

APPROVED
Economic Development Council
MINUTES
August 28, 2020
Held virtually
7:30 A.M.

In attendance:

John Vogel, Chris Heck, Joe Kramer, Val Fleischer, Anna Siefken, Elaine Evosovic, Betsy Benson, Mara Dowdy, Andrew George, Commissioner Flynn

Commission Liaison: Andrew Flynn

Guest: None

Staff: Eric Milliron

- I. **Call to Order:** John Vogel called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.
 - a. Anna Siefken has been appointed to the EDC. She provided a brief introduction.
- II. **Citizen's Comments:** None.
- III. **Review of July Minutes** – EDC reviewed July Minutes. C. Heck made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion seconded by V. Fleischer.
- IV. **Dissolution of Economic Development Council** – J. Kramer suggested discussion of dissolution of the EDC due to a low volume of recommendations to the Commission. J. Kramer noted that the EDC in the last two years has only made one formal recommendation since his appointment. After discussion those in attendance were queried if they concurred with moving forward with a recommendation to dissolve and there was no additional support for this suggestion. Rather, the EDC shall have a discussion on protocols at the September meeting.
- V. **Eco-District Introduction** – Commissioner Flynn has brought forth the Eco-District (EcoD) concept as something to be explored by the EDC and other appropriate boards/authorities/stakeholders. EcoD's offer an innovative and collaborative path for 21st century economic/community development designed around:
 - i. **Imperatives** – Equity, Resilience, and climate protection
 - ii. **Six Priorities** – Place, Prosperity, Wellness, Connectivity, Living Infrastructure, and Resource Regeneration
 - iii. **Implementation** – Formation of Leadership/Governance, Development of an Action Plan and performance reportingStaff will be working with Anna Siefken + Commissioner Flynn on developing the architecture for moving forward.
- VI. **Vibrant Uptown Steering Committee** – Eric Milliron provided an update on the Vibrant Uptown Steering Committee's progress on design elements of the Uptown Streetscape project. This is the second group of workshops (Leadership, Steering, and Resident/Prop Owner). There will be a third and final group of workshops to wrap up the Conceptual Design phase of the project.
- VII. **Vacant Property Recovery Program (ACED)** – J. Kramer will summarize expectations for how to best review this program and how it could be taken advantage of. The slate of vacancy properties at the dead-end of PA Blvd. has been the most ready example of sites to consider.
- VIII. **South Parking Garage** – J. Kramer has embarked on preliminary/exploratory conversations with developers about the future of the South Parking Garage. Commissioner Flynn will take lead on discussing this with J. Kramer.
- IX. **2020 Priorities** –
 - a. **Vibrant Uptown** – The EDC will work with Mt. Lebanon Partnership through the joint Economic Development Committee to identify grant opportunities to support the Vibrant Uptown project. Schematic work to be complete by April 2020 and bid documents prepared by fall 2020. Spring 2021 construction start.
 - b. **South Garage** – EDC will explore appointing a liaison to the parking advisory board to form an ad hoc committee to review the potential redevelopment options and/or upgrades of the South Garage. Findings and recommendations should be outlined and reviewed by the entire EDC and subsequently sent to the Commission and staff for review and consideration by November 30, 2020.
 - c. **Collaboration with Mt. Lebanon Partnership** –
 - i. **Annual Meeting Business Summit** – The EDC in potential cooperation with the MLP, will plan and host an annual business summit. The purpose of the summit is to extend goodwill to local business/property owners, through socialization, information sharing, and educational programming. The event is intended to establish the EDC as a bridge between municipal government and the local business community. Municipal staff and the Commission should be invited to participate and attend. The event should take place before October 30, 2020. **DELAY.**
 - d. **Retail Business/3rd Place Business Attraction** – Continued advocacy of the EDC's position on the proposed zoning ordinance to the Commission. This includes participation in public meetings. The EDC will evaluate the

municipality's current business recruitment focus and strategies and make recommendations about what policies should continue and what practices should be considered for future implementation. Recommendations should be forwarded to the Commission by September 2020.

- e. **Support Active Park Use at McNeilly Park** – The EDC will revisit this subject spring 2020. **DELAY**
- f. **Development Site Review + Monitoring** – The EDC working with EVC will make an ongoing effort to review existing residential and commercial development site opportunities and pending development and provide guidance to the Commission as needed. The EDC will devise a plan to draft a development incentive source guide by December 2020 for the purpose of assisting the commission, staff, and developers in identifying potential ways to structure financing of a development project. The source guide will be comprised of local, county, state, federal and foundation resources.
 - i. **PA Blvd. Vacant Properties** – EDC will summarize the existing conditions and potential acquisition and development of the Pennsylvania Avenue properties located adjacent to the Poplar T Station. Utilization of Allegheny County's vacant property program will be reviewed. Development opportunities, if any, including a potential dog park will be reviewed. Findings and recommendations to be forwarded to the Commission and staff for review and consideration by November 20, 2020.

X. 2020 Pillar/Work Plan –

- a. Impact Development – No report.
- b. Business Attraction + Retention – Staff informed EDC new business start-up activity.
- c. Public Realm – Staff and the Partnership are exploring ways to activate spaces for outdoor dining.
- d. Place Making – All current events have been canceled.
- e. Parking Advisory Board Update – No Report.

IV. Other Business:

- XI. Adjourn** – Chris Heck made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Joe Kramer.