



MINUTES

Geneva Economic Development Commission

Thursday, November 8, 2012, 8:00 AM

City Hall Council Chambers, 109 James Street

Present: Chairman Robert Mann and Commissioners Thomas Burgess, David Gemellaro, Brian Kay, Scott Lebin, Patrick Neary, David Quillen, and Paul Ruby. Staff present: Economic Development Director Ellen Divita, Business Development Specialist Paul Evans, and Community Development Director Dick Untch. Commissioner Robert Friedberg, was absent, with advance notice. Fire Chief Olson joined the meeting at 8:45 AM.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM by Chairman Mann.
- II. **AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA** – There were none.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – **August 9, 2012** meeting – Motion was made by Commissioner Quillen, seconded by Commissioner Lebin to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2012 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS**
Updates were provided to the Commission on four City Planning Projects:

East Side Tax Increment Finance District – In 1993 the Blue Ribbon Committee, appointed by the Mayor considered an East State Street Corridor Comprehensive Plan. Elements of the final plan were rolled into the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Aesthetics were high on the goals list. In 2000 “Private Property Design and Development Guidelines” were developed. In 2000 the East State Street Tax Increment Finance District (TIF #2) was created. In 2003 the City began surveying the road for streetscape, and the following year Design Standards were developed. In 2005, the State Department of Transportation asked the City to consider a widening project, not just streetscape and Phase I Engineering was done. The past two years the City has budgeted for Phase II engineering, but not executed a consultant contract due to uncertainty of State funding for Phase III construction. The estimated cost to insert a center turn lane from Bennett to Glengarry is about \$12.3 Mil. To complete streetscape improvements only is estimated to be about \$1.6 Mil.

A portion of the project area is in TIF#2 and therefore eligible for TIF financing; this is about 40% of the linear length of the street and 90% of parcels with ROW acquisition needs.

The TIF is healthy. It will expire in 2023. To date 7 projects have been completed, raising the initial base EAV of \$3,323,166 to \$6,616,446 (2011 EAV). The District is currently producing about \$300,000 a year in increment. Considering current annual obligations (administrative overhead and bond repayment), there will be about \$2 Mil available to reach the objectives of the Redevelopment

Project. At last Monday's Committee of the Whole meeting, the City Council agreed with staff recommendation to use these funds in three ways: 1) complete the Phase 2 Engineering (portion within TIF District to come from TIF fund), 2) purchase right-of-way as needed for widening and road improvements, and 3) identify potential purchase of private property to encourage property assemblage for redevelopment.

Southeast Master Plan (SEMP)- The SEMP describes the City's vision for the future of the area; identifies expectations for development and redevelopment; and provides recommendations on land use, road connections, utility extensions, access and circulation, transit, and open/civic spaces. The SEMP is a high end engineering study and proactively identifies needed sizing and costs of utilities to accommodate industrial and commercial development. Existing residential development are expected to remain along Old Kirk Road. The estimated utility costs for-on site and off-site improvements is about \$20 Mil.

In completing the SEMP, this process was used:

- Gather Data from the City, County, State, and Federal Agencies
- Distribute and Compile Resident & Business Survey
- Property Owner Meetings (vacant properties)
- Site Design & Land Use Workshop (Public Agency Staff)
- Resident & Community Meetings
- Develop Alternative Land Use & Infrastructure Plans
- Alternative Land Use & Infrastructure Evaluation and Report
- Public Information Meeting to present Draft Plan
- Plan Commission Public Hearing / Referral to City Council
- City Council Review / Comment / Adoption

The project has had several positives: renewed boundary agreements with Batavia and West Chicago, positive connections with the property owners, initial infrastructure costs, and a pro-active identification of issues and costs to aid future development.

Remaining tasks include discussions with KCDOT on access agreements for Kirk Road and Fabyan Parkway, continued evaluation of electric substation options, further identification of the natural resource area, identification of a route for a 138kv corridor, marketing the area for commercial and industrial development, seeking grants and financing for utility extensions, and obtaining needed ROW for utility extensions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kay and seconded by Commissioner Burgess to recommend the City move forward by: 1) marketing the opportunity and differentiation of a Geneva location, 2) planning for the 138 KV route, and 3) working to secure access agreements with KDOT.

