

**MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE  
CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS HELD IN THE COUNCIL WORKROOM,  
4301 CITY POINT DRIVE**

**MAY 14, 2018**

The Economic Development Advisory Committee of the City of North Richland Hills, Texas, met on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. in the City Council Workroom.

Present:	Ms. Rena Arnold Mr. Bob Brown Mr. Ron Huggins Mr. Jay Redford Mr. Mark Wood Mr. Michael Wright Mr. Xavier Villarreal	Street Level Investments Smurfit Kappa Huggins Honda JLL Valuation & Advisory Services, LLC Howe/Wood & Company MJW Architects Medical City North Hills
Absent:	Ms. Janice Townsend	Roots Coffeehouse
Staff Members:	Mr. Mark Hindman Mr. Craig Hulse Mr. Clayton Comstock Ms. Jennifer Stephens Ms. Elizabeth Copeland	City Manager Economic Development Director Planning Manager Economic Development Specialist Economic Development Assistant

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Wood called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH 7, 2018 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**APPROVED**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MR. HUGGINS TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 7, 2018 MEETING.

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

**3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**3.A UPDATE ON UPCOMING EVENTS**

The City attended the Society of Commercial REALTORS® Trade Expo in Fort Worth on April 19<sup>th</sup> alongside many other area cities and commercial brokers.

The City is a part of the North Central Texas Economic Development District in which Mr. Hulse serves on the Board. The group met on April 27<sup>th</sup> and meets on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Hulse will attend the International Council of Shopping Centers National Conference May 20-23, representing the City.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee will meet for a Joint Session with the Strategic Plan Committee on June 14, 2018 at 6pm in the Community Room at NRH City Hall.

### **3.B DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

TEX Rail is moving along and recently began making practice runs in North Richland Hills. Mr. Hulse shared a video of one of the trains making a test run, pointing out how very little noise is created by the rail cars.

Redevelopment of the Smithfield area is making progress with the addition of Smithfield Station along with nearby road construction including work at Davis and Mid-Cities, realignment occurring at Smithfield Road, and the rerouting of Cotton Belt Trail along Main Street. In addition, the school district formed a bond committee and one of the elements under consideration is Smithfield Elementary School. If considered and later approved by voters, this could play a part in the redevelopment of the Smithfield area.

Sushi Axiom is now open after approximately four years of construction. The owners took their time transforming the building, taking on no debt, and the restaurant is a welcome upscale dining establishment in the City.

Babe's continues to move along with delivery of exterior materials expected soon.

Alamo Drafthouse announced the location of their new cinema in North Richland Hills, expected to open in Spring 2019. The 42,000 square foot building on Davis Boulevard near North Tarrant Parkway will include eight theaters, a full service restaurant, and an outdoor patio with a play area for children.

Mr. Redford asked if any of the pad sites in front of Alamo have been purchased. Mr. Hulse mentioned that while none of the sites are taken, the strategic plan is recommending retail and restaurant uses. LIDL currently owns some of the nearby land, but they have decided to back out of US expansion plans so the City anticipates the company will remarket the property at some point.

### **4. FINDING YOUR WHY FOLLOW UP**

#### **4.A DISCUSS 'SINGULAR STATEMENT' FOR CHOOSING NRH OVER OTHER COMMUNITIES**

Coming out of the last EDAC meeting, Mr. Redford challenged the group to agree on a singular statement about the Economic Development Department during the next meeting. Mr. Hulse presented a few options for the group to discuss including:

- 1- "An experienced staff focused on providing creative solutions and problem solving in one of the most attractive regions in the country"
- 2- "Full service department dedicated to business in one of the most attractive regions in the country"
- 3- "Serving the business community in one of the most attractive regions in the country"
- 4- "A centrally located and diverse city with an experienced staff that utilizes a wide range of tools to promote development"

The group conversed about the options and concluded that number four was selected with a few changes. The committee agreed to the following singular statement: A centrally located and attractive city that utilizes a wide range of tools to promote quality development.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. VILLARREAL, SECONDED BY MR. REDFORD TO APPROVE THE SINGULAR STATEMENT 'A CENTRALLY LOCATED AND ATTRACTIVE CITY THAT UTILIZES A WIDE RANGE OF TOOLS TO PROMOTE QUALITY DEVELOPMENT.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

## **5. REVIEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **5.A REVIEW AND FINALIZE NRH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY #1 – REDEVELOP & REUSE VACANT & UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES**

Mr. Hulse gave a quick recap of the previous committee meeting, reminding the group of three strategies that make up the Economic Development Strategic Plan. During the March meeting, time did not permit discussion of the overarching Strategy #1 verbiage, so Mr. Hulse offered options for the word 'Redevelop' in case another term was preferred. After discussion, the committee determined that the word 'Redevelop' should remain in the goal.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MR. VILLARREAL TO KEEP THE STRATEGY #1 VERBIAGE THE SAME.

