

Public comments received by email or in writing by the Community Development Director prior to 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting were welcome on any topic. Public comments were also allowed during the electronic meeting using the Zoom Meeting ID and Access Code that was posted on the Village's website 2 hours before the meeting. The meeting was conducted electronically via Zoom due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, and based on the authority provided by Executive Order 2020-07, issued by Governor Pritzker on March 16, 2020, as most recently extended by Executive Order 2020-33, dated April 30, 2020, and Executive Order 2020-32, issued by Governor Pritzker on April 30, 2020, limiting public gatherings and suspending the Open Meetings Act physical presence requirement.



VILLAGE OF RIVERSIDE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** The Regular Meeting of the Village of Riverside Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, May 14, 2020, electronically via Zoom. Chairperson Herbst called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

- II. **Roll Call:**

<i>Present:</i>	Chairperson Herbst Commissioner Doherty Commissioner Fournier Commissioner Jacksic Commissioner Kahle Commissioner Plain
<i>Absent:</i>	Commissioner Buoscio
<i>Also Present:</i>	Community Development Director Abt Management Analyst Bouman

- III. **Public Comment**

None.

- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Economic Development Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2020
Commissioner **Kahle made a motion** to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 12, 2020. Commissioner **Fournier seconded** the motion.
AYES: Doherty, Fournier, Jacksic, Kahle, Plain, Herbst.

NAYS: None.

Motion passed.

V. *Chairperson Report*

Chairperson Herbst addressed the Commission for her final time as Chair. She is stepping down from the Economic Development Commission as she prepares to move to New Jersey. She spoke of the challenges that COVID-19 has created and felt heartened by the strong community spirit of Riverside. She spoke to the evolution she has seen with the EDC and Staff into a more focused group over her 8 years on the EDC. She thanked the Commission and Staff, and they did the same.

VI. *Liaison Reports*

A. Village Board Update

Trustee Peters was not in attendance.

B. Staff Update: COVID-19 Impact on Business Community

Director Abt gave her memo for the Village Board to the EDC overviewing the impacts of COVID-19 on the Village's business community. She highlighted Staff actions to mitigate COVID-19 impacts on businesses. These included:

- Allowing restaurants with liquor licenses to provide alcohol/liquor delivery with food orders provided they were in original sealed containers;
- Creating business resources on the Village's COVID-19 webpage;
- Sending emails and hand delivering various information to businesses including IDPH guidelines, loan information, and more;
- Creating a Shop Local page on the Village website;
- Performing check-in calls with all businesses; and
- Instituting a rebate on liquor license fees for all restaurant liquor license holders.

Director Abt presented findings from Staff's check-in calls with businesses. She stated that two businesses have permanently closed. Staff analysis of the calls found that 76% of Village businesses were still operating in some capacity whether with limited hours, remote working, emergency only appointments or online/phone ordering. Over half of these businesses have storefronts that are were still open. Staff found that only 30% of businesses surveyed that applied for aid were successful; 11 total. Surveyed businesses expressed that the Village should continue to promote local businesses. Many businesses provided staff with their modified hours and/or new product offerings – information that Staff used to update its central COVID-19 business information hub.

Director Abt discussed the new State of Illinois guidance as it affects local businesses with the approach of Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois plan. Director Abt provided the EDC with suggestions and options that the Village could pursue to help businesses mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Suggestions and options discussed included:

- Creating a follow-up Survey Monkey survey to assess business needs;
- Shifting the EDC Facebook strategy to directly promote businesses;
- Providing businesses with information on preparing to reopen, creating plans to do so, and communicating those plans with customers; and

- Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to promote businesses.

Director Abt then highlighted other intervention possibilities that may require Village Board action or Village Manager budget approval. These included:

- Creating business promotional videos with Riverside TV;
- Assessing the creation of space on sidewalks for queuing outside businesses while still providing for safe walking paths and appropriate social distancing;
- Creating/designating additional curbside pick-up loading zones;
- Evaluating potential road or on-street parking closures to accommodate pedestrians and adequate social distancing;
- Allowing outdoor dining for all restaurants (potential locations to allow this and methods to do so were discussed);
- Exploring outdoor dining fee waivers;
- Exploring the creation of curbside pickup signs and potential partnerships to accomplish this; and
- Exploring lifting temporary window signage restrictions to allow for more/larger signs for hours and curbside pickup information in store windows.

Commissioner Kahle liked the idea of additional curbside dining but wondered about how doing so might impact access to other places. She suggested creating additional outdoor dining space with empty lots or parks. Commissioner Fournier liked the idea of closing streets to create more space to ensure social distancing. She suggested utilizing parking lots for outdoor dining like Chew Chew Café has done. She suggested closing half of the street, a la construction traffic, as temporary but necessary. Chairperson Herbst agreed that the Village should try it as a pilot. Commissioner Doherty agreed with Commissioner Fournier's proposal of turning CBD streets into one ways. Commissioner Jacksic expressed safety and logistics concerns with partial street closures. Director Abt suggested that barriers like horses or dividers would be required for any proposals in the street. Commissioner Jacksic proposed piloting temporary outdoor dining street closures on Fridays and Saturdays and assessing their effectiveness. Commissioner Fournier agreed. Commissioner Kahle stated that curbside is the lifeline for business at this time, closing one side of a street could negatively impact businesses on the closed side.

