



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
March 13, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Kubaszko called the regular meeting of March 13th, 2023 of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 7:01 PM

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Kubaszko, Perri, Suffern

ABSENT: Lewensky

ALSO PRESENT: Economic Development Coordinator Tony Fradin, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki, Village Trustee Stephanie Gandsey, Management Analyst Joey Dienberg

3. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 9, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Erickson moved to approve the January 9, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Gudenkauf.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gudenkauf, Kubaszko, Perri

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Lewensky

ABSTAIN: Commissioners Gorski, Suffern

MOTION CARRIED

4. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER BRUCE SUFFERN

Commissioner Kubaszko welcomed Commissioner Suffern back to the EDC.

Mr. Fradin stated that Commissioner Lewensky is present.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

6. BRANDING CAMPAIGN SUBMITTALS

Mr. Fradin stated that one element of the village's strategic plan is to develop a community branding plan. The EDC previously discussed pursuing a plan to rebrand the village in



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2021. As staff researched various consultants, we determined that the budget should include a line item to support a branding campaign and that a Request for Qualifications/Proposals should be utilized.

Following review by the EDC and the Village Board, an RFQ/RFP for the Brand & Identity Development Project for the Village of Bartlett was issued late last year.

We received a total of seven proposals. A selection committee met to review the proposals, and the next step is the EDC's review of those we deemed the top three. Mr. Fradin then continued to walk through the top three proposals included in the meeting packet.

Commissioner Gorski asked if staff has reached out to the listed references.

Mr. Fradin stated some, but not all, and once it is narrowed down more, then staff will focus in on references.

Commissioner Kubaszko asked if all of these proposals fit within the budget.

Mr. Fradin stated that the proposals did come in high, but staff will budget appropriately for the selected proposal.

Mr. Skrycki added that since the village is on a one-year budget cycle, if the EDC and board were to like one of the proposals, that it would be budgeted for in future cycles.

Commissioner Kubaszko asked what criteria was used for selecting the candidates.

Mr. Fradin stated experience was a key factor, but a good mix of a professional proposal, relevant experience with success, and price. The three before you really stood out. Two of the proposals had really strong local experience. The three before the EDC really stood out, and staff is looking for input from the EDC.

Trustee Gandsey introduced herself and her background, she stated that she has a marketing and communication background. In all of the places that I have worked, we have gone through a rebrand and one of the things I like to bring up with that experience is that it is more than just a logo and the visuals that you see, but it is how you are going to operate internally as well. It is how you are going to talk about your brand and communicate externally to help bring in new businesses, residents outside of Bartlett coming to our events, etc. One of the things I look at with these proposals is the background in public relations and the market research component. I also like the flexible pricing where we can pick and choose components. Something like this would give staff a polished piece of information to present to new businesses, residents etc. It is also important not just right now, but in the long term as well. If you have any questions on rebranding, I have a great deal of experience and can answer any questions.



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Commissioner Gorski asked if any of the proposals provided statistical data on growth scene during and after these campaigns.

Mr. Fradin referred to the proposals, stating everything we have received is in the packet, and referred to some of the data presented in the packet.

Trustee Gandsey stated that in this field, you do not promise customers, but you set goals of people to bring into the funnel. She added that some proposals did include that quantitative data as well. A rebrand is a tool, and it doesn't necessarily have an immediate impact, but results can be seen over time.

Commissioner Perri stated that when he hears the word "Brand" that he thinks of Coca-Cola, McDonalds and other Global Brands. I don't understand what the village is trying to accomplish with a branding campaign.

Mr. Fradin stated that it's a marketing tool. It reflects the community, when you are competing with other towns, you want to be striking and memorable. The goal is to increase tourism, retain and attract businesses, brand the village events, etc. It can be used in a number of ways.

Mr. Skrycki stated that marketing a village is marketing a way of life. Business owners are often residents, so marketing the way of life, and the benefits of living in Bartlett, can sometimes be a deciding factor when trying to recruit new businesses. You are selling a feeling, not necessarily a product. It's all encompassing.

Trustee Gandsey cited some local communities and framed branding through those communities. Hanover Park, Geneva, Ontarioville have brands of their own, and it isn't just global companies that use branding as a tool.

Commissioner Erickson pointed out some examples of empirical data included in A5's proposal, especially in terms of some surrounding communities.

