

**Minutes**

**Village of Bartlett  
Economic Development Commission**

**May 11, 2015**

**Chairman Kubaszko called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm**

**Roll Call**

**Present: G. Kubaszko, C. Green, D. Weir, R. Perri, N. Mehta (arrived at 7:05), T. Smodilla, B. Krall,  
M. Sobel**

**Absent: J. Petro**

**Also Present: T. Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator**

**Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2015 meeting.**

**Motioned by: D. Weir**

**Seconded by: T. Smodilla**

**The motion carried with all members voting aye (voice vote).**

### **Status of Proposed Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District**

Tony Fradin stated because the Village of Bartlett is proposing the designation of a redevelopment project area, it must convene a Joint Review Board (JRB) to consider the Tax Increment Funding (TIF) eligibility prior to the adoption of an ordinance approving a TIF District. The JRB is comprised of a representative from each taxing district in the proposed TIF District, including the Village, Cook County, Hanover Township, School District U-46, Elgin Community College, the Public Library District, the Park District, the Fire Protection District and a Public Member. He stated the scheduled JRB began on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, was adjourned and continued to May 14<sup>th</sup> for further discussion and consideration. Tony Fradin stated the Village Board approved Resolution 2015-13-R, scheduling the Public Hearing for June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at which time it will review the recommendation made by the Joint Review Board and open the issue to the public for comments. He stated that also planned is a Town Hall style meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>, at which time the Village President and Board of Trustees will hear comments from residents and other community stakeholders regarding the proposed TIF. He added that meeting may or may not take place as planned because of other meeting conflicts with the TIF consultants. He stated he would keep the Commissioners apprised of the status of that meeting.

Commissioner Green asked if the meetings would be on the same date of the regular scheduled Board meetings. Tony Fradin replied yes they were and it was because the Mayor and Trustees would already be assembled at that time. Commissioner Weir asked who staffs the Public Hearing meeting. Mr. Fradin replied it would be conducted similar to the Budget Public Hearing meetings. Commissioner Smodilla stated she knows that the Joint Review Board has a Bartlett Library designate, but asked if Popular Creek Library also had a delegate. Tony Fradin replied that the Popular Creek Library had no representative for this TIF Joint Review Board because it is not impacted by tax dollars. The Bartlett Library is the taxing body that is impacted by this TIF area's taxes.

Commissioner Smodilla also stated that it was pointed out at the U-46 School Board meeting that even if the Joint Review Board does not pass a resolution supporting the creation of this TIF District, the Bartlett Village Board could still pass an Ordinance to create the TIF District. Tony Fradin replied that is correct. He stated that his understanding was that the Joint Review Board makes a non-binding recommendation. Even if the JRB votes against the creation of a TIF District, the Village Board could still pass an Ordinance to create the TIF District. He added that likewise, if the JRB voted in favor of the creation of a TIF District, the Village Board would still have the ability to vote down the creation of a TIF District. He stated the Joint Review Board is similar to any other recommending body. He added that if the TIF District was voted down by the JRB, it would change the percentages of votes the Village Board needs to pass the Ordinance. It is based on the voting members of the Village Board. Commissioner Smodilla stated that recently there were public comments made and there was some general concern regarding Donna Weir's position as a public member of the JRB and a member of the EDC. She asked how Donna Weir was elected to the JRB. Tony Fradin replied that a member of the EDC has been the JRB's public member for the entire time he has been with the Village. He noted that for the past 5 years it was Donna Weir and before that it was Howard Lesch, who was also an EDC Commissioner at the time of service on the Joint Review Board. Mr. Fradin stated that typically it was an EDC member because they are generally familiar with the area designated by the TIF and the economic development programs like TIFs.

Commissioner Smodilla stated she has received phone calls and people have raised questions to her about how an Economic Development Commissioner, let alone a Commissioner whose business stands to benefit from the creation of this TIF, could have been chosen as public member of the Joint Review

Board. She stated there is the appearance of a conflict of interest. Commissioner Sobel stated that the point is we want to look as clean as possible in this situation and if there is the appearance of impropriety or a public perception of a “stacked deck” perhaps there could have been a better job done in selecting the public member for the JRB.

