

**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 17, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Melissa Schladt called the meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Commission to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present were Chairperson Melissa Schladt, Members Mike Fath, Ron Hameetman, Kevin Lentz, Chris Mattran, John O'Meara and Patrick Wall. Also in attendance were Village Administrator Karl Warwick and Trustee Mike Schiestel as staff to the PEDC, and Secretary Alison Dal Compo.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 20, 2013 MEETING MINUTES

A MOTION was made by Member O'Meara to approve the August 20, 2013 meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Member Wall. Motion carried with one abstention.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS—none

Chairperson Schladt welcomed Village President Nunamaker, and Trustees Tom Anderson and Andrew Migdal.

BUSINESS LIAISONS/BUSINESS RETENTION ACTIVITIES

One of the key roles of the PEDC is to help retain businesses in the Grove. Some currently do not have a liaison assigned to them; this will be reviewed at this evening's meeting.

Member Lentz made reference to Village President Nunamaker's suggestion at the last meeting to form a special events committee. Member Lentz noted that if the committee members look for sponsors for these special events, businesses who are not retail in nature should also be included. Chairperson Schladt asked if all the members agreed that all businesses in the Grove should have a liaison, regardless of whether they are retail-based. All agreed.

A number of businesses were unassigned at the beginning of the meeting. They were assigned as follows:

Schladt: Abboud, A+ Engraving, FRG Limited Partnership, KNM Holdings (BMS Group), United Methodist Church, Verizon Wireless.

Fath: CG Adventist Fellowship Church, Epps Custom Heating and Air, Urban Forest Management, Westchester Services.

Hameetman: Michael Graft Construction, River Inn Motel, Wild Automotive

Lentz: Advanced Surgical Care, Barrington Family Healthcare, Dr. Bell, Excalibur

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Technology, Sirius Technology,

Mattran: River Pointe Dental, Ringers, Sprint, VCA Noyes

O'Meara: Advanced Auto Parts, UPS Store

Wall: FRG Memorial Library, McDonalds, Nick's Barber Shop, Walgreen's, Turtle Express Day Care

Member O'Meara suggested sending out an e-mail to the business owners prior to visiting the business, so the owner has a chance to think about any issues they would like to discuss. Administrator Warwick noted that the façade and TIF information would be a good ice breaker.

Chairperson Schladt asked if the business directory was on the website; she was told no.

Trustee Schiestel said that Administrator Warwick found a good app called "Shop Grayslake". It incorporates announcements and various perks. Administrator Warwick added that it has deals and coupons right on the app. Member Lentz said that it will be necessary to find out how the information gets loaded into the app. Village President Nunamaker commented that any deals businesses offer should last at least a week. He further said that Yummy Asian Bistro had asked him if they could go around and put flyers on cars. Village President Nunamaker told him that he couldn't, but their business liaison could explain using an app like this instead.

Trustee Migdal asked what would happen if someone used a code on the app repeatedly. Member Wall said that usually businesses use a "loss leader" for their deals, and wouldn't mind if it was used repeatedly.

Administrator Warwick said that a similar app for the village website runs about \$4,500. Chairperson Schladt asked if this would be an I-Phone app only; she was told yes. Member Lentz asked if a column could be added on the website next to the business which would show that they are running a deal, then provide a link to the actual deal; he was told yes. Administrator Warwick said that coupons could be uploaded to the website for each business. Member Lentz added that there could be a page of coupons on the website.

Chairperson Schladt suggested bringing a laptop or tablet when visiting business liaisons, so that features of the website can be demonstrated. She summarized some of the ideas presented. She explained that there should be one page fully integrated with a comprehensive business list showing the shop local discounts. Member Lentz said that the website should be www.foxrivergrove/shoplocal.org

Administrator Warwick encouraged the members to hype the façade grant program and encourage people to invest in their businesses. So far, New China is taking advantage of a façade grant, but Riverside Auto backed out.

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Trustee Schiestel explained that the façade program means the business owner needs to come up with all of the money up front and get three competitive bids. Then, when the project is 100% complete, the Village will reimburse the agreed percentage. Member Fath reported that Fuel Zone is considering participating in the program also. Administrator Warwick explained that the grant given to New China was outside the parameters of a typical façade grant.

