

VILLAGE OF RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:00 pm

This meeting will be conducted electronically via Zoom.

Due to the ongoing public health emergency, and consistent with the Governor's most recent emergency declaration, various Executive Orders entered by the Governor, and the recent amendments made to the Open Meetings Act in Public Act 101-640, this meeting will be conducted electronically. Public comments are welcome on any topic when received by email or in writing by the Community Development Director prior to 4:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Emailed comments may be sent to Director Sonya Abt at sabt@riverside.il.us. Written comments may be submitted to the attention of the Director at 27 Riverside Road, Riverside, Illinois. Public comments may also be made live during the meeting by persons participating via Zoom.

For those wishing to view the meeting or make public comments via Zoom, a Zoom link will be made available via the Village's website at <https://www.riverside.il.us/423/Economic-Development-Commission> no later than 4 p.m. on January 14, 2021.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call

Chairperson

Jennifer Fournier

Commission Members

Jack Buoscio	Suzanne Kahle
Bridget Doherty	Amy Jacksic
Larry Forssberg	Charles Terhune

3. Public Comment:
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - A. Economic Development Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2020
5. Chairperson Report:
6. Liaison Reports:
 - A. Village Board Update
 - B. Staff Update
 - C. Chamber of Commerce Update
7. Central Business District:

8. Old Business:
 - A. Continued SWOT Analysis and discussion of 2020/2021 economic development priorities and goals.
9. New Business:
 - A. Discuss Facebook Strategy for 2021.
 - B. Discuss potential vacancy signage program.
10. Informational Items:
11. Adjournment:

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 prior to the meeting. On August 21, 2020, Governor Pritzker entered the latest in a string of emergency declarations related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the governor's most recent emergency declarations, and consistent with various Executive Orders entered by the Governor, and the recent amendments made to the Open Meetings Act in Public Act 101-640, this meeting was conducted electronically via Zoom.



**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, November 12, 2020, electronically via Zoom. Director Abt called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

The Commissioners nominated Commissioner Kahle to serve as the Chair Pro-tem.

- II. Roll Call:*
- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>Present:</i> | Commissioner Kahle
Commissioner Doherty
Commissioner Forsberg
Commissioner Terhune |
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<i>Absent:</i>	Chairperson Fournier Commissioner Buoscio Commissioner Jacksic
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<i>Also Present:</i>	Trustee Evans Community Development Director Abt Management Analyst Bouman
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III. Public Comment

Commissioner Doherty stated that she received an email from a resident about the Holiday Wishbook that LaGrange put out to promote businesses during the holidays and asked if the Village could do something similar. Director Abt stated that she was looking into whether Staff had the capacity to produce a similar document given.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- A. Economic Development Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2020

Commissioner **Forssberg made a motion** to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 10, 2020. Commissioner **Terhune seconded** the motion.

AYES: Doherty, Terhune, Forssberg, Kahle

NAYS: None.

Motion passed.

V. *Chairperson Report:*

None.

VI. *Liaison Reports*

- A. Village Board Update

Trustee Evans stated that Staff is working with businesses to ensure they are operating within the latest state guidelines. She also stated that the Village received a grant for upgrading the walking path in Swan Pond.

- B. Staff Update

Director Abt gave a brief update on how Staff has been working with businesses as the area has shifted into Tier 1 COVID-19 mitigation and now possibly Tier 2. The COVID restaurant map has been reactivated and the newer restaurants added to the map. She also noted a new tobacco store is opening on Harlem Avenue. Commissioner Doherty asked that signage and displays be reviewed carefully.

- C. Chamber of Commerce Report

None.

VII. *Central Business District*

Director Abt stated that Michael's Pancake House has opened since the last meeting. Catrina Bar will be opening up in the former 34 East Lounge space. It will be opening soon, offering artisanal drinks and cocktails with a limited menu.

Commissioner Kahle noted that she went through the virtual workshop for the Riverside TOD Supportive Zoning Code Update and thought it was very informative.

VIII. *Old Business*

- A. Review EDC Facebook Page Strategy.

The Commission discussed the Facebook strategy; many commissioners noted that they had missed some postings over the last couple months. The Commission discussed some potential ideas for posts including the Riverside General Plan Map being for sale, the COVID Restaurant Map, and the new Riverside Wear face masks. The Commission discussed how the Facebook page could be used to help promote the business community in the absence of the annual Holiday Stroll. Commissioner Doherty suggested thinking about themes, rather than one business at a time. Director Abt stated that staff could put together a new calendar, with a focus on the holidays. The Commissioners agreed to promote as many of the businesses as

possible throughout the holidays and asked Director Abt to put together a schedule and list of businesses. They also recommended a higher volume of posts; 3-5 posts a week. The goal is to support the businesses through the holidays and the COVID Mitigation Tiers.

B. Continued Discussion of 2021 Budget for Economic Development.

Director Abt provided a quick update on the budget noting that the Visit Oak Park partnership and gateway signs were included in the 2021 budget.