Commissioners expressed support for an additional survey to gauge business support for the measures discussed. Chairperson Herbst liked the idea of a survey. As a business owner, Commissioner Fournier commended staff for their outreach to date. Commissioner Doherty supported an additional survey and suggested that it be brief. Commissioner Plain stressed the importance of creating such a survey as a way to mitigate unintended consequences that may arise from any future interventions. Director Abt stated that she would discuss curbside and street closing options with the Village Manager who would discuss putting them on the Village Board agenda with President Sells.

Commissioner Doherty liked the idea of lifting temporary sign restrictions and had seen other communities do so.

Commissioners discussed utilizing Village property to promote businesses and increase areas to socially distance. They discussed distributing cones and/or temporary signage to businesses. They discussed utilizing Guthrie Park and the area around the Water Tower. There was some concern expressed about how to ensure that the sanitation and cleanliness of common areas were maintained if too distant from the businesses utilizing them.

Chairperson Herbst asked Staff about outdoor dining options for Empanadus restaurant. Staff suggested a few potential locations but said they would need to gauge the restaurant's interest in pursuing any options.

Commissioner Kahle and Chairperson Herbst emphasized the need for the EDC to partner with the Chamber of Commerce. Director Abt suggested that Staff could serve as a liaison between EDC and the Chamber. Commissioner Fournier volunteered to do so.

- C. Chamber of Commerce Report
None.

VII. Central Business District

The Commission continued their discussion on mitigating COVID-19 impacts for businesses.

Commissioner Kahle and Chairperson Herbst discussed exploring outdoor dining options for El Faro and other restaurants on Harlem.

Director Abt asked the Commission if they wanted to re-assess the social media strategy in light of the pandemic. Commissioner Kahle agreed. Commissioner Doherty advocated for shifting the EDC Facebook strategy entirely toward direct business promotion. Commissioner Fournier agreed but cautioned that posts would need to retain their intentionality and integrity. The EDC agreed that priority should be given to original content produced by Commissioners over sharing the posts of businesses.

Commissioner Doherty asked whether Quincy Street Distillery would be allowed to sell cocktails to go. Director Abt responded that they are not able to sell anything pre-mixed but will explore further options.

There was discussion of the EDC's promotional budget. Director Abt stated that the budget for additional printed materials was tight. Chairperson Herbst mentioned that the State had frozen the tourism monies allocated to Visit Oak Park to prioritize crisis response. This meant that the Village's agreement with Visit Oak Park was affected as well. Visit Oak Park continues to generate content for the Village and the EDC agreed it best to continue to utilize the Visit Riverside site and their staff writer.

There was discussion on activating the Bank of America property on Harlem. Commissioner Kahle suggested hosting food trucks. Commissioner Jacksic agreed and highlighted the success of bringing food trucks to North Riverside. Commissioners Fournier and Doherty liked this idea. Commissioner Kahle also suggested exploring creating a drive-in movie experience in one of the parks.

There was discussion surrounding marketing Riverside to city dwellers who are now looking for more space due to the pandemic. Commissioners brainstormed ideas to do. These included developing driving tours of Riverside, creating a Google Map to do so, and brainstorming points of interest that might be included on such a map.

VIII. Old Business

A. Update on EDC Business Survey

Management Analyst Bouman presented results from the EDC Business Marketing Survey conducted between January and February. He described how important the updated business contact list created for the marketing survey had been for Staff's subsequent COVID business response outreach. Most respondents were interested in being featured in Village promotional efforts. This interest was further confirmed during subsequent outreach related to pandemic response.

B. Continued SWOT Analysis and discussion of 2020 economic development priorities and goals.

Chairperson Herbst discussed the importance of creating strategic plans for clarifying goals and focusing efforts toward meeting those goals. She expressed that one day the pandemic will end and when it does, the Village will be best served by having a plan already in place. Given the ongoing pandemic and action items discussed during the meeting, Commissioners discussed tabling ongoing SWOT Analysis discussion to a later meeting. Commissioner **Plain motioned** to table the SWOT analysis until the September meeting of the EDC. Commissioner **Fournier seconded**.

IX. New Business

New business was discussed during the Staff update.

X. Adjournment

Chairperson Herbst asked for a motion and second to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner **Plain made a motion** to adjourn. Commissioner **Jacksic seconded**.

AYES: Doherty, Fournier, Jacksic, Kahle, Plain, Herbst.

NAYES: None.

Motion passed.

Chairperson Herbst declared the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Management Analyst Bouman

Date Approved