

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
6101 CAPULINA AVENUE
JUNE 9, 2010**

1. Call to Order/Chairman's Report. Pursuant to proper notice in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Acting Chair Randy Israel who led the assemblage in the pledge of allegiance. In attendance were:

2. Roll Call
 - The following members were present:
 - Village Trustee Dan DiMaria, Pro Tem
 - Randy Israel, Acting Chair
 - David Lewis
 - Nancy Strauss-Kelly
 - Janine Witko
 - Chris Limjoco

 - The following members were absent:
 - George Alpogianis
 - Karen Johnson
 - Bharti Patel

 - The following individuals were present at the meeting:
 - Village Trustee Larry Gomberg
 - Village Trustee Maria Toth
 - John D. Said, Staff Liaison
 - Al Heinrich
 - Rosetta Metz
 - Jennifer Mitchell
 - Eric Poders

2. Review of Minutes. Commissioner Witko made a motion to approve the minutes of April 21, 2010 and seconded by Commissioner Strauss-Kelly.

3. Introduction. Trustee Liaison DiMaria introduced the new Community and Economic Development Director John D. Said, AICP (American Institute of Certified Planners). Mr. Said stated he has worked in community development for over 20 years and in various kinds of programs. He tries to perform professionally at a place where good planning, effective zoning and economic development all meet. Good economic development is a place where good planning happens and where local regulations go hand in hand in a community.

4. Discussion of 2010 EDC Projects. Mr. Said stated he sent out to the commission a *Strategic Plan for Community and Economic Development*. He proceeded with a power point presentation on his plan. He does believe in using ideas that have worked in other places. He would like input as to what the commission would like to work on for short term and long term goals. Also, to try and get outside of the commission members comfort zones. He would like different commission members to assist him on visiting different business owners. Also, if a commission member would visit a business with Mr. Said, discussion could center on the businesses needs and goals. He believes partnerships are a vital necessity in building a community and Village. Raising interaction with businesses and commission members is a goal.

Dempster Street is an upcoming project and is intended to begin after July 4. The repaving will help generate new investment on the part of private parties, but the economic development commission must also question what they could do to help private properties. Also have goals and recommendations be given. There are various programs which we can discuss to help new businesses come into town and stay here. A look needs to be had at updating 1999 strategic planning document.

In a handbook for the Unified Development Code, zoning regulations might be something worth considering looking into. Economic Development recommendations include real estate lunches in which you talk to real estate agents about your community. This increases the level of visibility. This also works on industrial lunches. New marketing might want to be considered. Planning and Zoning Commission is an important partner. We will need to work with them closely. Mr. Said also wants to reorganize the web site's portion of available properties. He will give the commission a monthly status report. In the long term strategy it is important to have real estate people and property owners involved. Mr. Said did send out an e-mail blast stating he was here and has had a response of some acquaintances wanting to come and speak with him already. He thinks we need to promote the Village by going on the web site pages such as Yelp and writing a review. These really do help a community. Any comments and questions are always welcomed.

A few commission members asked about the strategic plan approved one year ago. Mr. Said commented that bringing some of the elements of the plan forward mixed with current plans is very sensible. Mr. Said will review the plan before the next meeting and it will be discussed.

5. Chamber of Commerce Report. Rosetta Metz reported on the Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing and Dinner to be held on Wednesday, June 16. The Morton Grove Library will start their business which is to show their library card in September. It is a program to get the businesses out in the community.
6. Village Staff Report. Mr. Said is learning a great deal about the town. He does like it and sees great potential. He commented on the public works projects around town and is very impressed. It is very positive.

Trustee DiMaria stated he would like the EDC and the Chamber to work much closer and he would like a commissioner, Mr. Said, and himself to go and visit a business at least once a month. Commissioner Lewis stated he would go on the first business outing in July.

A question was asked about Culver's. Trustee DiMaria stated they are still trying to secure financing. Mr. Said stated that developers need to carry close to 50% equity to deal with banks. They simply do not have it.

Commissioner Lewis spoke about a discussion that was held at the last meeting referencing utilizing the quarterly newsletter and highlighting four different businesses in it, the services, location, etc. Mr. Said stated that possibly when the commission member goes into the business they speak with the owners and ask them if they would like to be mentioned in the newsletter and to give them encouragement.

Trustee DiMaria stated a new graphic and logo is needed. We need to brand our town. The Village has met with companies that have done this type of branding. Commissioner Lewis spoke about the TribLocal, which allows you to post anything in the paper for free. Press releases also need to go out to the Bugle which features Morton Grove. North Shore Magazine changed its name to Make It Better which also puts publicity in it about the surrounding towns. The cable channel has a show called Contempo which shows items about different Villages. These are really items we need to pursue.

Commission members can contact and speak with outside businesses. However, Mr. Said stated he found the real estate representatives are easier to speak with.

Commissioner Lewis felt that a lawn mower place in Skokie should be contacted and given incentive on coming into Morton Grove. Mr. Said stated that if there are zoning issues, we have to find a way to make it work. Commissioner Lewis stated the Village really needs a food store. Everyone realize this. Prairie View Plaza is owned by a family in Canada which owns many other pieces of property and hopefully will entice some great stores to enter the plaza. Trustee DiMaria stated new shopping malls draw big businesses.

Resident Eric Poders suggested defining what the EDC is, interviews should be had with previous commissioners and find out why they left, and immediately define the various corridors of the Village and the commissioner's head up a campaign to promote each corridor. Also find the ethnic groups and define the community for their groups. The strategic plan needs to be followed.

Mr. Said stated that industrial is undervalued and it contributes significantly to the property tax base and the services it demands are minimal.

7. Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Commission, meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm. and approved via voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Trustee Dan DiMaria
Pro Tem
Chairperson

These minutes were approved by the Commission at a meeting held on July 20, 2010.

APPROVED