Commissioner Lewensky agreed that A5 has a more data driven approach. He summarized the three proposals and stated that is what we are choosing between. If I had to vote today, I would pick A5.

Commissioner Gorski stated the best thing to simplify would be to eliminate one of the two. Commissioner Gorski made a motion to remove the Chandler Thinks proposal from consideration. Seconded by Commissioner Lewensky.

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Lewensky, Kubaszko, Perri, Suffern
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Commissioner Kubaszko



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MOTION CARRIED

Commissioner Suffern asked what existing materials on demographics, etc, do we have in house that we would hand over to an agency (i.e. population, business break down, etc.) and how is that packaged when we interact with a new business.

Mr. Fradin stated all of the above. The village uses various third-party sources to collect that data. We give that information to developers up front, and it is customized for the developers needs.

Mr. Skrycki stated that that is difficult mainly because it is so specific to one business. For example, over the decades of staff's experience, a developer has never asked for church information and demographics; however, when staff engaged with Culver's that was very important to them and a key part of selecting Bartlett.

Mr. Fradin stated it is less focused on the statistics and data, and more on the reach to market highlights and events in the village.

Commissioner Lewensky asked about next steps.

Trustee Gandsey stated the public relations and digital assets are more important than the visuals and printouts. I think placement and marketing to bring people in is the power in branding. Things like the best burger contest, and placing that information in neighboring communities, that brings people in.

Commissioner Lewensky asked who she preferred.

Trustee Gandsey stated without asking any questions, and just based on the proposal, she would choose McDaniel's, but she understands A5 has done a good job in different communities. I see opportunity there to pick and choose what we need.

Mr. Fradin agreed, and stated we can invite representatives in for the April meeting. We would rather have it done better than quicker, and it would be great to have them come in to answer some of these questions.

Commissioner Perri stated that instead of people calling and asking questions, that branding will answer their questions so they don't have to call and ask.

Mr. Fradin stated no, this is not replacing the normal process. They are always going to call and engage with the village. This is more outward bound, marketing oriented. It's not one or the other, its both.

Commissioner Perri stated that he still doesn't see the bigger benefit of doing this.



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Commissioner Erickson stated if you don't brand you aren't putting the icing on the cake, we look like every other town. This is what is going to be that visual that will draw people in and start a conversation, whether its people here, or people in other towns, and especially as we bring businesses in, it's a place for their families. We can say we are one of the safest cities, but showing that picture of what it looks like, is like staging a house when you're trying to sell so people can see, "Why Bartlett".

Commissioner Lewensky asked how realistic it is that this will move forward.

Mr. Skrycki stated that staff will take this recommendation to the board, just like any. Ultimately, at the end of the day it is up to the village board, but it is in the strategic plan and if they do get a positive recommendation, one would assume they would move forward.

Trustee Gandsey pointed out that in the staff memo, that acting on this would address many other points in the strategic plan and would hit many other goals.

Mr. Skrycki added onto the "Staging a House" analogy used by Commissioner Erickson, and stated that even though many areas are built out, we still want to attract and continue that momentum. There is still a lot of room for growth to distinguish the community.

Commissioner Suffern stated that the content of the branding program is something he would feel comfortable to weigh in on. I would defer to staff and Trustee Gandsey on which proposal is better.

Commissioner Gorski and Erickson asked for clarification on Woodstock being in both proposals.

Mr. Fradin stated that staff would look into it.

Mr. Fradin stated that staff would invite the two companies to the meeting in April.

7. ECONOMIC INDICATORS REPORT

Mr. Fradin stated that about eight years ago, the village's economy was struggling somewhat with an overall commercial vacancy rate around twenty percent and the downtown area near thirty. Over half of Bartlett Plaza (now Streets of Bartlett) was vacant, as were multiple buildings that remain and many others that have since been filled or demolished.

Dominick's Finer Foods was vacant at the time, contributing to the high rate throughout town.



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At that time, the Economic Development Commission discussed marketing and incentive strategies based on the various areas of town in an effort to encourage development of vacant land as well as filling key vacancies throughout the community.

Since that time, the overall economy has continued expanding and the village, in particular, has implemented multiple business-friendly programs including the creation of the BEDA program, sales tax rebates, Class 6b and 7c incentives, and aggressively working to attract development to village-owned sites including a second grocery store, a microbrewery, an automobile dealership, and a proposed apartment building.

