

VILLAGE OF RIVERSIDE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Thursday, January 10, 2019
Riverside Township Hall, Room 30
MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by CHAIRPERSON HERBST at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: CHAIRPERSON KRISTINE HERBST
COMMISSIONER BRIAN PLAIN
COMMISSIONER ALEX GALLEGOS
COMMISSIONER JACK BUOSCIO
COMMISSIONER SUZANNE KAHLE (arrived late)
COMMISSIONER JENNIFER FOURNIER

Absent: None.

Also Present: Community Development Director Sonya Abt
Eric Wagner, Visit Oak Park
Trustee Peters
Amy, Fenwick Student Visitor

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS moved, seconded by COMMISSIONER PLAIN, to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission. Voice Vote. All ayes. **Motion passed.**

5. CHAIRPERSON REPORT

CHAIRPERSON HERBST shared that the 150th Anniversary Committee is being lead by the Olmsted Society and the Landscape Advisory Commission. She stated that RAW will have a 150 related "Spectacle". CHAIRPERSON HERBST also welcomed and introduced the new commissioner, Jennifer Fournier.

6. LIAISON REPORT (these items were taken out of order and heard after item 8.A)

A. Village Board Update

Trustee Peters noted that CMAP is launching their 2050 Plan and asked if Staff could share that with the Commission and the Board.

B. Staff Update

Director Abt shared that the Village has hired a commercial real estate broker to represent the Village to sell the 2710 Harlem property. The company is David King and

Associates. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER asked why the Village decided to go outside of Riverside for a broker. Director Abt stated that the Village was looking for a firm with commercial real estate experience/expertise in the local area. Director Abt noted that they had represented other properties in Riverside as well as in the surrounding area. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER stated she would like to see the Village focus more on supporting local businesses.

Director Abt shared:

- still working with IDOT on getting the permits approved for the directional signs.
- Metra Intersection Improvement Project is on the January 18th letting with the state. Construction will most likely begin in April.
- CD Department issued a build out permit for a nail salon at 2726 S Harlem which is part of the unit the daycare was looking at. The daycare did withdraw their zoning application.
- Riverside TV is working on the final editing for the 34 East Lounge business promotional video. Staff hopes to have a cut of that to share with the Commission soon.
- The 2018 Façade Grant Projects have all wrapped up and had their final inspections. Staff is now working with the applicants on filing their refund requests so they can be processed.
- The Village Manager is asking the various commissions to put together a content calendar for Staff to incorporate into the Village's social media calendar. Please share any important events or priorities you'd like to see on the Village's social media pages.

Director Abt also shared that St. Mary's purchased the PNC Bank building. Their closing was that afternoon. She stated they would be moving their administrative offices into the building. Offices are permitted uses. The Commissioners expressed some disappointment at losing a commercial property in the downtown.

C. Chamber of Commerce Update

COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS stated the Holiday Stroll was very successful. Weather was not too bad. He stated they did not have a date set yet for the next chamber meeting.

7. CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT REPORT: None

8. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Presentation by Eric Wagner of Visit Oak Park on their new branding and marketing efforts for 2019 and potential partnership opportunities. (This item was heard out of order after item 5.A.)**

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COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS suggested that this item be taken out of order since Mr. Wagner was visiting us and the other items did not have visitors waiting. There was a consensus amongst the commissioners to hear this item first.

Mr. Wagner introduced himself as the new executive director of Visit Oak Park which is this region's certified convention and visitor bureau (CVB). Visit Oak Park represents 18 communities, not just Oak Park. He shared some of his background with the state's office of tourism. He also went over some tourism facts noting that tourism is big business in Illinois. He shared where many of the visitors to the Chicago area are coming from both regionally and internationally. He also went over how the CVB is funded.

He shared that Visit Oak Park is restructuring and making the necessary changes to take local tourism to the next level. This included closing the visitor's center. He shared that they have been working with a marketing agency to rebrand the CVB, which will officially relaunch in May. There will be a new website and a new marketing strategy which will be much more digitally and mobile focused. Mr. Wagner shared the new branding for Visit Oak Park going over the different elements stating that they tried to make it so that it could be easily incorporate the member communities as well. It utilizes and icon system with icons for each community as well as each type or category of activities.

Mr. Wagner also stated that Visit Oak Park has invested in video and photography for their marketing. These would be incorporated into their new website. They are also publishing an "inspiration guide" (rather than a visitor's guide) that would be poly-bagged with the May/June Midwest Living Magazine and with May Chicago Magazine to all their subscribers. He provided the Commission with the latest draft of the guide for the Commissioners to see. Several Riverside businesses/events are mentioned in the guide.

Mr. Wagner talked about ways to partner with Visit Oak Park. He said they could help us develop our tourism by creating a micro tourism website that would exist on the Visit Oak Park website with a vanity URL. Or he stated they can co-op with advertising or marketing. Mr. Wagner stated they are willing to match our budget dollar for dollar for a marketing campaign.

He asked that we provide them a list of events for them to include in their website. He stated they want the website to be full of content.

He also stated that as part of our membership there is an opportunity to create an Illinois Made video for either Flur or Higgins Glass both of which have been nominated as new Illinois Made businesses, if they are selected.

CHAIRPERSON HERBST asked if there would be a cost associated with the microwebsite. Mr. Wagner stated he did not believe there would be or if there was it would be pretty nominal. He noted he had not finalized numbers with their website designer yet. The Commissioners were very interested in the matched funding for a marketing campaign. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER asked if any other communities had taken them up on the co-op offer. Mr. Wagner stated that yes River Forest is. He also noted that the Zoo and the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust are also interested. He noted that Brookfield and Schiller Park are also interested. CHAIRPERSON HERBST asked if the Village's branding could still be incorporated into the marketing campaign. Mr. Wagner said they would be willing to be flexible. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER stated she was interested in the partnering and how we could piggyback on the Visit Oak Park advertising to those who are interested in visiting Oak Park and market to them with Riverside specific ads. She stated that could be huge for Riverside and since it's already targeted the Village wouldn't be spending a lot of money on something that isn't proven.

Mr. Wagner thanked the Village for being part of Visit Oak Park and for allowing him to present to them this evening.

CHAIRPERSON HERBST thanked Mr. Wagner for coming and stated that the Commission would discuss further and Staff would reach out to him to follow up.

B. Discussion and recommendations to Staff on Marketing Plan for 2019.

CHAIRPERSON HERBST asked Staff to go over the proposal from Point B. Director Abt stated that the Board had approved a \$5,000 marketing budget in the final 2019 Budget. Director Abt stated she reached out to Point B for some suggestions on how to utilize that money this year. Point B has provided two options:

1. Collateral development. Creating a printed economic development brochure for the Village. Image-centric, 4-page brochure. Village to provide copy.
2. Facebook campaign. A digital campaign targeted to adults 24-64 within a 10-mile radius, with a household income above \$75K that exhibit interest in dining, shopping and architecture. The campaign would utilize a video Facebook ad (either a new ad or editing the old one down to around 30 sec.). The campaign would be pulsed to be active in spring and summer.

Director Abt noted that additional money would be needed for either printing or the creation of the Facebook ad. Hamish estimated about \$575 to print 250 copies.

COMMISSIONER FOURNIER questioned who Point B identified the target was for this piece of media. Director Abt stated they did not get into those details, however anticipated working with our various partners (chamber, zoo, realtors, restaurants, etc.) throughout the community to distribute and to have them for ICSC conferences. COMMISSIONER PLAIN stated he did not think a printed brochure was the wisest use of the budget. COMMISSIONER BUOSCIO and COMMISSIONER KAHLE agreed. COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS questioned the timing proposed and thought Gustafson's images and video could be used for a fall/winter campaign. COMMISSIONER KAHLE said she would like to see cohesion between the marketing campaigns. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER thought that partnering with Visitor Oak Park will help our brand and was in favor of partnering with them for a digital campaign as you can better gage your success. She noted that she would like to know what the expected clicks and reach are for the facebook campaign. She'd also like to know how much is for ad spend and how much is for administration.

There was some discussion about next steps. COMMISSIONER PLAIN stated any partnership with Visit Oak Park should coordinate with their kick off in the spring. COMMISSIONER BUOSCIO suggested trying to create more content or reuse some previous content and try to boost some posts so we don't lose momentum. COMMISSIONER PLAIN suggested that Visit Oak Park won't be ready to do anything until June so they suggested using part of the marketing budget to boost posts on the Village's social media over the next few months. The Commissioners were in agreement on this. The Commission suggested utilizing maybe \$100 a month to boost posts for the next 4-5 months. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER stated she could provide Staff with a formula for posting on social media to help over the next few months.

After some discussion, the Commission was in agreement that a digital campaign was the way to go and requested that Staff look into pursuing a digital campaign with Visit Oak Park and see if the Village's branding could be incorporated into that campaign.

9. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Continued discussion on the Commission's priorities and focus for 2019

CHAIRPERSON HERBST asked the Commission to think about the Commission's priorities and focus for 2019.

Previously discussed items included:

- Supporting the 150th Anniversary Events
- Following through on previous year's projects (wayfinding signage)

- Marketing Budget
- Partnering with Chamber for an educational event for the local businesses.
- Facilities Needs Analysis Visioning
- Partnering with Visit Oak Park

She asked the Commission if they had any other ideas. COMMISSIONER FOURNIER brought up that a large part of our business community is artistic. She suggested that a makers' space incubator could do well in Riverside. That it fits our brand and our identity. It could fill a vacant space and create a space for small artisanal businesses to get started in. It could also be a major draw. COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS suggested the Gas Light Realty space as a possible location. COMMISSIONER KAHLE talked about how this could work or play out. Suggesting perhaps it starts out small as a pop-up during major events. That could bring people to venture further into town, could inspire them to come back for another event and then maybe that builds up expectation that these "maker events" should happen more often. The Commission thought it was an interesting idea. Maybe Staff or Commissioners could reach out to the different landlords about the idea.

10. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Director Abt noted that Staff had provided the Commission with a couple interesting articles from the Downtown Idea Exchange. Director Abt also noted that she has been on a steering committee over the past 6 months on the Des Plaines River Trail Extension including feeder routes into the trail. Riverside has been promoting a connector bike route through downtown Riverside to this proposed Des Plaines River Trail extension and hopes to have that included in the final plan. President Sells has also been working to get the same connector bike route through downtown approved and signed as a connector route to the Salt Creek Trail.

11. ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER PLAIN motioned to adjourn the meeting. COMMISSIONER GALLEGOS seconded the motion. Voice vote. All ayes. **Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.**