

APPROVED
Economic Development Council
MINUTES

December 18, 2020
Meeting held virtually
7:30 A.M.

In attendance:

John Vogel, Chris Heck, Elaine Evosovic Stacey Reibach, Betsy Benson, Bill Callahan, 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.
- II. **Citizen's Comments:** None.
- III. **Review of October Minutes** – EDC reviewed October Minutes. C. Heck made a motion to approve the minutes. Motion seconded by S. Reibach. Approved.
- IV. **EcoDistrict Update** – Eric Milliron and Commissioner Flynn updated the EDC on exploratory meetings held with the EcoDistrict focus group and local subject experts. These meetings are providing the focus group meaningful background information on the initiative + is helping to frame next steps. In addition, a high-level draft document is being development to track progress and frame early thinking on the subject.
- V. **Parking v. Mobility (integration of Parking Advisory Board into EDC)** – Commissioner Flynn is exploring a more comprehensive approach to transportation/pedestrian/parking issues as they relate to our commercial zones. This thinking was introduced at high-level for consideration as the EDC develops its 2021 workplan. I am providing an excerpt from the October minutes related to this topic for the sake of clarity:
 - a. **Parking Advisory Board Transition** – Commissioner Flynn has expressed a desire to fold this board into the EDC to offer the municipality efficiencies as parking is directly correlated to economic development. In addition, the Commissioner wishes to see a multimodal approach to future thinking of parking/mobility. There was unanimous support within the Council. Thus, a subset of the EDC with a selected representative of parking authority shall review how the integration shall happen + fit within the EDC scope. Anna Siefken made a motion to create an action group to evaluate transition and make a recommendation to full Council. Elaine Evosovic seconded. Approved unanimously. A. Siefken, S. Reibach, a MTLP rep., and member(s) of Parking Advisory Board shall comprise this group.
- VI. **2021 Workplan (preliminary discussion)** – The EDC discussed changes to the 2021 workplan. It was agreed that we should strike a number of priorities that have been discovered as non-priority such as McNeilly Park, Pennsylvania Blvd., South Garage, and annual business summit. New areas of focus to be discussed at upcoming meetings include, but may not be limited to three key nodes:
 - A. **Mobility** – Exploration + incorporation of all aspect of transportation in our commercial districts. This includes new technology, parking, and integration of our public transit assets;
 - B. **EcoDistrict** – Exploration and execution of an EcoDistrict designation application for Mt. Lebanon. The EDC shall focus on elements of the application related to economic development + our commercial zones;
 - C. **Economic Development COVID/Post-COVID** – The pandemic will radically change consumer patterns for the foreseeable future. The EDC will detail steps to proactively employ best practices in economic development policy to assist our businesses.
- VII. **Vibrant Uptown** – This project has entered the Design Development Phase, and it is still on schedule to go to bid early in the 1Q 2021.
- VIII. **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 municipalities 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.

IX. 2020 Pillar/Work Plan –

- a. Impact Development – No Report.
- b. Business Attraction + Retention – Sesame Inn has opened their new location at 706 Washington Road.
- c. Public Realm – Staff and the Partnership are working on holiday initiatives.
- d. Place Making – Holiday celebrations took place.
- e. Parking Advisory Board Update – No Report.

IV. Other Business:

- X. **Adjourn** – John Vogel made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Chris Heck.