There was healthy discussion on the City and future industrial development. The Commission agreed that "need for speed" is important. The last two items could be time constraints and the Commission believes that moving forward with 138kv and road access planning/agreements will reduce the time to "be in the ground" with a new project. The commission believes that with known zoning and utility planning completed, City Quality of Life amenities, and our electric utility advantages, the project will compete well in the marketplace. The Commission asked about elements of the planning inquiry; Directors Divita and Untch provided information regarding the level of planning including these details: gravity sewer will work, storm system to be decentralized due to ridge line, industrial and commercial zoning not in question. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Business District Feasibility Study - The Downtown Business District expires in 2013. At an October 31, 2011 policy discussion, the City Council discussed the potential of creating a new district and asked the Economic Development Commission to consider and make a recommendation. In February 2012, the EDC made a positive recommendation which was received by the Council Committee of the Whole on February 27, 2012. The City received word in October 2012 that the application for a Kane County Small Cities Grant Application has been awarded.

- **An area may be deemed “Eligible”** by a home rule or non-home rule municipality as a Business District if it meets at least one, or any combination, of the following factors:
 - Predominance of defective, non-existent or inadequate street layout;
 - Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
 - Deterioration of site improvements;
 - Improper subdivision or obsolete platting; and/or
 - Existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

Next Steps include:

- A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be released in the next few weeks as the City seeks a consultant team able to document eligibility of a new district and upon confirmation of eligibility, create a Development Plan and project, based on consensus from the community. The EDC will assist with consensus building.
- City staff will interview qualified applicants; the Commission confirmed they did not believe it necessary to have a representative on the interview team
- Identify desired projects that build the District. (The Economic Development Commission will play a role in district building consensus on potential projects for a district, if eligibility is established.)
- Identify funding sources, including potential for a sales tax layer to fund projects

The Commission has expressed a philosophy that use of public funds for improvements to private buildings is not desired. Director Divita, Director Untch, and Fire Chief Olson discussed the need for additional fire suppression in buildings downtown. The three Department Directors discussed the impact a fire can have; each property and business owner has a vested interest in all buildings having sufficient fire suppression. Over 30% of the downtown buildings do not have sufficient fire suppression. The Fire Department will map these buildings as we consider a business district as this is a key qualifying factor for creation of a district.

Director Divita showed photos of the recent fire at State Bank of Geneva. Fire Chief Olson discussed the department’s response in this and other fires. A fire will double in size every 8 minutes; the Geneva Fire Department has good response time – they were on site in less than 6 minutes for the Bank fire. There are 3 levels of fire suppression: heat detector (which activate when there is enough warmth to melt the plastic), smoke detector (activated by particles of carbon), and fire suppression sprinkler systems which activate one sprinkler head at a time, based on heat below. The latter point of singular activation is important because the water damage can be worse than fire damage. By Fire code, sprinkler suppression is required when there is a change of use or new construction (including additions). The City’s threshold to require sprinklers is 3,000 s.f. If a building is vacant more than a year, the use is considered to reset and even a use that previously existed in the structure without fire suppression may now require the installation of fire suppression. Even the installation of fire alarms can be a good addition.

Downtown Station/Master Plan - Director Untch advised the Commission that the City Council has adopted the new Downtown Station/ Master Plan. The project was completed over 18 months

with a process overseen by an ad hoc Citizens Committee. The document includes seven “opportunity” areas. The plan includes a pro-active discussion of what could occur on these parcels, with redevelopment. The Plan does not, however, anticipate use of eminent domain to push for redevelopment of the sites.

- V. Director Divita reminded the Commission to complete the **Open Meetings Act** Training from Illinois Attorney General.
- VI. Motion by Commissioner Mann, seconded by Commissioner Burgess, the meeting adjourned at 9:25.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Divita".

Ellen Divita