

Minutes

Village of Bartlett Economic Development Commission

August 14, 2017

C. Green called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Roll Call

Present: G. Kubaszko, C. Green, R. Perri, N. Gudenkauf, J. LaPorte, S. Gandsey

Absent: T. Smodilla, R. Martino, D. Gunsteen

Also Present: T. Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator,
S. Skrycki, Assistant Village Administrator

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2017 meeting.

Motioned by: R. Perri

Seconded by: J. Kubaszko

Motioned carried.

Map-Based Industrial Inventory

T. Fradin introduced the GIS map-based available space inventories and said that in the past several months, Staff has added commercial and office, undeveloped land sites and now available industrial spaces to the inventory on the Village's website. Adding the industrial properties was the third phase, and it was done to provide more timely and accessible information to businesses and their brokers who are seeking space in the Village.

T. Fradin reported that these maps are in the maps section of the Village website, as well as in the economic development section, where most businesses and brokers looking for space would go to. He demonstrated the map-based industrial inventory for the EDC, noting that there are only eleven current vacancies but that they are very large, over one million square feet available, due to the several new speculative buildings including Exeter's 421,000 square foot facility.

T. Fradin demonstrated how to access the listings via the map and also by the list and demonstrated clicking on the new building by Ridge Development. He showed all of the information and told the EDC that the three main things that the brokers and businesses are looking for is how many square feet the building is, how high is the clear ceiling height and how many docks does the building have.

T. Fradin demonstrated other buildings, noting that the Senior Flexonics property is listed for sale, with the business willing to lease back space through 2020, and also showed the former Main Steel building on Devon Avenue that should be completed and available for lease next year. He noted that he keeps in close contact with the local industrial brokerage community and will present this inventory to the EDC periodically as significant changes are made.

S. Skrycki noted that Staff is compiling a database of local brokers to send this to, and there are currently about two hundred brokers on this list.

S. Gandsey asked how other organizations contribute to marketing these sites. **T. Fradin** replied that it is mostly done through the brokers marketing the buildings and those seeking locations for their clients. But right after that, the Village is second most active in marketing them. Choose DuPage partners with the Village to help market the business park and on rare occasions the State will send a prospect, perhaps once per year. The brokers and the Village are the ones with our feet on the ground working towards filling these spaces. Choose DuPage's involvement is a good segue into our next agenda item.

R. Perri asked how much land is available at the Senior Flexonics site. **T. Fradin** replied that the site, itself, is being marketed as on twenty-four acres. The additional land that he may be alluding to just north of Flexonics abutting the Metra tracks is owned by Metra and has been identified as a future development site in the Downtown TOD Plan that was approved last year. Flexonics controls the nearly twenty-four acres on their site and some developers will view the entire property as a redevelopment site.

Choose DuPage Industrial Space Inventory

T. Fradin explained that Choose DuPage is the EDO (economic development organization) for DuPage County. He reminded the EDC that Bartlett spans three counties, mostly Cook and DuPage with a small western portion in Kane County. The developed area of Brewster Creek Business Park is in DuPage County, which forms the basis of the Village's relationship with Choose DuPage in jointly marketing the business park.

T. Fradin demonstrated the Available Properties link on the Choose DuPage website, noting that it is administered by a third party called Broker Savant and that he had recently added five of the larger available industrial buildings that were shown on the last item. Tony noted that he has participated with Choose DuPage since the organization was formed and this provides an additional opportunity to showcase Village properties. The EDC is well aware of differences in property and sales taxes between counties, and many businesses go directly to Choose DuPage to seek locations in the Chicago area but outside of Cook County. Tony showed the EDC the link to Exeter's new 421,000 square foot facility again.

C. Green asked how long Exeter's building has been completed. **T. Fradin** replied just about a month, around the time of last month's tour of the business parks.

S. Gandsey asked how long the Village anticipates it will take to fill Exeter's building. **T. Fradin** replied that it varies and there is no telling. During the Recession, it took years to fill the speculative building currently occupied by Cheese Merchants, but when Rich Turasky of Capital Realty and Development built that building, it remained vacant for years and the pressure mounted on the owner, the lender and the Village. It was ultimately purchased by Just in Time Packaging, sold again, and currently owned and occupied by Cheese Merchants, who appears to be a viable long-term business.

R. Perri mentioned that one of the factors in filling it is where the real estate market is heading. **T. Fradin** replied that is true. The Chicago area industrial real estate market has been on an upswing. Analysts follow a metric called net absorption, and that has been increasing for the last eight or nine quarters. Nobody has a crystal ball, but this project shows that Exeter has spent a lot of time, energy and money in developing this project, which demonstrates their confidence in this market. **T. Fradin** added that this is institutional money being invested, as Exeter is the fourth largest industrial real estate owner in the U.S.

J. LaPorte asked if this building would just be for one tenant. **T. Fradin** replied that ideally it would be for one. However, they have indicated a willingness to divide the building. If nobody leases the building by the time there is snow on the ground, they would surely be willing to subdivide it.

