. He noted that if additional retail nodes are desired to be highlighted, staff can attempt to add to that.

Member LeTourneau stated that if the plan is going to highlight nodes, perhaps the node at 167th and CR 47 should be identified and included.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that was the attempt in identifying the Rum River Hills area rather than calling it the 167th and CR 47 node.

Chairperson Steffen stated that Rum River Hills is the name of the section while the retail node is mentioned. He agreed that perhaps the 167th and CR 47 node is not the most attractive name.

Member Riley stated that because this is a 20-year planning document, he would like to see staff identify additional retail nodes included so that it does not show that this node is the only focus for the next 20 years.

Chairperson Steffen noted that The COR and the industrial park are also highlighted but agreed that additional retail node opportunities could be included.

Community Development Director welcomed input from the Members on future retail nodes that should be included and noted that Members can send that information to City staff.

Member Riley noted that although schools are important, perhaps including that item on the Comprehensive Plan is not the right place as that item is more under the control of the School District rather than the City.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that he can forward that comment to the Steering Committee, Planning Commission and City Council for consideration. He explained that education was a major theme that continued to come up in several community events and was identified as a key pillar for the community.

Member Kanaventi referenced the physical barriers identified and asked if there are plans to overcome those barriers.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that the plan does identify the river as a physical barrier. He noted that although the river crossing is identified in the plan, it is not likely to occur in the life of this rendition of the plan. He noted that the City's focus at this time is Highway 10, while Dayton's key focus is the Brockton interchange at 94. He explained that once those elements are completed, the cities could then work together to gain the support that would be needed for the Mississippi River crossing.

Member Burandt asked why the old Diamonds site was not included in the plan as a large tract.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that the large parcels could be identified for industrial use. He stated that they are planning to complete the same exercise for retail opportunities, which would include the old Diamonds property.

4.04: 2018 Business of the Year

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

Motion by Member Burandt, seconded by Chairperson Steffen, to select Zero Zone as the 2018 Ramsey EDA Business of the Year.

Further discussion: Member LeTourneau stated that Zero Zone is an excellent community partner that is doing great things. He stated that the business has been in Ramsey for many years and is committed to staying in Ramsey with a healthy employment base. He encouraged the group to continue to look at other local businesses to recognize in the future.

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

Chairperson Steffen noted that there is a list of 17 potential businesses on the long list and asked for direction on moving two businesses to the smaller list.

Member Hardin asked if the list of questions has been sent to all the businesses.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama explained that the long list is developed based on recommendations from EDA Members. He stated that once businesses are selected for the short list, staff sends out the interview questions.

Member Hardin suggested Anderson Dahlen and Panther Precision.

Chairperson Steffen agreed that Panther Precision was also going to be his suggestion.

Member LeTourneau suggested Do All Printing.

Chairperson Steffen confirmed that those three businesses could be added to the short list for consideration the next year.

It was the consensus of the EDA to move Anderson Dahlen, Panther Precision and Do All Printing to the short list for consideration next year.

4.05: Select Dates for Remaining 2018 EDA Events

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

The EDA confirmed the dates as presented.

4.05: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Hardin, to appoint Jim Steffen as Chairperson and Brian Burandt as the Vice Chairperson of the Economic Development Authority through March 31, 2019.

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

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

5.01: Business Retention and Expansion

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama reviewed the staff report. He noted that the intent is to have this case remain on future agendas to provide monthly updates.

5.02: Staff Update

The EDA reviewed the Staff Update.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama provided an update on recent development activity.

City Administrator Ulrich provided an update on the Day at the Capital sponsored by North Metro Mayors Association, which took place the previous day. He noted that he ensured that the representatives for Ramsey were aware of the items included on the City's legislative platform.

Chairperson Steffen stated that it is his understanding that Adrenaline Sports is open, or mostly open. He asked if there are plans for a grand opening.

Member Hardin stated that he peeked his head in the previous day and it looks very nice. He stated that on the next agenda he would like to see a case related to the land that the School District purchased and the zoning for the surrounding area.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that Adrenaline Sports has stated that members of the public are welcome to see the building and noted that there are open hours posted on the business's website.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Hardin, seconded by Member Burandt, to adjourn the meeting.

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

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Patrick Brama
Econ. Dev. Mgr/Assistant City Administrator

Draft by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.