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

After the March meeting, Mr. Hulse sent the Freeway Corridor Overlay Plan to the committee, giving members a chance to review the plan before finalizing Action #4, changing it from 'Evaluating Highest and Best Land Use of Loop 820 Area' to 'Implement the Freeway Corridor Overlay Plan.' Mr. Comstock gave a short presentation about the Freeway Corridor Plan and the group unanimously agreed to change Action #4 under Goal #1 to 'Implement the Freeway Corridor Plan.'

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. REDFORD, SECONDED BY MR. HUGGINS TO CHANGE ACTION #4 TO 'IMPLEMENT THE FREEWAY OVERLAY CORRIDOR PLAN.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

#### **5.B DISCUSS NRH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY #2 – PROMOTE A POSITIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE**

Mr. Hulse continued to present each Strategy and Action individually to the group, asking for feedback and edits. Strategy #2 in the Economic Development Plan is Promote A Positive Business Climate. Current Goals and Objectives under this heading include the following:

1. Retain Existing Businesses
2. Supporting a Regional Approach to Business Recruitment
3. Facilitating Street Reconstruction Projects

Action #1 Retain Existing Businesses – The following was discussed:

- Over 1,200 brick and mortar businesses in NRH
- Each business has a different economic impact, or benefit to the community. Some large, some small, some negative
- Retain all businesses? Or are some worth letting go?
- Just retain? Or grow and/or expand?

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MR. BROWN TO CHANGE ACTION #1 TO 'RETAIN AND FOSTER A QUALITY BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #2 Support a Regional Approach to Business Recruitment - The following was discussed:

- The City relies upon the regional economy (Ex. Fort Worth MSA, Dallas-Fort Worth, North Texas, State of Texas, etc.)

- Co-opetition – collaboration between competitors, in the hope of mutually beneficial results
- Customers, patients, clients don't necessarily follow municipal boundaries
- Rising tide lifts all ships, however competition for business is fierce

Mr. Hindman then spoke about the City Council Goals, one of which is Local and Regional Leadership, and that a regional approach is in alignment.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MR. WRIGHT TO KEEP ACTION #2 AS WRITTEN: 'SUPPORT A REGIONAL APPROACH TO BUSINESS RECRUITMENT.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #3 Facilitate Street Reconstruction Projects – The following was discussed:

- Access and visibility are primary factors for business success and site selection
- Mobility and transportation routes determine traffic volume, which in turn benefits business
- Street reconstruction projects take long periods of time, impacting mobility
- Rufe Snow is ongoing, Davis @ Mid Cities just started, Smithfield at Davis & Mid Cities just started (community fatigue?)
- Does this action remain relevant? Or is it a bigger action than just streets?

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MR. REDFORD TO CHANGE ACTION #3 TO 'PROVIDE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

The group discussed the idea of adding a fourth action of Promoting a Positive Business Climate, but determined that no additional actions are needed.

#### **5.C DISCUSS NRH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY #3 – DEVELOP AND PROMOTE AN ATTRACTIVE, DIVERSIFIED AND THRIVING COMMUNITY**

Strategy #3 in the Economic Development Plan is Develop and Promote an Attractive, Diversified and Thriving Community. Current Goals and Objectives under this heading include the following:

1. Promoting High Development Standards
2. Promoting Commuter Rail Service
3. Enhance Davis Boulevard
4. Support City Image
5. Promote Smithfield Historical Area

6. Promote Tourist and Entertainment Venues
7. Actively Market to Improve the Image of NRH
8. Promote the Home Town Development

Action #1 Promoting High Development Standards – The following was discussed:

- Do we mean high standards or quality standards?
- Is the intent to convey durability and retained value over time?
- How can this be communicated without inferring high construction costs?
- What about design standards?
- Is this action important?