Heritage Days and Kickstand Classic Cable TV Advertisements

T. Fradin reported that the Village began purchasing cable TV ads on Comcast a year ago. Commissioner **C. Green** suggested that the Village do something big marketing-wise during a meeting, which resulted in Staff producing ads on television. Tony referenced the Staff Memo that provided background as to why the Village spends money on promoting local events. It came about as a result of three different studies that directed the Village to promote local events – the report produced by the Spartan Consulting Group from ECC, the Downtown TOD Plan and the EDC Marketing Plan for 2016 through 2020. Local businesses always enjoy a nice boost during these events and some of the restaurants and stores are shown in the ads.

[Staff played the thirty-second advertisement for the EDC to view]

T. Fradin stated that with Heritage Days and the Kickstand Classic so near each other in mid-September and October first, it is a natural to promote them together. People are always impressed, and I get messages that people saw them while watching the Cubs game, Chopped or Fox News. It shows on numerous Comcast cable channels. We did three cable ad campaigns last year, and are doing the same this year. We run a dining ad in the spring, including one ad for Dining Downtown and another ad featuring restaurants outside the Downtown. We run this ad promoting Heritage Days and the Kickstand Classic. My favorite one is in the fall, promoting Small Business Saturday in November and urging area residents to shop locally at small businesses. We cut down from four weeks to two weeks this August, which cuts the cost of these ads from about \$5,000 last year to \$2,500 this year.

S. Gandsey asked if we can use these ads however we want to. **T. Fradin** replied yes. Last year, I asked our ad rep, who said that the Village has ownership of the ads. We post them on Facebook, on the Village website and our local cable channel. I wanted to show the ad to the EDC first, but will post it on Discover Bartlett tomorrow and will send it to all commissioners for them to share as well.

Social Media Workshop

T. Fradin reported that Commissioner **S. Gandsey** will be presenting a workshop on social media on August 30th at 6:30 p.m. She had attended the Village's initial effort at a small business workshop and was recruited for the EDC and to give this presentation. The Village has done a few in the morning that had low attendance, so the next one will be in the early evening. We will promote it several times.

S. Gandsey reported that her presentation will be about ways to start digital strategies or for those businesses that have social media sites but do not know what to do with it. Perhaps it is hurting their business's reputation. She will be providing strategies for implementation.

T. Fradin asked members of the EDC and the Chamber to promote this workshop to drum up attendance and the Village will promote it on its own social networks including the Discover Bartlett page and the official Village Facebook page.

C. Green asked if the Village has two Facebook pages. **T. Fradin** replied that he administers the Discover Bartlett Facebook page, that was started about four years ago with the EDC, and there is an official Village of Bartlett Facebook page, as well.

New Business

T. Fradin described two new businesses coming soon – Mo’s Joe will be the new coffee vendor in the Metra train station and the Village Board recently approved a video gambling café called Olivia’s Place to open in the Oakfield shopping plaza. Olivia’s Place will be remodeling a dilapidated space near the Goodyear and will be serving Boar’s Head deli meats.

T. Fradin added that a developer has applied to re-subdivide the Home Depot subdivision to create an additional out lot retail building.

C. Green asked about the Strategic Plan. **S. Skrycki** replied that NIU has completed the surveys and has compiled the results from the stakeholder meetings. They will be presenting the findings to the Village Board, which they will use to create their own strategic plan.

J. LaPorte commented that he was looking at the two Village Facebook pages and saw that Discover Bartlett has over 5,000 Likes and the official Village page has over 1,500, so it is a great way to promote events and reach people. **T. Fradin** agreed, and explained that it took several years to get over 5,000 Likes on the Discover Bartlett page. Sometimes a post goes viral and gets shared by people. When that happens and a post gets a lot of likes, Tony can invite people to Like the page. Out of a 42,000 population, 5,000 Likes is pretty good. That was Tony’s original goal, but now he would like to continue increasing the page’s reach.

C. Green asked if Discover Bartlett is more promotional and if the Village page is more official. **S. Skrycki** replied that is it exactly. The official Village page includes Village Hall news, police and more.

J. LaPorte asked if there was anything new in terms of land development. **T. Fradin** replied not really, with the exception of the Home Depot out lot, and that was not even listed as a development site. We still receive inquiries, but they do not always match the Village’s Zoning and Land Use Plan and what would serve in the best long-term interests of the Village. We will be looking to promote the Village-owned property at Route 59 and Lake Street more aggressively and that should be coming to the EDC soon.

J. LaPorte asked what is being built south of Apple Valley Drive and south of the Goodwill. **T. Fradin** replied that a memory care facility called Artis Senior Living is being built just south of Apple Valley Drive, then an Alden skilled nursing facility will be built behind that. A high-end car and pet wash called Everwash is being built just south of the Goodwill store.

R. Perri asked for a timeline on the construction at Route 59 & Stearns Road. **T. Fradin** replied he is not the expert at the construction timeline, but that it will continue into next spring or summer.

R. Perri said that Tony knows what the next question is. **T. Fradin** replied that the health care provider that he has been referencing all these months is Amita. They continue negotiating the lease for the former Dominick’s in Stearns Crossing and recently obtained their Certificate of Need from the State. The joint marketing group reconvened and met in Naperville earlier today to share information on our latest efforts and what we have heard.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM

Motioned by: R. Perri

Seconded by: N. Gudenkauf