

City of Darien
Minutes Economic Development Committee
****Rescheduled Meeting****
Thursday, December 8, 2022

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04PM. Committee members present were Jonathan Christ, Bob Hahn, Lou Mallers, Tom Papais, Nick Pitzer, and Bob Taft. Also present was Mayor Joe Marchese, Alderperson Mary Sullivan, City Clerk JoAnne Ragona, and City Planner Jordan Yanke.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes – November 3, 2022

Minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

4. New Business

a) Nomination/Vote for Committee Chairperson

The Committee nominated member Tom Papais as Chairperson. The nomination will be placed on a City Council agenda for the Mayor to appoint member Tom Papais formally.

b) EDC Duties and Tasks – Activities/Initiatives for 2023

i. New Business License Welcome Package

City Planner Jordan Yanke introduced an example welcome package for new businesses. The Committee discussed the example and requested that a draft version be put together and brought back to the next meeting for comment. Committee member Bob Taft recommended not only targeting new businesses with the welcome package but also putting together a document for prospective businesses looking to locate in the City.

ii. Other Ideas

Conversation regarding the welcome package transitioned into a discussion and overview of a new position that is being created by the City. The position is titled Business Liaison and Recruitment Coordinator, and the employee will be hired to initiate and propel

economic development programs to a higher level and assist in community event planning. The person in the position will focus on business recruitment and retention, while also leading the Business Visitation Program and implementing community/business surveys garnering input on preferred economic development initiatives. This discussion also included the proposed absorption of the Chamber of Commerce into the City, which is currently being reviewed at the Council level. Committee member Tom Papais and Mayor Joe Marchese provided additional detail on this proposed transition.

5. Old Business

a) Previous Follow Up/ Hanging Matters

i. EDC Member Updates

General discussions and updates amongst the Committee and staff were held pertaining to redevelopment ideas for the City's shopping centers and other parcels that have been discussed in the past.

Aldersperson Mary Sullivan iterated the importance of the City highlighting businesses and promoting them. The Committee concurred this element is crucial and that the City can ramp up promotional materials and marketing materials with the new hire.

ii. Staff Updates

Staff provided brief update on recent projects and businesses.

6. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting will be rescheduled to Thursday, January 12, 2023.

7. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM.

APPROVED: _____
CHAIRPERSON