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MS. ARNOLD TO CHANGE ACTION #1 TO 'MAINTAIN QUALITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #2 Promoting Commuter Rail Service – The following was discussed:

- Action was created to support the notion of commuter rail
- Although commuter rail is now a 'GO', promotion/support is still needed
- City does not control commuter rail, rather the zoning around it
- The two TODs represent 300 acres (150 ea.) for both development and redevelopment
- Commuter rail is now referred to as TEX Rail by Trinity Metro

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MR. WRIGHT TO CHANGE ACTION #2 TO 'MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #3 Enhance Davis Boulevard – The following was discussed:

- A large share of functionally obsolete strip centers owned by one entity south of Mid Cities
- 'Re-energize Mature Transportation Corridors' is an action from Strategy #1. Is this action redundant?
- Current approach involves enforcement of zoning and building codes with a façade grant program when opportunities arise
- Strong potential for raised medians from FM 1709 down to Loop 820
- This action is similar to Goal #1 Action #2 'Re-Energize Mature Transportation Corridors'

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MR. VILLARREAL TO REMOVE ACTION #3.

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #4 Support City Image – The following was discussed:

- City image study conducted in early 2000s
- ‘Positive City Image’ is a Council Goal
- A need to differentiate NRH from adjacent cities
- Perception, reality, vision and expectation are all factors when it comes to ‘image’
- This action is similar to Goal #3 Action #7 ‘Actively Market to Improve the Image of NRH’

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. ARNOLD, SECONDED BY MR. BROWN TO REMOVE ACTION #4.

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #5 Promote Smithfield Historical Area – The following was discussed:

- Smithfield is now part of the TEX Rail and Smithfield TOD
- Opportunity to include with a specific Commuter Rail or TOD action?
- Smithfield is primarily a redevelopment opportunity. While the need to celebrate its history, few buildings are worth retaining
- Is the larger need to promote NRH history? Ex. Green Valley, Birdville, Smithfield, etc.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. VILLARREAL, SECONDED BY MR. WRIGHT TO CHANGE ACTION #5 TO ‘EMBRACE AND PROMOTE THE HISTORICAL AREAS OF NRH.’

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #6 Promote Tourist and Entertainment Venues – Mr. Hulse gave details about the current state of Entertainment and Tourism in North Richland Hills:

- NRH<sub>2</sub>O and NYTEX are the two main tourist attractions
- Entertainment and Recreation are top requested citizen uses (ex. Experiential Retail and Experiential Dining)
- Alamo Draft House, Babe’s Chicken Dinner House, and Sweetie Pie’s Ribeyes are considered Experiential Dining
- What about hospitality (hotels)?
- Over 30 City programmed events representing 63,000 in attendance

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MR. REDFORD TO CHANGE ACTION #6 TO 'PROMOTE TOURISM, HOSPITALITY AND ENTERTAINMENT.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #7 Actively Market to Improve the Image of NRH – Mr. Hulse asked the below questions to the committee:

- Is this action similar to 'Support City Image,' or can these be combined?
- Is NRH's image in need of repair or improvement?
- How has NRH's image changed since 2003?
- Does this action remain important?
- This action is similar to Goal #3 Action #4, considered to combine the two actions into one

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. REDFORD, SECONDED BY MR. VILLARREAL TO CHANGE ACTION #7 TO 'CONTINUALLY MARKET TO ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF NRH.'

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Action #8 Promote the Home Town Development – Mr. Hulse reminded the group of the following:

- Action was established in the early stages of Home Town, now nearing completion
- To 'preserve' and/or 'maintain' will be more important as time goes on
- Over 350,000 square feet of retail and 185,000 square feet of office is sometimes overshadowed by the residential

Mr. Hindman also mentioned multiple strategic areas besides Home Town, and continued focus on Home Town over other areas of the City may not be in the City's best interest

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. BROWN, SECONDED BY MR. REDFORD TO REMOVE ACTION #8.

MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 7-0.

Mr. Hulse gave the group the opportunity to discuss adding another action and the group agreed that no additional actions are needed under Strategy #3.

## **9. DISCUSS FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE**

The next meeting will be a joint meeting with the Strategic Plan Committee on June 14, 2018 at 6pm in the Community Room.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Wood, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Craig Hulse, Secretary