Tony Fradin stated, to his knowledge, this is the first time this has ever come up. He stated it has been made into an issue where there has never been an issue before. He stated that maybe it is something that could be discussed in future years. He reminded the Commissioners that the Joint Review Board meets once a year and it is not a glamorous position. He stated that he feels Donna Weir is the best representative that he could have chosen for the Joint Review Board, but understands the comments presented tonight. Commissioner Sobel added that he doesn’t think anything inappropriate was done and that it is simply a matter of managing people’s public perceptions.

Commissioner Weir stated that she wants to be perfectly clear to the Commissioners and that she doesn’t want this to negatively impact the EDC and the job it has done. She stated that if the Commissioners feel it would be more appropriate for her to step down and have another Commissioner appointed to the JRB, she would be fine with that. She also stated that she would not want to be the public member for the JRB without the support of the EDC Commissioners. She stated she would be perfectly fine with whatever the other Commissioners decided.

She announced that she will state here tonight and in future meetings that she is a strong supporter of the TIF and hopes to rally support for it. She stated it has nothing to do with her business. She does not own the business. She works at the business and does not receive any personal profit from the bank. She stated she feels, as a resident and as a business manager, there is an important reason for the successful passage of a Downtown TIF. She stated she wants the Commissioners to feel comfortable with the decisions made within the Commission and if they don’t feel that it is appropriate that she continue on the Joint Review Board, she has no issue with their decision for her to step down.

Commissioner Green stated she could not think of a better choice for public member of the JRB that is more knowledgeable than Donna, nor has more heart for the Village and its business community. Commissioner Green stated she has her full support for JRB member. Commissioner Sobel agreed and pledged his full support. Commissioner Perri stated he would hate to succumb to “appearances” and stated there will always be people to make something out of nothing and in that case no member of the EDC should be on the Joint Review Board because someone could always “perceive” it as inappropriate.

Chairman Kubaszko stated the EDC discussed the TIF for at least 3 months before making a recommendation to the Village Board for approval of the creation of a Downtown TIF District. He stated he feels very comfortable with the EDC’s decision and supports Donna in her statement and he sees no other viable alternative to stimulate growth in the downtown area.

Chairman Kubaszko stated he feels the other taxing body’s opposition to a Downtown TIF was very predictable. He stated that obviously the local newspaper opposes the TIF, but no one has proposed an alternative way to revitalize and redevelop the downtown area. Commissioner Green stated that there are a lot of people that are ill-informed and make statements that are only half-truths.

Commissioner Smodilla stated there is still a negative public perception and the Village has to be sensitive to those public comments. She stated residents are suspicious as to whether a \$17.5 million bond float will actually make a difference in the downtown area.

Commissioner Sobel stated there are a lot of improper perceptions regarding the last Downtown TIF. He stated that a lot of the improvements were literally “underground” with issues like the environmental cleanup and things of that nature. The average Joe couldn’t see that benefit. They didn’t see that there was an environmental hazard headed toward an apartment complex that the Village would have been responsible for. Most people only notice the street lights and streetscape, which they really hated then, but really love now. Tony Fradin agreed there were many projects that were completed utilizing TIF funds but were not noticed by village residents. He stated that things like sewer pipes or other underground infrastructure are never a popular item to finance, but they are needed and were provided for with funds from the last TIF.

