

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK
INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Remote Meeting
May 25, 2021

ICDC Members Present: Chairman Patrick Lederer, Mark Bernhard, Jill Carlisle, Tensley Garris, Ron Goldblatt, David Gottlieb, Doug Mahute, Richard Rushkewicz, Curtis Wilens

Staff Present: Deputy Director of Development and Planning Services Michaela Kohlstedt, Deputy Director of Development and Planning Services Chan Yu, and Greenest Region Corps Member Tessa Murray

Guests Present: Michael Ciulla from Liston & Tsantilis, Jerome Star, Northbrook Distribution Center, LLC and President of Sterling Brands LLC.

Public Present: None

Recorder: Sue Anetsberger

Call to Order & Introductions:

Chairman Patrick Lederer called the meeting to order remotely at 7:32 a.m. Today's agenda item order has been changed in order to review the 6b request for 3401-3411 Commercial Avenue first.

Review of Minutes

A motion was made by Member Garris and seconded by Member Bernhard to approve the April 27, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed.

Public Comment-Hear from the Audience-None

3401-3411 Commercial Avenue

Sterling Brands LLC is looking to expand. They were founded in 1943 and manufacture all types of PVC office products including vinyl chair mats and runners. The company sells over 300 different products on the internet. The business was formerly located in Northbrook doing business as Superior American from 1986-1998. The company is currently operating in Wheeling and is outpacing the space they have. Twenty-five employees would be transferred from Wheeling to 3401 Commercial. Predicted growth would have 45-75 employees at 3401 Commercial over the next twelve years. The property is under contract for \$2,450,000. The applicant plans to invest \$500,000 in renovation. Liaison Yu stated that the property tax with the 6b would be \$882,470 over twelve years. If the property is left vacant, the property tax would be \$1.2 million.

The attorney for Mr. Star stated if the applicant is not granted the 6b, the applicant will not close on the property or make improvements on the property.

Jerry Star stated that 3401 Commercial needs a lunch room, offices, and washrooms. They would move a substantial amount of equipment into the new facility. The space is 48,000 sq. ft. and would allow for expansion. A substantial amount of expenditure would be for electrical power. The property will be used

for manufacturing, not as a warehouse. Mr. Star would be the principle owner of the property, tenant, and occupant. He hopes to make the move by the end of June or July. The facility does not contribute to any noise pollution. A second shift is planned for a later date. The property has 44 parking spaces.

Liaison Chan asked Mr. Star about plastic bag recycling for residents. Mr. Star stated that his company would be able to handle the recycling of plastic bags on a monthly basis.

Member Gottlieb asked where the current employees come from and wage information. Mr. Star replied that most workers come from Wheeling or Mt. Prospect. Wages begin at \$14 per hour and advance upwards.

Chairman Lederer stated that ICDC is an advisory commission to the Trustees. The Commission makes recommendations on topics after a discussion takes place. Chairman Lederer asked the Commissioners if this 6b is one that they would like to support. The property has been vacant a number of years. The developer bought the property on speculation and was not successful. The new applicant is bringing a business that has been in Northbrook before. Chairman Lederer stated that it would be nice to see manufacturing jobs back in Northbrook.

Member Rushkewicz stated that he sees an empty building. Jobs add to the vitality of Northbrook. He is in favor of the 6b.

Member Gottlieb recused himself as his company is involved in the sale.

Member Bernhard is not sure of incentivizing the property further.

A motion was made by Member Rushkewicz and seconded by Member Garris that ICDC supports the recommendation that 3401 Commercial Avenue be granted a 6b for the Village of Northbrook. The motion passed with seven Yea, one Nay, and one abstention.

Member Rushkewicz stated that he hope to see the applicant involved in local community organizations and the Chamber of Commerce.

Community Planning Report

Chan Yu, Staff Liaison, provided an update on various projects within the Village. He stated that in the downtown area, the Village is working on improving the sidewalks with barriers between the railroad tracks and Meadow Road on Shermer for outdoor dining opportunities. Barriers will be put out towards the street in order to widen the sidewalk. Member Goldblatt asked for the timeline for the barriers. Liaison Yu will share the information once it is available.

Outdoor dining permit applications are being streamlined. Residents are interested in expanded outdoor dining.

Member Goldblatt asked for information on the Village's marketing of the downtown. He asked if the Village is working with the Park District to plan more local events for the public and to bring more activity to the area. News blasts on social media and the Village website were encouraged, especially if

things are becoming more open. Member Goldblatt suggests that the Village look at potential new events.

Member Garris stated that the downtown was busy with the art festival this past weekend. She stated that there is an appetite for people to get out more and it is a good time for marketing.

Director Kohlstedt stated that Civic is working out how they would like to handle Northbrook Days this year. Member Carlisle stated that one potential location for Northbrook Days is the downtown shopping plazas. Rides would be on one plaza side and food on the other. Director Kohlstedt had no new current information to share.

The Farmers Market begins on June 16th. Director Kohlstedt stated that the Village is conversing with Mr. Heitman to potentially place picnic tables on his vacant lot for takeout food consumption.

Liaison Yu had no new information to share on updates at Northbrook Court or Green Acres.

