

City of Darien
Minutes Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, February 12, 2020

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by Chairwoman Tina Beilke. Other committee members present were: Louis Mallers, Matt Weberling, Nick Pitzer, and Alderman Mary Sullivan (City liaison). The meeting was held at Darien City Hall.

2. Public Comment

Jennifer Hynes from Celestine Spa spoke regarding her request for EDC committee to review her business incentive application in which she is looking for perhaps a low cost financing opportunity for her to buy the property she is currently leasing at 1224 Plainfield Road. She has been in that business for 15 years and the owner is looking to sell the property. She feels the unique location and additional sq. ft. area which she envisions to be a friendship center is part of its success and does not want to risk moving the business. Celestine Spa employs 15 people. EDC and staff will review submission.

3. Approval of Minutes – January 8, 2020

The minutes as submitted for January 8, 2020 were approved.

4. New Business

a. New Business Prospects – Incentive Prospects

Discussion regarding updates on Cannabis business locations was discussed. Staff will deliver the City's ordinance depicting agreed upon locations to Committee.

The District 61 property of 12.5 acres and City is going through an exploratory concept of creating mixed use (residential and retail). EDC Committee is also interested in going further with the concept plan.

5. Old Business

a. Implementation of Business Outreach Program Update

i. Business Visits

The Committee discussed how one business response was received from first round of business mailings and if a follow up is warranted for the others. Committee agreed to do follow up phone calls first before any site visits.

ii. Next round of business mailings

Second round of businesses for mailings were approved and provided to staff. Committee also discussed the idea to possibly implement a physical visit to businesses that are receiving their annual business licenses. Committee thought it would be a great touch instead of just mailing those out. Committee will look into the timing of when those will come up.

b. Census Update

The Committee received an update from Joe Hennerfeind, Darien Senior Planner. The City's Complete Count committee that is running through the EDC Committee needed to define a Chairman and a Secretary. Tina Beilke as Chairman and Robert Hahn as Secretary have agreed to fulfil those roles. In practice it was discussed that the Census meetings and updates will align with the meeting timeline of future EDC meetings and thus will be a recurring item on the EDC agenda through the census completion.

In addition the Mayor is looking for committee members to visit some churches, schools, and library to hand out flyers, etc. to generate more awareness and would like the committee to email staff which locations they can cover.

c. Previous Follow Up/Hanging Matters

Marketing video is nearing completion and is looking good.

6. Next Scheduled Meeting

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2020.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. approved.