



RESCHEDULED MEETING

MINUTES

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Davis Joint Unified School District Administration Building

East Conference Room, 526 B Street

Monday August 31, 2009

7:00 PM

Commission Members: Anthony Costello, Chair, Greg Phister, Robert Agee, Sydney Vergis, Tobin Richardson, Joe Hruban, Michael Faust, Dave Robert (Alternate),
(Finance and Budget Commission Liaison Donald Palm)

City Council Liaisons: Ruth Asmundson, Don Saylor (Alternate)

City Staff: Sarah Worley, Economic Development Coordinator
Brian Abbanat, Economic Development Specialist

Amount of time for each item is approximate and subject to change.

1. Determination of Quorum and Seating of Alternates

Quorum determined @ 7:04 p.m.

Absent: Phister, Robert

Liaison Absences: Palm, Asmundson, Saylor

2. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved @ 7:05 p.m.

3. Public Comment (5 min)

This is the time for the public to address the Commission on matters not listed on the agenda. Presentation time will be at the discretion of the Chairperson.

No public comment

4. Approval of Minutes (2 min)

- July 27, 2009

Minutes approved @ 7:06 p.m.

5. Chamber Quarterly Update (15 min)

Christi Skibbins cited Chamber priorities. Three issues of concern:

1. 5th Street road configuration. Concerned the road diet will choke access. Safety concerns for cyclists. Deliveries will be affected downtown and affect willingness to come downtown from the west side of town. Chamber is opposed to reconfiguring 5th Street.

Discussion followed regarding alternative approaches to downtown and the extent to which traffic improves or declines. Comments regarding the traffic study and how the traffic study is approached followed.

2. Second issue of concern is Measure J. Chamber Subcommittee drafted a suggested change approved by board last week:
3. Third issue is Parlin Wildhorse Ranch project. Chamber received a presentation from Parlin seeking endorsement for project. Chamber has not taken a position yet but will discuss.

Green aspect is compelling, low income housing on Covell, and aesthetics, parking, were all considered intriguing.

Chamber priorities: Very happy about Westlake grocery store, we're happy for the neighborhood.

During the past year, the Chamber is trying to add a lot of value to the membership. Trying to increase the networking opportunities. Added another mixer, 4th Wednesdays in the morning that's doing very well, serving a whole different group of people with very little crossover from the afternoon mixer. More members can now host a mixer that previously could not due to the morning time.

Chamber is also adding new member orientations in September occurring on the 3rd Wednesday of month, two different times to get people there. First will be September 16th.

Chamber is having a workshop on how to put together a successful booth at Celebrate Davis

Chamber has upgraded the newsletter, website, and are now on Facebook. Networking with peer organizations has increased.

We've been doing business outreach with City staff and other city affiliates regarding what the City and Chamber can do to help them.

Commissioner question regarding coordination between BEDC-initiated outreach and the Chamber. Staff confirmed coordination is occurring.

Commissioner comment regarding importance of a feedback mechanism. Staff responded not everything discussed can be public. However, an outreach visit to University Honda raised two issues: Freeway auto signs (trim back vegetation, improve freeway visibility), and for the City to work on a shop local campaign. As more outreach visits are conducted quarterly reports would be a good thing. Committee did raise there are different methods for how you can approach a much broader business outreach program.

Chamber stated renewals and new memberships are increasing.

Commissioner asked what % of members are Davis businesses? Chamber guessed, Davis 85%, Yolo County 95%, 5% somewhere else.

Commissioner asked question regarding whether Chamber looks at bicycle traffic to stimulate demand for customers? Chamber responded they do not, but get lots of questions regarding bicycles all the time. We get a lot of people from the Amtrak station and we are their first stop, often. We're very supportive of it but I wouldn't say we encourage it.

Commissioner asked for positions regarding Measure J and Wildhorse and to send to staff.

6. Staff Communication/Updates (5 min)

- Update on Target Retail Pad sites

Staff provided update on status of retail pad sites. Provided brief overview of Target history. No prospective tenants yet. Staff has received a number of calls but nobody has ever moved into the site. Building itself is unique for Target. LEED certification is an accomplishment for a building of this size. Façade and site improvements are of a higher quality.

