

**MINUTES
CITY OF WOODSTOCK
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
August 12, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 8:01AM on Tuesday, August 12, 2014, by acting Chairperson Rick Francois in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall, 121 West Calhoun, Woodstock, Illinois. A roll call was taken by CED director Cort Carlson.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Arlene Lynes, Ryan O'Connor, Craig Hallenstein, and Rick Francois.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Henry Patel

STAFF PRESENT: Cort Carlson, Director of Community and Economic Development and Joe Napolitano, Economic Development Coordinator.

GENERAL BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

R Francois inquired about progress on the economic development plan for the City. Carlson noted that it is a priority for staff and hope to have a preliminary draft for commission review at next meeting.

C Hallenstein initiated discussion on the status of industrial sites in the City. Staff provided update on development as related to the former Precision-Quincy and Quad-Graphics/Brown Printing buildings. It was noted that industrial/manufacturing continues to lag behind other sectors of the economy, but that staff has been working with brokers to assist with potential new uses for both buildings. J. Napolitano explained that staff is exploring possible application for creation of an enterprise zone in Woodstock and the benefits of such designation. Staff is currently gathering quotes from consultants to assist with application process and has attended state sponsored workshop. R Francois noted that heavy manufacturing may be difficult due to limited access. It was recommended that staff continue to make industrial/manufacturing an ED priority and try to identify potential uses for currently vacant buildings as well as new expansion opportunities. C Hallenstein mentioned the marketing efforts of Bedford Park and its WGN radio promotion. Staff discussed the City's partnership with World Trade IL. Discussion from Commission regarding identifying national/international industrial brokers, buyer's agents are not always local.

C Hallenstein asked about the progress of the Metra expansion in the City. It was noted that Metra expansion plans continue to include relocation of rail yard to Woodstock and expanded service. Upheaval in the Metra board and staff over the past several years has delayed Metra's plans. A new executive director was hired earlier this year and McHenry County recently appointed a new representative to the Metra board of directors. It was suggested that the City look into obtaining, if available, a ridership study for the Woodstock station.

A lengthy discussion was had regarding the marketing and promotional efforts of the City, especially as it relates to the downtown. Staff updated Commission members on outcome of recent Retail Business Forum and desire for the City to take a greater leadership role in the marketing of downtown. A Lynes stressed the urgency in getting a marketing program started sooner rather than later and that the City cannot wait to roll out a long-range marketing plan for the entire City. A Lynes noted that several businesses on the Square are planning to leave or using this as their make-or-break year and then deciding the future of their retail business in Woodstock.

Staff provided status updates on projects economic development outreach including recent attendance at the ICSC Retail Connection marketplace.

ADJOURN

Motion by A. Lynes, second by C Hallenstein, to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission scheduled for 8:00AM on Tuesday, September 9, 2014. Ayes: Lynes, O'Connor, Hallenstein and Francois. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: Patel. Meeting adjourned at 10:10AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Cort Carlson