

APPROVED

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
ECONOMIC STRATEGY COMMISSION (ESC)
VILLAGE HALL, TERRACE ROOM
FEBRUARY 22, 2023

ESC Members Present: Chairperson Marci Carl, Patrick Keefe, Katie McKillip-Von Feldt, Rob Weil

ESC Members Absent: James Karagianis

ESC Staff Present: Cara Pavlicek, Village Manager and Michaela Kohlstedt, Director Development and Planning Services

Public Present: None

Call to Order & Introductions:

Chairperson Marci Carl called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Review of Minutes- On a motion made by Member Weil and seconded by Member Keefe, the January 25, 2023 minutes were approved as presented.

Public Comment-Hear from the Audience-None

Economic Strategy Commission Topics Review

a) Economic Development Incentives

Manager Pavlicek opened the meeting with a description of the authority of a city government. The Village of Northbrook adopted a council form of management. It combines elected officials with an appointed manager. Any municipality that has more than 25,000 residents has Home Rule Authority. The Village President and six trustees are elected to run the Village with staggered four-year terms. The Village Manager is hired by the Village Board and supervises six or seven positions. The City Manager runs the day to day operations.

Manager Pavlicek provided an overview of the most popular tools used to fund economic development. Money can be borrowed. Revenue can be shared with a private party coming into the community. Special Service Areas (SSAs) can be designated. Cook County Tax incentives can be claimed. Property Tax Rebates can be declared.

Northbrook currently has two TIF Districts; Macy's at Northbrook Court and Dundee and the Skokie Boulevard shopping center. An explanation on how the TIF Districts work was provided by Manager Pavlicek.

Member Weil asked if the Village writes a bond when a TIF zone is established. The answer is that the Village does not do that. Communities do not usually float the bonds first.

Chairperson Carl asked about eminent domain. Manager Pavlicek answered that the Village always tries to negotiate.

Manager Pavlicek stated that in the downtown area, a TIF could only be given on the residential side, not the retail side.

The Village can also look at ways to capture sales tax. Car dealers in the Village have requested, and received, a sales tax rebate. The Village Board can levy a business sales tax district up to 1%. Northbrook does not have a food and/or beverage tax.

The Board frequently uses a Cook County 6B initiative. The proprietor can apply for an eleven year graded reduction on the property tax. This is a good tool for unoccupied parcels. There are incentive opportunities in the downtown area for façade improvement.

Membership asked about hosting more public events in the downtown. Special event space in the downtown area is a challenge. There is not enough staff to support events on the weekends. The Village has to be thoughtful when choosing dates and locations. Event parking can be an issue.

Membership agreed that residential is the new retail. Chairperson Carl stated that more residents are needed in the downtown to support growth downtown. Restaurant parking space is an issue in the area. Manager Pavlicek stated that parking can be paid through SSA. She suggested that the downtown have a more holistic approach. Member Keefe suggested that the commuter lot needed a facelift. Manager Pavlicek answered that the lot is owned jointly by Metra and the Village. The control of the property is a big challenge.

Membership inquired about the Heitman property known as Meadow Shopping Plaza. The property is a shopping Center on the west side of Cherry Lane where Marcello's Father and Son is located. Mr. Heitman also owns the pop-up lot at 1200 Meadow Road, south of Cherry Lane. Mr. Heitman seems to be interested in entertaining an offer on his property. However, the price he is looking for doesn't meet current market conditions. Manager Pavlicek stated that public money could be used to protect the ambience of the area. Many ideas were floated for redevelopment of the shopping center. The Village would have to look at possible parcels to purchase. Membership is interested in creating incentives for the existing businesses.

Membership agreed that it is important to seek businesses to come in to the Village that have working business models. A short list may be developed in the future but available spaces need to be identified first.

Manager Pavlicek explained to membership the process of how to make a recommendation to the Board along with the timeline. Once a plan is formed, it is paper driven. Director Kohlstedt would prepare a draft with all elements. Staff would refine the draft. The Village Attorney may be asked to review the document. A motion would be made to the Board. A thoughtful dialog would take place. The Board may choose to go into a closed session to discuss further and come to an agreement on a course of action.

The TIF on Macy's was discussed. Manager Pavlicek stated that Brookfield, the property owner, will return in the Spring with a full master plan, most likely with a large residential component. The TIF may be expanded for the whole property.

Member Weil suggested that for the Commission to be successful it should hone in on one project. Membership's consensus is to create a comprehensive downtown redevelopment plan prioritizing the Heitman property. Membership will proceed with a detailed script.

Membership agreed that the next problem in the Village is the abundance of existing office space that needs to be repurposed and redeveloped.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjourn

A motion was made by Member Weil and seconded by Member Keefe to adjourn the Economic Strategy Commission meeting at 7:02 p.m. The motion passed by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Anetsberger