Director Abt noted at the last meeting the Commission had discussed possibly offering an economic incentive package for the businesses. The Finance Director will look at what potential there is to fund this program, but cautions that it will be small. Staff put together a program that would provide assistance for businesses to help them with improvements or projects that would help them operate during the pandemic and/or succeed post pandemic and put together eligibility and evaluation requirements. These included that the businesses be located within one of the commercial zoning districts, must have been operating since the initial governor's disaster proclamation and they must be a food service, retail or personal service establishment since they are the ones that have been most impacted by the mitigation efforts. Criteria utilized would be total budget, aesthetic impact, consistency with Village Plans such as the CMAP CBD Plan and the three Business District Plans, whether the project will allow the business to operate during the pandemic, and whether the project will better position the business to succeed during and post pandemic. Director Abt stated the proposed grant program would be a reimbursement grant for up to 50% of the qualified expenditures. She asked for the Commission's feedback and if they wanted to specify a maximum grant amount.

The Commission discussed the proposed program; many thought it was a good idea. The Commissioners were not in favor of limiting eligible businesses to just those that were already in business in March. They recommended allowing any businesses that were existing as of the adoption of this program to qualify. Commissioner Doherty expressed some concern about penalizing businesses that had already incurred expenses. Director Abt noted that with these types of programs, from an auditing perspective you cannot award them for projects that have already been completed or expenses that have already been incurred. Commissioner Kahle stated the application should help explain what the CBD and Business District Plans' goals are to help the businesses emphasize how they are meeting those criteria. The Commissioners asked that the application requirements not be too complicated. Commissioners Doherty and Terhune both wanted the application period expedited to award the funds as quickly as possible to the businesses. Director Abt stated that may require a special meeting, but certainly Staff would turn around applications as quickly as possible. The Commission also discussed the name of the grant program, rather than calling it a COVID relief Economic Incentive Program, they thought retitling to the 2021 Business Economic Incentive Program would be a more inclusive title.

Director Abt asked if the Commission's position was that the funding for the gateway sign at First and Forest be redirected towards this program as a funding source. The Commissioners were in agreement. Director Abt noted that there was \$8,000 budgeted for the gateway sign.

Commissioner **Forssberg made a motion** to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 10, 2020. Commissioner **Terhune seconded** the motion.

AYES: Doherty, Terhune, Forssberg, Kahle

NAYS: None.

Motion passed.

The Commission asked that Staff promote the program as much as possible including social media posts and e-flashes.

C. Discussion and Recommendations to Staff and Village Board on Economic Incentive Policy for Riverside.

Director Abt went over the draft economic incentives policy that incorporated the suggestions and feedback of the Commission from the previous meeting. Director Abt asked if grease traps should be included for the additional \$10,000 for the retail business grant in addition to fire/life safety and ADA improvement. She noted that it had been discussed by the Commission, but in the draft before them that item had not been added to the list. Commissioner Forssberg stated he thought that would be appropriate. The other Commissioners agreed, noting that is a long term infrastructure investment in a space providing a value to the property owner as well.

Commissioner Doherty brought up the lifetime maximum for the Façade Improvement Grant. She questioned whether that was necessary and if it unnecessarily penalized longstanding businesses. Commissioner Kahle suggested a 10 year maximum. Commissioner Forssberg agreed, noting that 10 years is about average for façade updates. The other Commissioners were in agreement with that change.

Commissioner **Kahle made a motion** to recommend approval of the Economic Incentive Policy with the discussed changes. Commissioner **Forssberg seconded** the motion.

AYES: Doherty, Terhune, Forssberg, Kahle

NAYS: None.

Motion passed.

D. Continued SWOT Analysis and Discussion of 2020 Economic Development Priorities and Goals.

Director Abt asked if the Commissioners wanted to postpone this discussion to the next meeting since so many Commissioners were not present. Commissioner Kahle agreed and suggested tabling the discussion..

Commissioner **Terhune made a motion** to table the SWOT analysis to the January 14, 2021 regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission. Commissioner

Doherty seconded the motion.

AYES: Doherty, Terhune, Forssberg, Kahle

NAYS: None.

Motion passed.

IX. New Business

None.

X. Informational Items:

None.

XI. Adjournment

Commissioner Kahle asked for a motion and second to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Commissioner **Doherty made a motion** to adjourn. Commissioner **Terhune seconded**.

AYES: Doherty, Forssberg, Kahle, Terhune.

NAYES: None.

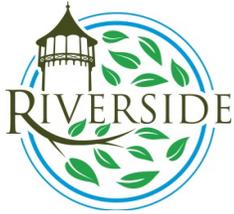
Motion passed.

Commissioner Kahle declared the meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Community Development Director Abt

Date Approved



COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

To: Chairperson Fournier & Members of the Economic Development Commission
 From: Sonya Abt, AICP, Community Development Director
 CC: Jessica Frances, Village Manager
 Re: Continued SWOT Analysis (continued from May)
 Date: January 7, 2021

Background

The village is in the preliminary phases of creating a 5-year economic development plan and solidifying an action plan for 2020. Staff directed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat) Analysis to identify Riverside’s strengths and weaknesses and identify external opportunities and threats. By utilizing this information, the Commission can create an appropriate and effective strategy to achieve its economic development goals. The analysis can be utilized to create an action plan.