Commissioner asked who has responsibility to fill the vacancies. Staff responded that Target owns the property and they want to get the pads built because it enhances their project. Their preference is to find a local developer who is experienced and can find local partners. Target is responsible for marketing the site.

Commissioner asked if buildings be built and remain vacant. Staff responded nobody has been willing to build spec buildings with no tenant identified. Comment from commissioner regarding whether this could be a state-certified site. Staff responded the value of the state site certification is questionable.

Commissioner asked if there is something we should be doing as a commission. Staff is looking to Target to market the project with connections in a way that staff can't. Currently, it's a "wait and see". If nothing after 6 months, then City may want to explore if there is something else that can be done. Restriction of uses here makes it more difficult to find tenants.

- Update on Business statistics

Staff provided overview of business statistics from the packet.

7. Economic Indicators (30 min)

Commissioner provided a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the progress of the Economic Indicators project. Discussion followed regarding possible funding options including raising business license fees. Staff responded that because the business license fee is based on percentage of gross receipts, it would be difficult to tag a "rider" on top of existing fee structure. Suggestion that some % of gross receipts derived by BL fees could support this report. This could be an area for exploration.

Commissioner stated this has been a council priority but what was the impetus for the project. Commissioner responded the current version really started with the BEDC. The genesis was in meetings about where decisions were being made based on almost folkloric ideas on how things work in town. BEDC wanted to provide empirical backing for the decisions to be made. Commission doesn't have a lot of that information it needs. At some point, a professional team is needed to work on this and get Chamber and DDBA support for the project. For now, the route to success has been to get support.

Commissioner stated it might be good to have Paul Navazio come and talk about the larger vision of this effort, in regards to the community indicators. He sees BEDC delivering on a part of a broader project.

8. Business Park Lands Strategy Update (5 min)

Staff provided brief update regarding progress of Business Park Land Strategy project. Over the past several months staff has shared various project components. The purpose of this month's memo was to:

1. Review the key original questions and additional "big picture" questions the study will address
2. Take the various project components and place them into a visual, sequential framework resembling a final form the report will take.

Staff explained how the project schedule has slipped in comparison with the original timeline presented earlier in the year due to the addition of additional analysis to the original project scope.

9. Subcommittee Assignments/Reports (20 min)

- Business Retention

Staff stated follow through is occurring with individuals and businesses who were recommended to meet with. Holding meetings with four auto dealers, and reaching out to some contractors in town. If BEDC has a particular business in mind, let staff know. As business park interviews wind down, the business outreach interviews can be increased.

Staff has been looking into MetroPulse. It provides a format to provide and collect information. Still looking into a survey. Economic indicators project plays into a business survey by raising what kinds of questions should be asked in a survey. Mayor brought up the subject of a survey in the presentation for the economic indicators.

Commissioner introduced an idea regarding a welcome to Davis package. With Chancellor Katehi soliciting funding for one of 8 national grants for clean energy research City should touch base with all the clean tech-oriented firms in town

- Business Attraction

Staff announced September 22 will be the New California 100. GCN is the host of the conference. Last year they began an inaugural Hall of Fame, drawing more attention to business successes. Two Davis businesses will be recognized as leading innovation companies, Marrone Bio-Innovations, and Schilling Robotics

- Community Enhancement

Community enhancement committee held its first meeting. Trying to decide where to put its' energies. Discussed topics which might segue into the indicator project. Had a good meeting and are looking forward to second one and coming back with something more definitive.

10. Future Agenda Items

Paul Navazio to share thoughts on community indicators. Staff stated MuniServices will be doing a search for people doing business in Davis without a business license, looking for revenue.

11. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned @ 9:35 p.m.

Future Meetings: September 28, 2009 and October 26, 2009

Any writing related to an agenda item for the open session of this meeting distributed to the Commission less than 72 hours before this meeting is available for inspection at City Hall, 23 Russell Blvd., Davis.

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