Despite the many challenges associated with the overall economy including inflation, supply chain issues, and looming possibility of a recession, the village's economy has continued expanding over the past several years.

On the industrial side, the trend towards rapid distribution of goods and "last-mile" facilities have definitely contributed to the growth.

Also, as inner-ring industrial areas continue to age, some businesses that want to continue to grow view our area as providing an opportunity for them to access a premier workforce or bring their current employees with them while developing build-to-suit projects to meet their specific needs.

The ongoing strength in the industrial market is one of the reasons why large institutional investors like Ridge Development, Logistics Property Company, Conor Globe Commercial and, in 2022, Midwest Industrial Funds have been willing to invest \$30 to \$40 million or more on speculative projects with a high level of confidence that they will be able to lease these buildings.

When the industrial rate rose to around ten percent in late 2020, that was due to a 436,000 SF speculative project coming online, which has since been leased to Colony Display Company.

The long-awaited redevelopment of the former Main Steel Building at 802 E. Devon Avenue was also completed last year and recently welcomed Closets by Design, who I had been working on bringing to that building for around a year.

The current industrial vacancy rate dropped even further from last year's historic low of only 3.5% to just under one percent.

Like industrial, the retail/commercial sector remains strong with a vacancy rate of 6%, up one percent since last year.



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The two most glaring downtown vacancies last year were the former Bartlett Tap, which has been renovated into an insurance office, and the former garage behind JC's Mexican restaurant, which has recently been demolished.

Bartlett Town Center also continues with a higher vacancy rate than in recent years, with the closing of Trakside Diner, insurance office and the corner space that is yet to be occupied.

We reported working with multiple prospects and anticipating a higher occupancy rate by the close of last year. The top prospect came to fruition; the relocation and expansion of Rebecca's Cakes by Design. We are working towards filling another vacant space in 2023.

Throughout the rest of the town, small spaces have largely been filled with small mom-and-pop businesses in a variety of industries. Most of the shopping centers along Route 59 have remained near full capacity, with some lingering vacancies in Stearns Crossing shopping center.

A vacancy rate under ten percent is generally considered strong in the retail sector.

Bartlett remains a community without large office tenants, which is a mixed blessing. Although there are no major employers with hundreds or thousands of office workers, the village has also not suffered the loss or decline of such a business.

Although office uses are allowed throughout all commercial zoning areas and most shopping centers have multiple office tenants, there has only been 249,000 SF in 28 properties designated as offices throughout the village.

The vacancy rate has improved of late after hovering in the 6% to 7% for the past several years to 4.1%. Additionally, the average lease rate has risen to nearly \$26 PSF.

One of the top economic indicators, both the jobs within the village's borders and the jobs held by village residents has improved over the past year.

Long known as a bedroom community, the village has worked for decades now to build up the daytime population in order to support and attract new business to serve our residents.

Per Jobs EQ, total employment in the village was 9,881 in Q2 of 2021, with employment having increased by 7.2% throughout the region. This year, Jobs EQ estimates employment in the village to be just over 10,000.

Also note that wage trends have continued to rise, up 6% to nearly \$75,000, which has helped raise the overall sales within the village.



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Lagging by a few years, the Census OnTheMap website has not yet updated last year's information, showing a slight increase from 2018 to 2019 in terms of inflow and outflow of jobs within Bartlett with 7,674 people residing outside the village and working in town, 1,055 people who both work and live in town, and over 22,000 residents who leave the village to work elsewhere.

Depending on the precision of the statistics in years to come, this indicator has changed significantly due to many village residents being employed as professionals who have worked completely or partially from home over the past three years. There have also been hundreds of new jobs added in the business parks over the past several years.

Last year, the unemployment rate of village residents dramatically improved over the previous year, dropping by over fifty percent from December of 2020 (6.9%) to December of 2021 (3.1%). The latest data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security shows the village's unemployment rate to be holding steady at 3.2%.

Overall taxable sales in the village rose dramatically from \$260M from July 2020-June 2021 to \$350M from July 2021-June 2022.

This is due to a shift on how collection of the online use tax has been modified, which benefits communities like ours with more online shoppers than brick-and-mortar retail.

In many cases, the retailer with Illinois physical presence ended up collecting more in sales taxes on a transaction than a retailer with no presence in Illinois. This act claims to level the playing field by requiring both in-state and remote retailers to collect Illinois Retailers Occupation Tax based on the sales tax rate at the buyer's destination.

