

CITY OF ANOKA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 10, 2022

Call to Order: Chairperson Finn called the EDC meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. at Anoka City Hall, 2015 First Avenue North in the City of Anoka.

Oath of Office – Mike Allen: Mr. Borglund administered the Oath of Office to new members Mike Allen and Logan [REDACTED].

Roll Call: EDC Members present were: Mike Allen, Logan [REDACTED], Mathew Finn, Jeff Lee, and Curt Rekstad. EDC members absent were: Quinn Garrick, Jeff Lee, and Julie Smith. Staff present: Community Development Director Doug Borglund

Approval of Minutes: No action.

OLD BUSINESS: Chairperson Finn commented that the Highway 10 project has been an ongoing discussion item and noted that if the new members of the Commission are interested in detail, staff could bring them up to speed.

NEW BUSINESS:

March 28th City Council Work Session Meeting: Mr. Borglund stated that the group was going to meet with the City Council to discuss the two resolutions recently passed by the Commission, support for the golf course redesign and related to the 7th Avenue/East River Road corridor study. He noted that the meeting has been delayed to April because of a heavy City Council agendas for March. He stated that the Commission could also have discussion with the Council related to the desired bylaw amendments for the EDC.

March EDC Anoka Enterprise Park Event Planning: Mr. Borglund stated that he included the agenda within the Commission packet, noting that he reserved space at Greenhaven for the event. He reviewed the agenda with the Commission and welcomed any input the Commission may have.

Anoka Agriculture at 2nd and Harrison: Mr. Borglund noted that this is the last of Anoka's agricultural heritage, noting that the City owns the silos and grain bins. He stated that the City would like to develop a master plan to preserve these features but also convert them into another reason for people to visit Anoka. He stated that the City does not own Anoka Independent Grain but could pursue a purchase if that were to be listed for sale. He stated that in that scenario, the City could follow a path similar to what was done with the Woodbury house and Mad Hatter. He reviewed some of the issues and challenges for the area. He reviewed one concept that has been developed to provide additional parking and solve some of the onsite problems.

Chairperson Finn asked if the Historical Society would be interested in providing historical information on what this area looked like in the past in order to create something that would have the same historical look.

Mr. Borglund stated that if the City were to be in that position, the desire would be to keep a historical feel. He stated that the City has put thought into how the silos could be modified for uses and provided photograph examples. He noted that this is part of the master plan that is being developed and additional suggestions and ideas will come out of that process. He commented that originally, \$50,000 was budgeted for 2022 for the grain bin modification but the City Council stepped back to hire a landscape architect to assist in developing vision for the site. He noted that a few members from different Boards and Commissions along with members of the Council will most likely be asked to participate in the task force to assist in developing that vision.

Jackson Street Entertainment District: Mr. Borglund stated that the vision for downtown Anoka has been to focus on “shopper-tainment”. He stated that during COVID they were very flexible, providing barriers and planters, and shutting down a portion of the street to allow expanded seating. He stated that has evolved into a desire to create something unique and interesting as people have loved the outdoor seating and environment. He stated that the City is also working on a master plan for the Jackson Street area in order to coordinate with the planned road reconstruction scheduled for 2025. He stated that the thought would be to narrow the road and design the drainage to eliminate the curb in that area with the ability to shut the road down to traffic during events or certain times. He noted that the process would involve a lot of public input and input from the businesses. He stated that this year they are going back to sidewalk seating and the opportunity for businesses to expand that with the platforms that were allowed prior to COVID.

Anoka County Facility Expansion Downtown: Mr. Borglund stated that Anoka County is looking to expand the existing government center, estimating a \$240,000,000 investment. He stated that the project would include demolition of certain County owned items in order to build an expanded parking ramp, skyway, expanded jail, and surface parking. He noted that this plan would require the City to vacate a portion of Van Buren Street. He stated that staff met with the City Council, noting that there were a lot of questions as this was unexpected and was not identified in the County’s CIP or long-range planning. He noted that the City Council has not yet agreed to the rezoning and other efforts that would be required to support this plan as this scale of building for the jail and ramp is not desired in this area of Anoka.

Commissioner Lee commented that while he understands that some people do not like the concept, and he would agree that he would not like it if he lived in the adjacent neighborhoods, he does believe this would bring in additional benefit in terms of economic development. He noted that more people coming to that area, would mean more people for businesses.

Mr. Borglund commented on the residual concerns of having a jail in the downtown Anoka area. He acknowledged the inadequacies of the facility and need for expansion

but noted that the Council does not believe that this is the right location. He stated that the City Council will be meeting with the County Board in order to continue discussions.

Highway 10 Communications: Mr. Borglund stated that he provided information in the packet that Commission members could share with members of the public. He noted that website and contact information will provide the most up to date information on the project activity.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

Marketing and Communications Updates:

- Discover Anoka: No comments.
- Chamber of Commerce: No comments.
- ABLA: No comments.

Subcommittee Updates: None.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Discuss April Meeting Agenda: Chairperson Finn stated that perhaps additional background information could be provided for new members on certain items of interest such as Greenhaven, Jackson Street entertainment district, and Highway 10. He stated that perhaps a bus tour could be scheduled in June as well to give updates on the development ongoing.

Staff Updates: No comments.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner Lee, a second by Commissioner Rekstad, and a unanimous vote of those present at 9:11 a.m.

Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*