

 **DRAFT**

**THE MEETING OF THE EDA BOARD HELD ON OCTOBER 21, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M.,
AT THE PRINCETON CIYT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M., by Victoria Hallin. Members present at City Hall were Charles Snustead, Carrie Peterson, Thom Walker, Genny Reynolds, and Nicolas Taylor. Staff present were Stephanie Hillesheim (Comm. Dev. Manager) and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist).

Sharon Sandberg and Thom Walker. (Walker arrived at 6:01 P.M. just after approval of Minutes)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING ON AUGUST 19, 2021

TAYLOR MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2021 WITH THE REMOVAL OF THE WORD HENNEPIN IN TAYLOR'S COMMENT ON PAGE ONE. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Hillesheim informed the EDA Board she has been looking into the Initiative Foundation and she is figuring out how to use the funds there and it is not clear. There are \$112,871 available funds and she is researching what the funds could be used for. She is also checking if the funds can be used into another type of funding.

Reynolds said what about the Façade Program

Hillesheim will check. She wanted to use it in 2020 for downtown grants during covid and was not supported. It cannot be used that way. She will find out more information.

Walker said the funds might have been for GAP Loans.

Hillesheim is not sure and will ask.

Walker said it is good to start over with what it can be used for. Is there a way to remove the funds from there and place it somewhere else.

Reynolds said if it is state funds we should have control of the use, but federal funds we would not.

REPORTS:

Light Up Princeton: Hillesheim said the lights are on November 27th.

Mini Dazzle: The Chamber is holding the Mini Dazzle parade. They will start in the City Hall parking lot to First Street and go to 4th Avenue to the library and down to the Mark Park where the lights are turned on and Santa will be in the park during the day. Need volunteers for 36 nights. They need four people a night. Five groups applied for the grant and will help setup and take down the display; Soccer Boosters, Cross Country Boosters, Ambassadors, Wrestling Boosters, and Boy Scout Troop. Each group needs ten people. November 8th thru the 12th Public Works will put up the post for the lights. The other volunteers will be helping out on November 13th and November 20th from 10:00 AM till 2:00 P.M. The Princeton Public Utilities will come on November 9th and hang up the lights with their bucket trucks.

Industrial Park: The plat will be sent to the County for recording and will be ready to sell the lots officially.

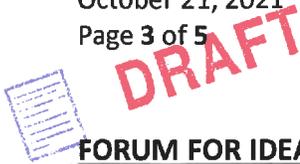
Manufacturing Month: Each week this month a manufacturer will host a tour. Crystal Cabinets, Plastic Products, USDP, and GMI will be hosting next week. Next month is Business Administration month which will include panel discussions with students as well as mock interviews for 11th grade students. January 19th we will be hosting a career expo in the malls for students and community members. She researched assessments of our wages in the area for jobs and we are competitive with outside communities. Princeton Campaign is to promote Princeton where they want to live and work here and this involves the Chamber, School District, and businesses.

Workforce Tour to Hutchinson: She said the Workforce had a tour in Hutchinson and it was very interesting. It was very inspiring on what can be done in an incubator setup. They toured their school also. Their Tiger Path Workforce is amazing. They have four huge classrooms that are dedicated to careers. It is a state-of-the-art facility. They have industrial equipment and they used MIF Loans. Low interest loan from DEED and a portion of it stays in the city. They used that funding to help along with city funds and business manufacturing funds. The downtown lost a few businesses during covid and they had a contest for any business to win a space for a vacant area downtown. Two businesses combined in one site that are both food businesses and they share the kitchen area. The city pays the rent for a short time until they get on their feet. The applicants have to provide a business plan.

The brewery is annexed into the city. The site that is in the old Shipwreck site.

The Chamber is working on a Welcoming Committee. They are looking at reinvigorating businesses to come to town. They want to increase involvement in the community.

Grants: Toni Fulton is continuing to move forward with her project. She is looking at the drainage that goes in front of her doorway and needs to be corrected. Princeton Insurance has been working on their façade with painting of their building and new lights. We have had a few inquiries of people regarding business loans and grants along with future expansions.



