

**SPECIAL MEETING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
CITY OF OAKDALE
JANUARY 5, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the City of Oakdale was held on Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at the Oakdale City Hall, Oakdale, Minnesota. Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:15p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present.

Chair: Bill Burns

Vice Chair: Dave Halper

Commissioners: Erin Voca
Lynn Stafford
Gary Severson
Frank Orsello
Bob Stiglich
Stacie Penn
Jeff Bates
Holly Koep
Bob Boullianne

Also Present: Andy Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Chris Volkers, City Administrator

Via Zoom: John Shardlow, Stantec
Jon Rausch, Real Estate Broker, Cushman & Wakefield
David Wellington, President/Co-owner Wellington Management

Absent: Susan Olson, City Council Liaison

Quorum Present: YES NO

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PENN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2021.

Ayes 10

Abstain 0

Nays 0

Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Council Liaison Update

No report.

Guest Speakers

Guest speakers, John Shardlow, Jon Rausch and David Wellington, spoke to what they feel is the best role a city's Economic Development Commission can play to promote and support high quality development.

Questions and Comments:

How important is it for cities to have and maintain accurate information about available land, the state of its infrastructure, pending projects and community priorities?

- *Jon Rausch – Let the market dictate what businesses to attract to avoid subsidizing uses that may not have longevity in the community.*
- *David Wellington – Have city staff provide clarity and guidance regarding city's interests when looking for economic development.*

How important are relationships in the cities where you are exploring projects?

- *Jon Rausch –Very important. Clients often ask if the Community Development Director and City Council are in agreement with a project. If not, many times the developer will ask City Council directly for opinions to not waste time and money.*
- *David Wellington – Agrees with previous comment. Currently looking at communities that are more politically aligned with development projects.*

John Shardlow – Believes the general market in Oakdale is the best he has ever seen it.

- *David Wellington – A recent flight to the suburbs is happening again and Oakdale is doing a great job making it easy for retailers.*
- *Jon Rausch – Buying trends have changed in the last couple years. For instance, vacancies in industrial real estate is significantly lower than the past and there is significant rental growth.*
- *John Shardlow – Impressed with how robust the development response has been along the BRT line but the market seems to be driving it.*
- *David Wellington – There is a strong demand for attainable housing for the workforce who can't afford homes yet or choose not to own and are seeking opportunities in cities like Oakdale.*
- *Jon Rausch – Suggested a shorter lead time to shovel in ground to stand above other communities and encourage development, be ready to streamline.*

Chair Burns stated that residents are asking when restaurants will be in the Oakdale Station/Oakdale Marketplace and asked why something isn't there already?

- *Jon Rausch – As current broker for property, he is working on finding restaurants but current world crisis has forced many restaurants to close their doors. The cost for a restaurant to build from ground up is \$4.5 million and rent is extremely expensive. Oakdale Station needs a 360° draw. Currently, Lake Elmo, Demontreville and cornfields are the surrounding land uses and restaurants don't want to build yet but residents do. Question is -do you build the restaurants first or the homes?*
- *John Shardlow – Reported on challenges currently preventing building such as capacity in the sanitary sewer lift station and 3M contamination in creek.*
- *David Wellington – Even with resources it is very hard to dictate land use, it will still depend on the market. At times, it depends on concept and the business owner to be successful.*
- *John Shardlow – 4Front Campus is currently amending their PUD and they are aware of the community's interest for mixed use development.*

Chair Burns inquired about the property east of Target.

- *Jon Rausch – Currently working with Northpoint to develop a 750 sq. ft industrial site but required studies have slowed progress. Suggested Oakdale take care of land that requires AUAR/EIS to prevent delays in future building. For example, Amazon will not select certain land sites unless all testing is complete.*
- *John Shardlow explained the AUAR is an alternative way to perform an EIS. Many communities are opting to perform AUARs proactively.*

Commissioner Halper asked how communities express their streamline processes to brokers?

- *Jon Rausch – Have a single point of contact to communicate effectively. It is preferable to speak to one person who is able to make decisions and answer questions. If answers are not given from staff, developers will directly to the decision maker. Communities that have that streamlined process have seen great success.*
- *John Shardlow – Continue to be proactive in small area studies to layout plan for areas, zoning, environmental reviews but without skipping steps and performing low quality development.*
- *David Wellington – When cities are able to have all parties involved get together at one time, it signals that the city is actively and aggressively recruiting development and sends a positive message to developers.*

Community Development Director, Andy Gitzlaff asked what role an EDC should play?

- *David Wellington – Usually a commission will have more expertise in community development and can help communicate to city councils and residents as well as provide backup to the Community Development Department.*
- *Jon Rausch – Has experience serving on commissions and boards and believes it's best when you have a variety of backgrounds serving to provide objective input.*

- *John Shardlow – Cities that are the most successful have advisory commissions who are empowered to do research, have discussions and be able to recommend plans.*

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Community Development Director, Andy Gitzlaff, gave a brief introduction of his work experience and provided a presentation on development projects.

Current Projects:

- HOM Furniture – Currently under construction. Additional pad site available for future development.
- Animal Emergency and Referral Center of Minnesota – Currently under construction.
- Water Treatment Facility – Building on current tower site.
- Eagle Point Elementary – New school scheduled to open fall 2022.

Looking Forward:

- Bike and Pedestrian Plan – Resume planning in 2022
- Glenbrook Small Area Plan – Hwy 36 and Hwy 120 – Planning to begin in 2022.
- 4Front Technology Campus – Looking at adding a mix of uses through a PUD amendment.
- Priority Courier – Planning on moving their HQ to 50th Street.
- Tartan High School Renovations and Additions – To begin construction in March 2022.
- Oakdale Station and Oakdale Marketplace – Increased developer interest.
- Willowbrooke – Residential construction underway.
- Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project – Will start construction late this year. Developer interest in Helmo and Greenway Stations.
- Cornerstone, Break ground in 2022.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Koep mentioned the upcoming Oakdale Area Chamber of Commerce (OACC) meeting at Oak Marsh and the February 3, 2022 meeting.

Commissioner Severson is excited for bike and pedestrian trails at Willowbrooke and hopes it will connect to the other trails within the county.

Commissioner Boullianne spoke about a Star Tribune article regarding Edina using the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to provide technical assistance programs to 10-15 small businesses. Another article in the Wall Street Journal mentioned how large businesses have weathered the “Great Resignation” but small businesses are greatly impacted. Also mentioned how recently the taxes for his employees tripled for the State Unemployment Tax Act (SUTA). This was due to all four employees going on unemployment during the state shutdown. All four have been rehired. Suggested asking council if there is a way to help businesses who have experienced this.

Commissioner Orsello, owner of Cavalier Barber Shop, has three employees who are all independent contractors and is thankful he has not experienced the unemployment issues as other small businesses.

Chair Burns clarified completion dates for HOM Furniture and Animal Hospital are in 2022, Suggested EDC tour 4Front Technology Campus as well as other new development site.

In response to Chair Burn's question if bike and pedestrian trails are planned through Willowbrooke, Administrator Volkert replied there are plans for trails throughout with smaller parks and larger open space areas. The city is responsible for park planning and Ms. Volkert will provide a map to the Commission.

Chair Burns suggested a Congratulations/Welcome package with gifts from local businesses to the first homeowner in Willowbrooke.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next Economic Development Commission meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2022 at 5:15pm.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY CHAIR BURNS AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KOEP TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 5, 2022 AT 6:45 PM.

Ayes	10	Abstain	0
Nays	0	Motion Carried	

Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Buhl, Recording Secretary