City of Mequon

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Tuesday, October 26, 2021
8:00 AM
Christine Nuerenberg Hall

Minutes

1) Call to Order, Roll Call

Present:
Chair Timothy Carr
Alderperson Kathleen Schneider
Board Member James Baka
Board Member Dennis Engel
Board Member Daniel Gannon
Board Member Michael Kramer
Board Member Jeff McLean
Board Member Bruce Sipiora
Board Member Tracy Johnson **-- Absent**
Board Member Andrew Petzold **-- Absent**

Chairman Carr called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 27, 2021.

Action
Board Member Kramer made a motion to approve the September 27, 2021, meeting minutes. Board Member McLean seconded the motion.
A voice vote was taken; vote passed (7-0)

RESULT:	**Approved [Unanimous]**
MOVED BY:	Board Member Kramer
SECONDED BY:	Board Member McLean
AYES:	Carr, Baka, Gannon, Kramer, McLean, Sipiora, Schneider

3) Continued Discussion of Port Washington Road Redevelopment

Ald. Schneider stated that many constituents have raised concerns about the Port Washington Road area feeling that it has been neglected and they would like to see improvements made there. She commented that there are varying stages of building appearances, setbacks, etc. in the area which make it difficult to make general decisions and that many properties are viable.

The topic of a possible hotel from the previous meeting was mentioned and Dir. Tollefson stated that she had followed up with Mr. Flaherty for a contact for a consultant who can obtain the Star Report which will report on the marketability of a hotel along Port Washington Road, south of Mequon Road.

Ald. Parrish sent a letter to the Board with his support of a TIF incentive that encourages modifying facades. There was not Board support for this type of incentive as there is not as much bang for your buck and many believe that it rewards property owners for deferred maintenance. Dir. Tollefson added that she agrees that there is not as much bang for your buck as other incentives provide, it does help to fill the gap in some consistency among varying properties.

Asst. Dir. Zader stated that there is about $1M in available funds between TIF districts #4 & #5 to spend on improvements in that corridor and he encouraged the Board to create a plan to use these funds.

There was discussion about the beautification improvements that can be made given that it is a county road as well as challenges such as the overhead powerlines, mismatched lighting fixtures and vacant mediums. The Board voiced support for improvements that will create more cohesiveness and better aesthetics. The Board liked the idea of hiring a consultant to help facilitate this process and develop a plan of action. Staff needs to confirm that the Project Plan allows for the proposed improvements with being amended.

There was discussion about the Port Zedler property and the desire of the Board that the City buy that parcel. It is believed that there are possible opportunities there and it is an advantage for the City to have control of that location. Combining another parcel with this location to create a large parcel would be ideal, but it is market driven and not in the control of the City.

Overall feedback from the Board:

- Recommendation to the Common Council to consider buying Port Zedler.
- Support to initiate public improvements along the proposed corridor (Port. Washington Road between County Line and Mequon Road). The aim is to make it more cohesive and to help revitalize the area.
- Modify the Fast-Track Formula – change the incentives and establish the criteria.
- Some support for targeted high priority sites but need to establish criteria.

The Board discussed what percentage the Fast-Tack Formula incentives should be increased . Additionally, whether it should be a different percentage for the identified high priority sites. The Board supports increased incentives for combined properties. There was discussion about finding a medium between open-ended opportunities and being overly formulaic when establishing new incentive formulas. Staff advised that the Common Council will need to feel confident about approving all EDB proposed incentives. It was agreed that the required criteria for qualifying for an incentive must be specific and transparent.

There was discussion about outreach to promote opportunities in our community. Staff commented that the first steps are to establish incentive guidelines, secure Common Council support and then promote to the public market.

Final Recommendations from the Board for moving forward:

- Initiate and create a public improvement/landscape/streetscape plan without the assistance of outside consultant.
- Recommend Common Council purchase the Port Zedler property.
- **Tier 1 -** modify current Fast-Track incentive to require complete demolition to qualify.
- **Tier 2** - Increase incentive for combined parcels (increase 5%-10%).
- **Tier 3 –** eliminate this option (façade modifications).

4) Staff Updates

5) Announcements

The meeting date on the agenda was incorrect and the next meeting is Tuesday. November 23, 2021, unless it gets changed.

6) Adjourn

Action
Board Member Gannon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Board Member McLean seconded the motion.
A voice vote was taken; vote passed (7-0)

Meeting concluded at 9:38 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Tollefson
Director of Community Development