Per the IL Department of Revenue, the SIC codes that comprise the highest sales in the DuPage County portion of the village are, from highest to lower, automotive and filling stations, drugs and miscellaneous retail, lumber, building, and hardware (Home Depot), food (Jewel), and drinking and eating places.

Less retail sales are made in the Cook County portion of the village, led by drugs and miscellaneous retail, drinking and eating places, and agriculture and all others.

The overall 2022 sales figures have not yet been released; however, the quarterly reports consistently reflect comparable figures.

The village's population has remained at 41,000 for the past twelve years.

With several residential projects on the horizon, including the recently-completed Eastfield Subdivision, the Residences at Bartlett Station building at TOD Site E, and the



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Grasslands subdivision at the Crown site at the northwest corner of Route 59 and West Bartlett Road, we anticipate an increase the number of residents in the coming years.

Bartlett has long been known to be a safe community with a low crime rate and a highly professional police department.

In the recent resident survey, respondents highly rated the village's enforcement of traffic laws, police safety education programs, efforts to prevent crime, and visibility of police in neighborhoods and commercial areas.

NeighborhoodScout similarly rated the village's crime rate as one of the lower rates in America among communities of all sizes, lower than 83% of them. The chance of becoming a victim of a violent crime is 1 in 4,505, far lower than the statewide rate of 1 in 253.

A safe community is important for economic development as it can attract investment, businesses, and skilled workers. A safe environment fosters consumer and business confidence, allowing for the growth of local economies.

Crime and social unrest can deter investment and harm local businesses, leading to a decline in economic activity. A safe community also provides a stable platform for the development of infrastructure and social services, which can further support economic growth. Additionally, a safe community can improve quality of life and increase the attraction of a region for workers, tourists, and residents, contributing to a strong and sustainable local economy.

Mayor Wallace, the Village Board, staff, commissioners, and entrepreneurial residents will continue implementing our marketing strategies including broker blasts, a return to trade shows, calling upon interested parties, and our growing network of developers and business owners in an effort to fill these challenging spaces that remain and working towards assisting them in bringing their projects forward.

Bartlett's Economic Development team will continue actively seeking to diversify the village's economy by pursuing technology, entrepreneurial, retail, entertainment, logistics, food, and foreign direct opportunities as they arise locally, regionally, and on a statewide basis.

Aldi's new prototype 19,432 SF store in the Streets of Bartlett in an out lot is also in the works. Mayor Wallace and the Village Board approved an incentive package to attract this much-needed second grocery store to downtown Bartlett. Aldi hopes to break ground this summer and be open late this year or early next year.



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With multiple automobile dealerships, a microbrewery with a rooftop beer garden, a new subdivision, apartments, retail projects, and ongoing industrial growth, our plan is to continue on this positive track throughout the year and report similar growth in 2024.

Commissioner Perri asked what the size of the Aldi will be, and what they predict their sales to be.

Mr. Fradin said it is just under 20,000 square feet. In terms of projections, that is proprietary information that is not disclosed. Staff estimates that it may be in the ballpark of \$12 million, and staff used that estimated figure for the sales tax rebate incentive package.

Commissioner Kubaszko asked if that is a normal size of an Aldi.

Mr. Fradin stated that it is the newest prototype, and it is slightly larger than their previous size.

Commissioner Perri stated that if he remembers correct, the size of an Aldi was about 5,000 square feet when they first came to the US.

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked what direction it will face.

Mr. Skrycki stated that the front will face Midway Lanes and O'Hares, towards the parking area, the rear will face CVS.

Commissioner Gudenkauf applauded staff for all of their hard work.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Kubaszko asked when the estimated opening date for MORE Brewing would be.

Mr. Skrycki stated that it is a moving target, they have had a handful of supply chain and utility hurdles along the way. They are moving forward, and I would guess sometime in May.

Commissioner Lewensky asked for an update on Site E and if that would be this year.

Mr. Fradin stated that deal was tied in with the Aldi deal, and the village board recently approved an amendment to move those projects forward. They are looking to break ground this spring.

Commissioner Perri complimented how quickly the Hyundai dealership is moving.



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Mr. Fradin stated that project has attracted interest from similar businesses to move to that corridor.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Gorski moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Gudenkauf

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Lewensky, Kubaszko, Perri,
Suffern

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Joseph Dienberg
Management Analyst