Commissioner Smodilla once again asked if there is a specific community plan for the area covered by the proposed Downtown TIF. She stated she has some hesitancy if the TIF funds will be used strictly for rehabbing older buildings. She quoted the suggestions in the Spartan Marketing Plan for creating and promoting businesses for reverse commuters such as providing fiber optics that would support technology businesses or even medical offices that provide digital imaging. She noted that providing some of these types of amenities in turn would attract businesses that that could occupy the vacant spaces and thus provide support to the existing shops and restaurants. Tony Fradin agreed with her suggestions but added that unless there are funds available to provide some kind of incentive to a potential developer or there is a private company that is willing to put forth their own dollars to rehab and upgrade the buildings, it is very difficult to offer these spaces to start-up companies. He stated there is interest in some of the space in the Gorski Plaza, but the potential tenant is waiting to see if a TIF District is created to help in the development of the center. He stated they have been invited to the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

*Commissioner Mehta left the meeting at 7:45 pm.*

### **New Table Top Display**

Tony Fradin presented the new Table Top Display to the Commissioners. He stated he will use it at area trade shows and it replaces the older version that was quite large and bulky. He stated it is much easier to travel with and to assemble. He stated there is a wide variety of graphics included on the display and would give a trade show participant a good feel for what Bartlett is and what it has to offer. Mr. Fradin stated he and a graphic designer (Howie Vitek) designed it and it was ordered from/produced by Mark Your Space (Mike Sobel), a Bartlett business.

### **Business Visit – Pacino’s Tap House**

Tony Fradin stated Commissioner Sobel accompanied him on the business visit to Pacino’s Tap House at 113 W. Railroad Avenue. This business was formerly Bartlett Tavern and Grill and Papa Pacino’s (also commonly known as “The Tap” or Bartlett Tap”). He stated the restaurant is owned by Gary Danno and Mike Olsen, along with several other restaurants located in the area, and is currently managed by John Gianforte. Mr. Fradin stated Mike Olsen is the recent purchaser of the former Lucky Jack’s building next door and although Mr. Danno acted as Mr. Olsen’s broker and advisor during the purchasing process, Mr. Danno does not share ownership of the Lucky Jack’s building. Mr. Danno stated that the video poker machines are what is keeping Pacino’s Tap House in business at this time and they are waiting to see what transpires with the proposed Downtown TIF District before deciding what actions to take with both businesses. Mr. Fradin stated they discussed rehabilitation and redevelopment of the two properties and how they might benefit from a TIF and other incentives, because TIF funds alone would

not be sufficient for the extensive rehab/redevelop projects needed for the two properties. The property owners stated that demolition of the buildings and sale of the property was another option they are exploring if the rehabilitation/redevelopment costs are too high. Both owners indicated they were interested in the establishment of a Downtown TIF District and would attend any public hearings on the matter. Commissioner Sobel stated that the owners are pretty savvy businessmen who have some experience in taking older buildings and turning them into profitable businesses. He added that they also have interesting visions (concepts) of what the two businesses at that location could eventually become.

### **New Business**

Tony Fradin stated he will be participating in the Start-up, Smart-up series at the Bartlett Library by presenting a lecture on “Permits, Applications and Paperwork – Oh My”. The Chamber of Commerce and Library started this lecture program to assist aspiring entrepreneurs on the ins and outs of starting a business. He also stated that Smokin’ Pit BBQ, located in Bartlett Commons, has finally opened.

Tony Fradin gave an update to the Commissioners on the progress of the “One call – Ten Store” Marketing Initiative group. He reported the group, consisting of nine municipalities, compiled a list of 36 retailers and assigned each municipality four of them to contact. He noted that his four corporations actually consisted of two grocers that he had previously contacted. He stated he would keep the Commissioners updated as to the progress of the marketing group.

Tony Fradin stated the Village Board approved the Intergovernmental Agreement with the RTA to go forward with a Downtown Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan. He stated that four consulting firms submitted their proposals and one should be chosen/finalized sometime later this month.

Commissioner Krall stated he attended the Kane County 2015 Leaders Summit last Friday. He stated a 2040 Plan for Kane County was discussed by state and local officials that were present at the Summit. He stated approximately 200 people attended this meeting. The IDOT officials attending explained long range plans for potential new routes, which were mainly in the area west of Randall Road and east of Route 47. He added that it was most interesting to look at the process of long planning strategies for growth in Kane County and then to track how the implementation and follow-up is handled for these long range plans/goals.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.