Member Mattran asked if there was anything happening with the old Dollar Store, or the proposed Dog Trax business. He was told no on both counts. He added that the new train station has been a great catalyst for change. Administrator Warwick said that most of the buildings along Northwest Highway in downtown were purchased 30-50 years ago, and make the majority of their money from the apartments above the storefronts. Member Mattran suggested direct marketing the façade program to the business owners. Mr. Mir owns the two buildings to the east, and Mr. Kondreras owns the ones to the west. Member Mattran further asked if the building owners might be open to having volunteers do some of the basic aesthetic work done. Administrator Warwick said that the business owners would have to be approached.

Administrator Warwick said that a vacant property registry is on the agenda for the Village Board this coming Thursday. The owners of vacant properties would have to pay a fee. Only a basic property maintenance code exists at this point. Member Mattran asked how the owners could be forced to make improvements. He was told it might have to go to court. Chairperson Schladt said she would be willing to meet with Mr. Mir in regards to his buildings. Member Hameetman pointed out that other communities put drapes on windows of vacant buildings; Member Mattran said that mat vinyl could also be used. Chairperson Schladt said that art by the middle school children could be put in the windows. Member Mattran added that historical pictures of the town could be used as well. Village President Nunamaker said that one of these suggestions should be put into practice for the windows in the old theater building.

CGCC—The organization is getting a new executive director, as Suzanne Corr is going to head up the Chamber in Barrington. Trustee Schiestel suggested getting Turtle Express Day Care involved in the CGCC.

VILLAGE UPDATES

Special Events Committee: Trustee Schiestel continued the discussion of the re-establishment of a special events committee. It would help to facilitate events such as the tree lighting, etc. In the past, the committee worked very hard but received little appreciation for their efforts. This time around, it is hoped that the burn out experienced by the past members can be avoided. The Grove is based on volunteerism, but each organization is self contained and not connected. If the existing committees could be tied together by one person from a number of committees (including the PEDC) working together, more could be accomplished.

Administrator Warwick named the following organizations as ones to potentially include:

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- 1) Fire Department
- 2) Scouts
- 3) Lions/Lionesses
- 4) Jaycees
- 5) Parks Commission
- 6) Library
- 7) Norge Ski Club

Chairperson Schladt noted that the keys to success will be planning, executing the plan and communicating the plan. For any events, the question is: how will other people know about it? Trustee Schiestel had talked to Sherri Sepeczi about the Fox Chase 5K, and she reported that many people go in to businesses to ask them to sponsor such events. The business owners can feel overwhelmed by being approached by numerous organizations. It would help to have one central committee.

Village President Nunamaker said that before he was Village President, the Village had taken a pass on participating in Fox Fest. The reasons for this should be re-visited.

Trustee Schiestel noted that the special events committee would act almost as a mini chamber of commerce. Village President Nunamaker said that about \$530,000 in sales tax goes to the Village each year. If there was even a 1% increase in sales tax because of a social event, any money budgeted towards the committee's events would be well worth it.

The Fox Chase 5k is being held on October 6. Administrator Warwick said that a flyer was hand delivered to every business in town. Trustee Schiestel is acting as D.J. Chairperson Schladt suggested that events such as the Fox Chase should be more socially geared by having perks like food and etc. Member Mattran asked when the farmer's market ends in Cary. He was told usually the end of September. Perhaps vendors would have something left over for an event in the Grove.

Chairperson Schladt said that the Halloween Haunted Trail went over really well last year, but it is a very short event-that only takes about 15 minutes. Trustee Schiestel suggested having a hayride or a pumpkin patch along with the trail. Member Mattran added that the special events committee should work from a calendar of events, and go month by month to see which ones could be made into something bigger. Chairperson Schladt said that another possible addition to the Haunted Trail could be showing a "spooky" but kid friendly movie and having something like a drive-in.

Chairperson Schladt said that the dedication for the new train station will be coming up in October. She wondered how large of an event it will be. Village President Nunamaker said that it is projected to be held on October 27 or 28, and it will be advertised to the whole village.

Member Mattran asked why the deal fell through for Café Salsa. Village President Nunamaker said that the two parties had been close to a deal but were about \$50,000 apart

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on the price. The current owners are now thinking of investing some money into the building.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member O'Meara and seconded by Member Lentz to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. All were in favor.

Melissa Schladt, Chairperson

Alison Dal Compo, Secretary

Date Approved