



MEETING SUMMARY – minutes to be adopted at the February 26, 2015 meeting

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 22nd, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

Alter called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm

Roll Call:

Members Figone, Taylor, Kagawa, Shrem and Gager.

Absent: Horng Brawer, Lehman

Also Present: Emily Alter, Staff Liaison

- 1. Staff/Council Liaisons Announcements and Reports** Alter reported on the affordable housing development proposal at 5620 Central Avenue in Richmond: staff submitted comments on the draft MND, developer to present plans to the Design Review Board once fully developed, project is in keeping with the El Cerrito's Form Based Code and development numbers were included in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan EIR, owner willing to set back from culverted creek, major traffic concerns have been evaluated and greater Central traffic concerns will be addressed as part of the I-80 Central Interchange Project. Alter discussed Ohlone Gardens commercial property outreach process and asked the EDC to provide input on the project's engagement list. Alter discussed the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan outreach process, including plans for developer meetings and a community meeting to be held in the Spring. Alter discussed the City's ad in Chinook Book, including a map of El Cerrito and highlighting local businesses that support Chinook Book's mission.
- 2. Comments from the Public on non agenda items-** Tom Peterson, owner of Noodles Fresh and EDC applicant; Candice Li, local property owner and EDC applicant; Christine Izaret, market researcher and EDC applicant; Colin Ransdell, Wells Fargo employee and EDC applicant; Jia Ma, banking profession and EDC applicant, were in attendance.
- 3. Approval of the Minutes** – Figone moved to recommend adoption of November 20th, 2014 Meeting Minutes. Kagawa seconded. Unanimous approval. Shrem moved to recommend adoption of December 18th, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes. Taylor seconded. Unanimous approval.
- 4. Commercial Property Vacancies, Real Estate Representation and Business Attraction** – Committee discussed results of the presentation from Roger Mills at the December 18th, 2014 Special Meeting. Taylor expressed frustration with his lack of vision and Kagawa described his feeling that real estate brokers generally represent what is available now, instead of what it could look like 5-10 years from now. Committee expressed need for better marketing of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan to address these problems. Shrem mentioned Aaron Vitale's interest in discussing local real estate with the Committee. Candice Li discussed her property on San Pablo Avenue where she is looking for a new large retail tenant; Committee encouraged her to consider alternative/flexible uses for the space, such as a yoga studio, coffee shop or HUB work space.
- 5. End of the Year Happy Hour and Future Committee Events** – Committee expressed an interest in hosting quarterly community mixers. Committee decided to co-host the next mixer with the Chamber of Commerce on Friday, March 6th from 5-7 pm at the Scene Winebar & Café at the Cerrito Theater. Figone announced the Chamber of Commerce's promotion of the Firestone's Grand Opening on February 6th, 7th and 8th.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION

To request a meeting agenda in large print, Braille, or on cassette, or to request a sign language interpreter for the meeting, call Emily Alter, Staff Liaison at alter@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or 215-4385 (voice) at least FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS NOTICE PRIOR TO THE MEETING to ensure availability.

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6. **Economic Development Committee Newsletter and Listserv** – Taylor expressed interest in having an Economic Development Committee Newsletter, building off the existing listserv developed for the End of Year Happy Hour. Alter explained that Committees have not historically had newsletters that they administered themselves, because all communications are part of the public record and must be maintained by City staff in accordance with the Public Records Act. Alter clarified that Committee members are free to share information as private citizens as they see fit and that the Community Development Department will be developing an e-newsletter in late February.
7. **Economic Development Committee 12-Month Work Plan Discuss** – Adjourned to the next meeting.
8. **Committee Member Updates and Discussion of Future Actions and Agenda Items** – Committee members will continue to outreach to San Pablo Avenue businesses and property owners, including Stan Zimmerman, owner of the Guitar Center. Interest in developing business support lists, including lists of qualified architects and anticipated permit restrictions to help address barriers to development. Kagawa reported that he would be prepared to give a presentation on Vacant Building Registration Fees.

Consideration of Upcoming Agenda Items

- Pop-Up Use Policy Presentation (February)
- Vacant Building Registration Fee Studies
- Historical Society Presentation – Tom Panas (February)
- Aaron Vitale Presentation (February)
- Committee Work Plan

Upcoming Meetings + Events | more details online at www.el-cerrito.org

9. **Adjournment-** Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Economic Development Committee regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at City Hall - 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito during normal business hours.