Member Rushkewicz asked for information on the possibility of Pheasant Run Golf Course being turned into an industrial park. He stated the owner is an industrial developer and broker. The property would be seen as being desirable for a last mile distribution site.

Chairman Lederer stated that industrial is getting crazy. Occupancy at some places is the highest it has been in years.

Update on Village Climate Action Plan

Tessa Murry provided background on the Climate Action Plan and how the ICDC can work as an advocate moving forward. She stated that it is our responsibility to act now to leave the environment in a better state for the next generation. The goal is to reduce the carbon footprint and changes in behavior to improve the environment. The goal of a 35% reduction in carbon emission levels by 2030 is in alignment with the Paris Agreement. This is a reduction from the baseline of Northbrook's carbon emission levels of 2010. There are 190 specific actions which are goal recommendations for the Village to oversee the actions that are under eight categories. The categories are transportation and land use, building energy, waste management, water and waste water, local food, climate health and safety, green space and climate economy. PaleBLUEdot, the environmental consultant, calculates the projected emissions reduction associated with each category upon successful implementation of the plan. Trustee Israel and Trustee Roth, along with staff and community stakeholders, the Park District, School Districts, Library and Commission members have helped draft the Plan. The Plan is open for public review until June 21. Responses are being collected from the public. A Climate Action Plan Public Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16th at the Village Hall. The final plan will be published on July 27, 2021. Trustee Israel stated that the goal is to maximize the benefit and minimize the inconvenience and to encourage behavior change.

The CAP team recommends that ICDC look at 1) transportation and land use, working with local employees to encourage discounted transit programs; 2) waste management on commercial and industrial property, finding ways to measure and reduce waste and better incorporate recycling.

Chairman Lederer shared that the Commission has until June 21 to read, review and make recommendations. A link to the document was provided. He stated that there were some good things that the Commission could add to the document.

Chairman Lederer asked if there were any questions. Member Garris stated it was an excellent document but that it is overwhelming. She would like to see priorities for the recommendations to make achievements more successful. She feels it will be hard to get the public to read all the pages in the document and that it needs to be more digestible.

There are eight categories in the document and each has 10-30 recommendations. Members of the Commission recommended one page documents with bullet points listing top priorities. Membership felt the new documents could be targeted and distributed to three or four specific industries.

Member Rushkewicz commended the members of the taskforce on the work involved. He offered that his bank can share the document beyond local borders. Trustee Israel stated that he hopes that other communities take up the cause and adopt these practices that benefit the environment and the next generation.

Trustee Israel then asked the Commissioners to look at areas of the document that is of interest to them, figure out what is important and provide comment and feedback. The CAP team is looking for detailed comments on what will or won't work.

Com Ed

Sharma Prachi provided information on a free Commonwealth Edison Energy Efficiency Program for commercial, industrial and public sector new construction offering. The program allows individuals to engage with ComEd and receive a potential incentive once ComEd provides an energy analysis. Design can be incentivized in electric and gas. Conditions apply. The project should be in the design phase. Two primary building systems are needed to become engaged. Pathways to enroll in the program were defined. Two types of programs are offered, Best Practices (incentives are calculated on a per sq. foot basis) and Performance Pathway (incentives are calculated in therm and kWh saved). Both involve energy conservation measures. Liaison Chan will forward contact information and a link to the presentation for ICDC member follow-up.

Chairman Lederer asked for a definition of "new construction". The answer is that ground up construction or major renovation, as long as it includes two building systems, is included in the definition. Chairman Lederer asked if changing T12 lighting to high efficiency would qualify. The answer is that it would not qualify because two building systems are needed to engage. Chairman Lederer and Liaison Chan thanked Ms. Prachi for her presentation.

General Business Impact of Pandemic – Discussion

Chairman Lederer stated that he continues to see small businesses growing out of their home space. The businesses are seeking warehouse space.

Chairman Lederer asked for current information from the Village on “mask policy”. Trustee Israel answered that the Village is moving with CDC and State guidelines. He shared that if someone is immunocompromised or has allergies, it is advised to wear a mask. He added that if someone near you is immunocompromised, you should wear a mask in consideration of the individual. Small businesses have the right to ask patrons to wear a mask while in their business. Member Carlisle stated that her business asks patrons to wear a mask because she has customers that are of a young age and also that it is a comfort level for some who are just starting to engage in public situations.

Member Garris stated that is within a business’ rights to ask for mask usage within their facility. She stated that businesses are having employment issues and cannot find staffing. Some businesses are putting up signage asking customers to be patient, as they are short staffed.

Member Bernhard stated it is brutal to get fully staffed. Some companies are offering sign on bonuses.

Member Goldblatt stated that staffing issues are affecting total sales.

Old Business

None

New Business

The Chamber 2021 Annual Golf Outing & Dinner will take place on Friday, June 11 at the Glenview Park Golf Club.

The Chamber Business After Hours (In person) will take place on June 24, 2021 at Marcello’s Restaurant.

The next ICDC Meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2021.

A motion was made by Member Garris and seconded by Member Carlisle to adjourn at 9:04 a.m. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted

Sue Anetsberger