



## **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EDA MEETING**

**EDA Members Present:** Russ Smith, Shelly Peterson, Dave Bjerckness, Lara Wilkinson, Mike Schultz, Ross Peterson

**Staff Present:** Brian Fritsinger, Holly Butcher (City)

**Absent:** Commissioner Steve Micke (EDA); Kelly Zink (Cloquet Area Chamber of Commerce); Connie Christenson (Carlton County)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

President Shelly Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:03 A.M.

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

President Shelly Peterson asked for any corrections or additions to the February 4, 2015 EDA meeting minutes? Hearing none she asked for a motion.

**Motion:** Commissioner Bjerckness moved, and Commissioner Wilkinson seconded, that the EDA approve the February 4, 2015 Cloquet EDA Meeting Minutes.  
(Motion passed 6-0.)

### **APPROVAL OF MONTHLY FINANCIALS**

Ms. Butcher reviewed the financial information for January for the Cloquet EDA and noted that all loans are current. President Shelly Peterson asked for a motion to approve the January 2015 Cloquet EDA financials.

**Motion:** Commissioner Ross Peterson moved, and Commissioner Smith seconded, that the EDA January 2015 financials be approved.  
(Motion passed 6-0.)

### **ACTION ITEMS / PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION**

#### **EDA WORK PLAN 2015**

Mr. Fritsinger led the EDA Commissioners through each goal of the Draft Work Plan and asked for discussion on each item. Commissioner Wilkinson thanked Mr. Fritsinger for the format to spur EDA discussion. EDA Commissioners mentioned their overall general interest in becoming more involved in actual EDA work on topics and are looking for broader ways to get involved.



**Priority 1 – Cloquet Business Park.**

Commissioner Wilkinson asked what the original goal of the Cloquet Business Park was? Mr. Fritsinger stated that the Cloquet Business Park project was not initiated by the Cloquet EDA rather it was a project that the EDA took over after the CDIC disbanded. The CDIC developed the Cloquet Business Park because there were no viable sites available and no empty buildings and several business opportunities were lost to Duluth and Superior. The City had conducted a study to identify the most suitable location for a Business Park and identified land in the Ulland Pit and this site along North Hwy 33 where the Business Park is currently located. Pre-recession, there was a significant retail expansion interest along the North Hwy 33 corridor.

The EDA continued discussions noting that the Business Park has always been a work topic but it has not always been proactively marketed. Commissioner Wilkinson asked, what is the issue with the Business Park that the EDA is trying to resolve?

- 1) Is it a marketing problem?
- 2) Is it not the right site for the original vision?

President Shelly Peterson mentioned that these sites are for new businesses, they are best suited for office park / light industrial (non-retail) space that don't need visibility. This is the area of the City where growth was identified that it would occur in the future. EDA members stated that items 5, 8, and 13 on the draft goals were most relevant to future work. They also stated to consider activating a TIF District for the Business Park to attract development. Mr. Fritsinger mentioned that the Development District is set up and new TIF Districts are currently created in the Business Park as they come forward.

**Direction:**

- A. Rezone the Cloquet Business Park to Office / Light Industrial for a clear message. Currently office and light industrial are allowed in the Business Park along with retail in the front portion of the Park. The idea would be to still allow retail should it want to occur but to guide the development of the Business Park as office / light industrial. As part of this exercise, look at development standards in the Business Park, look at other regional and state business parks as to what land uses they are targeting.
- B. Identify competitive advantages / disadvantages in developing the Business Park.
- C. Develop marketing Plan for Business Park and update marketing materials.
- D. Consider relationships such as build to suit with local contractors.
- E. Consider regional ED relationships such as working with APEX.
- F. Consider business incubator (not speculative building space, business start-up incubator space).
- G. Identify business sectors to attract into the community by surveying existing businesses about their supply chains.
- H. There is internet into the Business Park, but consider other high speed improvement projects into the Business Park to spur development.



**Priority 2 – Promote the Development and Maintenance of Housing Through Implementation of the 2014 Cloquet/Scanlon Housing Study**

EDA members stated that identified draft goals are relevant under this housing category, that the EDA and HRA should be clear on one another's roles in the community. Commissioner Wilkinson stated that identifying areas in Cloquet for new single family developments and spurring those project through tools could be important for the EDA. She also stated that the EDA's role should not be building housing in the 20 – 60% of median income bracket, that should be the role of the HRA to develop. EDA members stated that the EDA should proactively identify redevelopment areas in the community to RFP with owners for redevelopment projects.

**Priority 3 –Develop land along Hwy 33 / I-35 for retail development.**

EDA Commissioners stated they'd like to meet with Ryan Companies in person at a future meeting to hear about the tools and techniques they are using with retail firms to promote the Cloquet site.

**Priority 4 – Downtown Redevelopment / Revitalization.**

EDA members stated a shared vision needs to be developed for Downtown. Commissioners stated that they'd like to identify projects to clean-up / open up / and revitalize or redevelop areas of Downtown (including acquisition / construction) and that the role of the EDA is "if not but for the EDA" these projects would not occur.

**Priority 5 – Develop Business and Community Marketing Program**

EDA members discussed the draft goals under business and community marketing. Commissioners mentioned the importance of promoting accomplishments the non-Minnesota way – talk about the school referendum that will create a new middle school facility. Members discussed that branding exercises are focused on unveiling who we are and how to promote ourselves properly in the region and internally to the Cloquet residential community and existing businesses.

**Priority 6 – Existing Business Retention and Growth**

EDA asked if this section should note a facebook page launched for community development and EDA this year? They stated this section cross references with work force development and supply chains.



**Provide Proactive Economic and Community Development Leadership and Support**

EDA Commissioners mentioned the concept of reaching out to an FDL member as ex-officio representative on EDA to broaden relationship. Lastly, that the City's economic development work, role, and project development is very detailed.

Mr. Fritsinger closed the discussion by stating that there are other items under Riverfront, Workforce Development and other goals, the challenge is to be clear on priority goals and focus of the EDA.

**Informational Updates / EDA Questions**

President Shelly Peterson reminded members of the joint meeting between the Cloquet EDA and City Council is March 17<sup>th</sup> which will be a good opportunity to follow-up on the Draft EDA Goals and gain feedback and guidance from the Council on work directions of the EDA.

**Next meeting date**

Wednesday April 1, 2015

**ADJOURNED 10:05 A.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Holly L. Butcher, Community Development Director