



MEETING MINUTES – adopted at the April 23, 2015 meeting

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 26th, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

Shrem called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm

Roll Call:

Members Figone, Horng Brawer, Lehman, Taylor, Kagawa, Shrem and Gager

Also Present: Emily Alter, Staff Liaison; Melanie Mintz, Interim Community Development Director; Suzanne Iarla, Community Outreach Specialist; Alessandra Thompson, Community Development Intern

- 1. Staff/Council Liaisons Announcements and Reports** Mintz reported that General Motors pulled their pre-application for a project at the former Orchard Supply Hardware site at San Pablo Ave and Eastshore Blvd. Mintz announced the City Council goal setting session on Saturday, March 8th from 9 am – 12 pm. Mintz announced that City Council recently joined Marin Clean Energy (MCE) to provide community members with a more sustainable energy provider with 50% and 100% renewable energy electricity choices. Alter shared MCE's promotional materials highlighting that the program gave El Cerrito businesses, like Elevation 66, the power to choose cleaner energy. Alter mentioned that City Council recently opted into 4 Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs, which provide financing mechanisms for residents and businesses to do renewable energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency and seismic improvements on their property, including unreinforced masonry improvements. Alessandra Thompson introduced herself, providing background on her work on Baltimore neighborhood revitalization efforts and her interest in the nexus between place-making and economic development.
- 2. Comments from the Public on non agenda items** Tom Petersen, owner of Noodles Fresh and EDC applicant; Nicholas Arzio, El Cerrito resident; Bill Kuhlman, El Cerrito resident; Tom Panas, El Cerrito resident and member of El Cerrito Historical Society; El Cerrito resident. Arzio reported that Nong Thon restaurant, located at 10086 San Pablo Ave, was having difficulty passing inspections and would likely close. Lehman wondered if someone should follow up with the business owner. Kuhlman presented his idea for an El Cerrito restaurant event to be held in September and requested that he be put on a future agenda to discuss details further.
- 3. Approval of the Minutes** Kagawa made a motion to adopt the minutes of the Committee meeting on January 22nd, 2015. Figone seconded. Unanimous approval.
- 4. Proposed Tobacco Retailer License Program Presentation** Suzanne Iarla presented the proposed Tobacco Retailer License Program. Arzio wondered what the impacts of the program would be on smokers in pocket parks on San Pablo Avenue. Kuhlman wondered if, given the proposed distance requirements for any new tobacco retailers, there would be any spaces left along San Pablo Avenue where a retailer could locate. Iarla explained that there would be a Conditional Use Permit process to allow the Planning Commission to grant an exception if a project could prove that it provided other desirable community amenities. The Planning Commission were scheduled to hear a presentation on the proposed ordinance at their Wednesday, April 15th meeting; City Council will receive two study sessions on the program in the summer. The program would prohibit new significant tobacco retailers; Arzio expressed his concern that the distinction between major and minor retailers would not achieve the major concern of the program, which is to limit tobacco access for youth under 18 years of age. Figone reported that the Chamber of Commerce had solicited comments on the proposed

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program, but had not received any concerns. Kagawa and Lehman expressed interest in taking action on the item at the next EDC meeting, pending additional information on the amount of tobacco use at local schools.

Historical Society Presentation Taylor introduced Tom Panas from the El Cerrito Historical Society, who gave a presentation on El Cerrito's early history, including former business trends. Taylor expressed interest in an additional presentation to learn about the 1920's-1980's when a strong Italian influence and musical heritage were developed in the City. The Committee expressed interest in hosting an event, such as a community mixer, to present El Cerrito's history to community members.

6. **March 6th Community Mixer** Alter reported that 21 community members signed in at the March 6th Community Mixer and that 5 business owners completed surveys. Taylor expressed interest in attending a Rotary Lunch in late May to present Steve Price's presentation to the EDC and have a discussion with business owners and community members involved in Rotary. Figone stated that the May 21st meeting would be a good time for a presentation. Lehman expressed that the EDC should follow up with the business owners who attended the Mixer to see what's working and what isn't for them. Committee members discussed the next mixer and agreed to host another joint community mixer with the Chamber of Commerce on Friday, May 29th at Scene Winebar at the Rialto Cerrito Cinema. The Committee agreed on an outreach strategy including announcements in the Chamber's By-line, Community Development e-news, through a Press Release, on the City's website, and through flyers.
Discuss the March 6th Community Mixer and consider possible action items for future community events.
7. **Economic Development Committee 12-Month Work Plan Adoption** Kagawa made a motion to adopt the EDC's 12-Month Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 contingent on the removal of "AND 2013-2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS" from the front page. Lehman seconded. Unanimous approval.
8. **Announcing Elections for Chair and Vice Chair** Figone made a motion to re-nominate Tess Taylor as EDC Chair and Wendy Horng Brawer as EDC Vice-Chair.
9. **Committee Member Updates and Discussion of Future Actions and Agenda Items** Committee members discussed their priorities for upcoming agendas, including outreach to existing El Cerrito businesses and potential new businesses; engaging other City Boards, Committees and Commission on interrelated efforts; and, to receive announcement of events 2 months out. Committee members agree to share a table with the Arts and Culture Commission at the WorldOne July 4th Festival.

Consideration of Upcoming Agenda Items

- Pop-Up Use Policy Presentation
- Historical Society Presentation
- Discussion of City Council EDC Presentation – May 19th
- Collaboration with other City committees and community organizations
- Development Entitlement Process Training

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

- Draft Urban Greening Plan Community Workshop – April 25th
- Earth Day Celebration – April 18th, 2015
- MCE Clean Energy Meetings – April 15th and April 22nd

10. Adjournment- 9:30

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.