

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2023
MEETING OF THE MORTON GROVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
MORTON GROVE VILLAGE HALL, 6101 CAPULINA AVENUE, MORTON GROVE, IL 60053**

Pursuant to proper notice in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Secretary Zoe Heidorn called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Dahlberg, Fernandez, Hardegree, Khounani, Laliwala, Mathew, O'Connor, Pandit

Commissioners Absent: None

Village Staff Present: Zoe Heidorn, Assistant Village Administrator

Village Trustees Present: Trustee Witko

Commissioner Dahlberg made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the meeting of December 11, 2023. Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion. All present at the January meeting voted in favor. Motion passed.

Zoe Heidorn provided an update on active projects, including:

- 8350 Lehigh Avenue, an 89-unit townhome development by Lexington Homes
- 8500-50 Lehigh, a 36-unit mixed-unit development by MHDC SLF LLC
- Napleton Honda at Waukegan and Dempster
- Everclean Car Wash at 9120 Waukegan
- New Village Hall and Police Station at 6201 Dempster

The Commissioners discussed the active projects.

Ms. Heidorn said that the business survey was prepared but would not be distributed until later in the year as staff was focusing on Restaurant Month and other initiatives. There has also been no new activity with respect to the Guide to Opening a New Business in Morton Grove and business brochure. She noted that she recently transitioned positions and is now the Assistant Village Administrator. The Village welcomed Brandon Nolin, AICP, as the new Community Development Administrator in January.

The Commissioners discussed the idea for a business workshop that might provide information on Village programs and opportunities. Commissioner Khounani suggested that the workshop could share information about other topics.

Commissioner Laliwala suggested that the workshop could feature a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and discuss tax savings opportunities with business owners. He noted that taxes are an attractive topic for businesses.

Chairperson Fernandez asked if this would be a series or a one-time event. He also asked if this would be a longer event or just a one-to-two-hour event.

Ms. Heidorn said that they could start off with a one-time event and decide to continue it based on success and demand for additional events. She recommended keeping it short and suggested that it could be a breakfast event on a Friday morning. The Commissioners agreed that offering food would help attract participants.

Trustee Witko noted that just like the Sustainability Expo, the event might grow organically based on participant feedback and demand for future events. She noted that the initial idea was to raise awareness about the Facade Improvement Program, but that this could include other opportunities for businesses.

Commissioner Khounani suggested that the focus could be on connecting businesses with different types of existing programs, including Village, County, State, and Federal programs.

Trustee Witko said that she would still want to include promotion of the Facade Improvement Program. Not taking advantage of the program is like leaving free money on the table. She hoped that properties along Waukegan and Dempster would learn about the program and take advantage of it to improve the overall appearance of the corridors.

Commissioner Devesh added that the business workshop could be like a show and tell and support business collaboration. Chairperson Fernandez said that the workshop should feature a variety of programs and features that are advantageous to businesses.

Trustee Witko said that they needed to create a draw to attract businesses. She agreed that tax information would be desirable to local businesses. Commissioner Dahlberg added that they could also ask for feedback from businesses and hold a Q & A session. The Commissioners continued to discuss ideas about the business workshop. They agreed that it should be held later in the year, possibly October or November of 2024.

The Commissioners then discussed the Sustainability Expo and how the Commission could be part of the Village event this year. Commissioner Dahlberg described the event as having many booths with information for residents. Commissioner Laliwala described his experience at the event in previous years. They agreed that it's a family-friendly event that is geared toward residents, not businesses.

Trustee Witko suggested that they feature local businesses that supply eco-friendly products, such as Menards. The Commissioners agreed that this is a good idea.

Commissioner Fernandez said the Glenview has a community-wide motto of "hug the bear," which means to hug the community. He said that Morton Grove could adopt a similar motto but relate it to shopping local or sustainability.

The Commissioners continued to discuss the future Sustainability Expo and agreed that their contribution should (1) feature local businesses, (2) give businesses tips on how to be green, and (3) encourage everyone to shop local.

The Commissioners reviewed the Facade Improvement Program Application submitted by Everclean Car Wash at 9120 Waukegan Road, FIP #24-01. The applicant is proposing the demolition of the northern portion of the existing building, which will be replaced with concrete pavement and vacuum stalls. With total eligible costs determined to be \$13,672, the applicant is eligible to receive up to \$10,000 in grant assistance through the program. The Commissioners reviewed the application package and discussed the property's background. Staff noted that the applicant only provided two like bids, where three are required by the program guidelines. The applicant submitted an email showing that they had reached out to multiple contractors to request bids.

Commissioner Dahlberg made a motion to approve Facade Improvement Program Application FIP #24-01 for 9120 Waukegan Road. Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion.

Commissioner Dahlberg	voting	aye
Chairperson Fernandez	voting	aye

Commissioner Hardegree	voting	aye
Commissioner Khounani	voting	aye
Commissioner Laliwala	voting	nay
Commissioner O'Connor	voting	aye
Commissioner Pandit	voting	aye

Motion passed 5-1.

Commissioner Laliwala said that he could not support the application because they did not provide three like bids as required. Commissioner Fernandez asked if a third bid might affect the grant award. Commissioner Laliwala said that likely it would not, but that there's a large difference between the bids submitted and he has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure the Village's dollars are being spent responsibly. The Commissioners discussed the requirement for like bids.

Hearing no further business or public comment, Commissioner Pandit moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hardegree.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 7:42 p.m.

Minutes by: Zoe Heidorn