At the March meeting the commission started this process. The Commission went over previously outlined visions and goals, including the Riverside CBD Plan’s priorities and guiding principles and the Point B facilitated branding’s goals and long-term sustainable competitive advantages. The commission was in agreement with these still being the goals and visions of the Village.

SWOT Analysis – Part 1

The Commission identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that affect Riverside’s abilities to achieve our visions and our goals. These are listed in the table below.

- Identify the community’s strengths and weaknesses (internal factors – inherent characteristics of the community, often looked at in comparison to other communities)
- Identify opportunities and threats of/to the community (external factors – generally outside of the influence of local actors and have an impact on the local economy)

<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>WEAKNESSES</u>
<p>(Assets or factors that give a community its competitive advantage and make it an attractive place to be.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace, Recreational opportunities, Biking • Proximity to Chicago • Good schools • Motivated Village Board, willing to work with surrounding communities • Residents with good incomes & purchasing power & hobbies • Flexible recruitment • Riverside Foods • Nice & safe community • Housing: Diverse housing stock, good value – still a discount compared to other nearby communities, aging in place opportunities • Small Population • Charming downtown & Train (Metra Station) • Historic Landmark • Empty Storefronts 	<p>(Factors that are obstacles or constraints to economic development. They can be social, physical, financial, regulatory, operational.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation of not being business friendly • Lack of economic anchor • Lack of parking • Bad landlord • Dated available space • Not a great history of thriving businesses • Empty storefronts • Backs of businesses turned to the train • Low walking traffic • River – limited visibility, pathways, signage • Small population • Aging internet infrastructure/availability • Limited facilities for larger gatherings



MEMORANDUM—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

<u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>	<u>THREATS</u>
<p>(Conditions, that are external to the community, that make it easier or possible to develop competitive advantages.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brookfield Zoo/Zoo Events ● Younger families moving in/Young families moving to the ‘burbs ● Des Plaines River & Des Plaines River Trail ● # of businesses without an online presence ● Changing nature of business/commerce ● Makers – people already in town whom could take advantage of a maker’s space ● Home rule referendum ● Restarting Guerilla Gardening ● What is our economic anchor? 	<p>(Unfavorable trends or developments external to the community that lead to a loss or decline in a community’s competitive advantage or economy in general.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate change ● High taxes and high rents ● Non home-rule community ● Threat of recession ● Small businesses – can they withstand a recession? ● ComEd reliability & blackouts ● Landlord motivation or lack of ● Aging population ● Berwyn (their BDC Flexibility & \$\$) ● Lack of landlord investment

Also helpful are “neutral factors” (factors that do not neatly fall under the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or strengths categories); they may be critical to the overall economic plan.

- Business Districts
- Planned Unit Development Ordinance

Next Steps

The Commission may want to revisit Part 1 given the COVID pandemic.

SWOT Analysis – Part 2

SWOT Analysis is an iterative process that facilitates the plan-making process. We will be working to take the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified in Part 1 at the last meeting and utilizing them to create an action plan and economic development plan for the commission.

The SWOT matrix is a great place to start that analysis. Please utilize the SWOT Matrix to analyze our answers from our previous meeting (on page 1) and think of actionable items.

<u>SWOT Matrix</u>		
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	Evaluate ways to use strengths to take advantage of opportunities.	Consider how opportunities can be used to compensate for or overcome weaknesses.
THREATS	Create strategies that will use strengths to avoid or to mitigate threats.	Develop defensive policies that will minimize weaknesses and avoid threats

Example:

Analysis: As a nice and safe town with close proximity to the city and an affordable housing stock we can take advantage of the opportunity of young families looking to move out to the suburbs. This increase in population and income will help attract new businesses that can serve young families and help sustain existing businesses.

Actionable item: Work with local realtors to promote Riverside’s available properties to young families in Chicago.



MEMORANDUM—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

To: Chairperson Fournier & Members of the Economic Development Commission
From: Sonya Abt, AICP, Community Development Director
Re: EDC Facebook Strategy for 2021
Date: January 8, 2021

In 2020 the Commission refocused the EDC Facebook Strategy to promoting the business community more due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A strategy was prepared that paced for three (3) posts per week with 70% of the focus being on our village businesses, 20% on business trends and entrepreneurial resources and 10% on Village resources. (While we want and need to promote our businesses, we need to promote Riverside too.)

We did not meet our goal of 3 posts per week, however when we did post more regularly there was good interaction and sharing.

Given that the COVID-19 pandemic is still here, the Commission should discuss how it would like to proceed with the strategy for 2021. Will it be more business promotion focused or back to a more even mix of business promotion, village resources and business/entrepreneurial trends?

In order to make this strategy manageable, we need as many of the Commissioners to help as possible. Staff can continue to create a schedule for topics and assign people to those dates over a 2-3 month period. This will give you time to preplan and create posts in advance when you have time. Staff can also continue to provide a list of businesses pulling from both the CBD and Harlem Avenue for the Commission to choose from.

If everybody participates then each person would only have to plan at most 2 posts per month.