FORUM FOR IDEAS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. EDA Strategic Plan Update

Stephanie Hillsheim, Comm. Dev. Manager Memo:

Background:

The City of Princeton last updated the Economic Development Strategic Plan in 2012. Staff reviewed the EDSP and it is called to be a guiding document to help the EDA make priorities on local public investment. It is important to review Strategic Plans on a regular basis and update them as needed. With this not being updated since 2012 it is vital the EDA review this plan.

Analysis:

On October 11, 2021 the Princeton EDA began brainstorming to begin updating the Strategic Plan. Faith Goenner from Goenner Consulting facilitated the discussion. Through the process it was determined that a community engagement event may be useful in creating a broad scope for the community.

City staff is currently reviewing the information gathered by Goenner Consulting at the aforementioned meeting and has also reached out to U of MN Extension staff to see their interest in helping engage the community through a community wide presentation and engagement process.

Recommendation:

There is no recommendation or action needed at this time as staff work to identify next steps to recommend to the EDA Board in devising the most accurate and comprehensive strategic plan.

*****End of Staff Memo*****

Hillsheim said at the workshop there was a consensus to have a public meeting. Staff will ask Ben Winchester (University of MN Extension) to speak at a joint EDA, Council, Park Board, and the community for a meeting of how to have positive information to share about the community. She is waiting to hear back from him. She would use funds from the GPS to pay for his time. She will set up a time and date and share it with the Boards.

Snustead asked if there are funds available for someone moving to Princeton. Like an incentive.



Hillesheim said the population is staying the same so that is good, and we are increasing. They were considering buying gift cards from local businesses and give \$2,500 to a new business opening in the city. It is being looked at.

Peterson said there are residents moving out of the community because of the high property taxes, so it is a slippery slope to give someone money to move in to the community.

Snustead said we need an incentive to move here.

Taylor said fiberoptic is needed.

Hillesheim said the companies do not share where they have fiberoptics placed. The City is planning to put fiberoptics in the parks for free internet at Riverside Park, Mark Park, and Riebe Park. Goenner had typed out a report of what was discussed. The next step is the public engagement and then create or reuse the seven areas or make new ones.

Hallin suggested adding on to the Ice Breaker area the golf course and regional hospital. There is parks and camping also.

Peterson said to put a message on the community sign in regards to this meeting being setup.

Reynolds said the fair grounds and race track. Livestock is able to be there.

Hillesheim said in LeSueur they are redeveloping the malls with underground parking. The south mall here has new owners that might condo it out for office space in the previous appliance section of the mall. Their realtor will present the idea to the Chamber for office space.

Taylor asked if Faith Goenner will participate more than just the brainstorming.

Hillesheim said yes. She is waiting to hear back from Ben Winchester first before scheduling a community meeting.

The EDA Board is in agreement with the community meeting with other City Boards joining.

Taylor would like Hillesheim to gather information from other communities where we can be a step above it.

Hallin agreed with Taylor's suggestion.

Reynolds said on the process there are good ideas and the funding piece is important and we do not have the tax base so if it could be incorporated on the funding also.

Walker said some of the funding may not be from the EDA only. The street projects and such are impressive that they are updating to the community.

Hillesheim mentioned funding from Small Cities Development. They are looking at uses the city could use those funds for such as; infrastructure, street scape, owner occupied housing and such. The Council would have to approve the use of the funds. There are apartments that need updating and could be funds for that. They are looking at funding for the planters being put back in the south end of town.

Walker said commercial development on the north side of town should be included.

Hillesheim will add that.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hillesheim said the EDA Board maybe needed for next month and to setup a possible meeting for November 18th. It might be cancelled, but to put it on their calendar. Special meeting noticed will be put up if it is happening.

SNUNSTEAD MOVED, SECOND BY PETERSON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:02 P.M.

ATTEST:

Victoria Hallin, President

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist