

City of Darien
Minutes Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, September 11, 2019

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairwoman Tina Beilke. Other committee members present were Louis Mallers, Bryan Gay, Matt Weberling, Robert Hahn, Angelo Imbrogno, Mary Coyle Sullivan (City Counsel Liaison) and Joseph Marchese (Mayor) was also present. The meeting was held at Darien City Hall.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments

3. Approval of Minutes - August 14, 2019

The minutes as submitted for August 14, 2019 were approved.

4. New Business

a. John Manos -Brookhaven Plaza Update

John described recent activity, including maintenance and repairs for the property at Brookhaven Plaza and development details for the out lot at that corner of Plainfield Rd and Cass Ave. He showed a rendering of the proposed development and discussed a few options that may be included. He also discussed activity with current and prospective tenants regarding both properties and their tentative plans in the future.

b. Committee Member Opening

5 applications were received from those interested in the open position available in the committee. Joseph Marchese (Mayor) introduced Nick Pitzer, currently on the Executive Board at The Darien Chamber of Commerce and mentioned he might be a good candidate. Nick introduced himself and described his experience and willingness to join the committee if approved.

c. Training/Seminars

Bryan Gay discussed a training opportunity granted by ComEd for someone on the EDC to learn more about topics relating to Economic Development. Suggestions were made to take advantage of this learning opportunity via other avenues, perhaps a training presentation to the EDC and/or Planning and Zoning Committee and possibly including Aldermen as well. Bryan agreed to inquire more about this possibility and report back to the committee.

5. Old Business

a. Business Statistics and Data-

The committee started a dialogue about the various taxes shown on the (SIC) Code Reporting page. Joseph Marchese (Mayor) informed the committee that individual taxes paid by businesses to The City of Darien was confidential and could not be released. Joe also expressed concern about the occupancy of The Chestnut Court Shopping Center as current tenants are being actively recruited by other property owners in surrounding cities to change locations. More was discussed about the revitalization of Grove Shopping Center and what might be done with The Chestnut Center to improve its current condition. Some time was devoted to the possibility of building a colored/electronic monument sign to be utilized for the benefit of businesses and residents and pros and cons were discussed as well.

b. Incentive Formalization (Vision/Mission)

The committee discussed the desire to have a platform for current and prospective businesses to apply to the City of Darien and if needed, request support. The Mayor discussed some opportunities that may be coming to Darien into the future. It was noted that not many surrounding communities offered this option which makes it an appealing benefit to the City of Darien for applicants.

c. Incentive Matrix/Template-

The committee discussed the Incentive Matrix and noted that the template is almost complete. The goal of the matrix is to be comprehensive in nature with the ability to evaluate and quantify all applicants equally. Another goal is to provide a clean and easy process for applicants and to work in conjunction with the application on the city website.

d. Survey Darien Connect Results-

The committee discussed sending another survey to Darien residents to get feedback on what type of businesses they would like to see and to obtain insight on the current array of businesses within Darien. Some minor additions and changes were discussed.

e. Darien Marketing Material Update-

Joseph Marchese (Mayor) mentioned that Al Kohout from Alkaye Media Group already has a lot of great footage he has worked to obtain for the video and marketing material. He would like some direction on the structure of the video that the City wants to pursue.

6. Next Scheduled Meeting

The committee's next meeting will be Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 7pm.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:10pm