

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS COMMITTEE MEETING
101 D Mounts Bay Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185
July 19, 2018
8:30 AM

A. CALL TO ORDER

At 8:32 a.m., Mr. Odle called the meeting to order

B. ROLL CALL

Robin Bledsoe
Robin Carson
Christopher Odle, Chair

Amy Jordan, Economic Development Authority (EDA) Secretary
Teresa Fellows, EDA Recording Secretary
Kate Sipes, Assistant Director of Economic Development

C. COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

1. Minutes Adoption - June 21, 2018 Meeting

A motion to Approve was made by Robin Bledsoe, the motion result was Passed.
AYES: 3 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0
Ayes: Carson, Bledsoe, Odle

2. James River Commerce Center Update

Ms. Jordan reviewed the updates to the Priorities Spreadsheet and noted that the improvements to the James River Commerce Center had been added to include installing fiber and the installation of the stoplight at the intersection of Endeavor Drive and Route 60. Hence the increase in the total cost of improvements. These projects are at the bottom of the list and are much further down the timeline.

Ms. Bledsoe concurred, but expressed her concern that the amount could be misinterpreted to mean that this is what the EDA is asking for now. She wants to make sure that the message is conveyed to the Board that this additional amount is for work much farther down the line.

Ms. Jordan stated that Ms. Sipes has put together a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the shell-building site based off the discussion last month.

Ms. Sipes stated that she had spoken with the Purchasing Department to ensure that staff was following the correct guidelines. She stated that she had spoken with Mr. Rick Shippey, James City County EDA Board Member, to get some baseline information on different warehouse sizes, parking requirements and number of loading docks. She noted that the draft RFP had been included in the meeting materials.

Mr. Odle stated that his only comment was that on the warehouse plan there should be some type of office space included on the plan.

General discussion ensued on the general assumptions included in the draft RFP.

The Committee expressed its approval for staff to move forward with sending the RFP to the three firms, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., AES Consulting Engineers and Timmons.

Ms. Sipes stated that staff should receive the three responses prior to the next EDA meeting, which would allow the Authority to vote and approve one of the proposals.

Ms. Jordan noted that the Committee should move ahead with the Closed Session discussion and then come back to the remaining items on the agenda.

3. Expedited Review Guidelines

Ms. Jordan noted that the revised guidelines included with the meeting materials was given to her by Mr. Christopher Johnson, Ombudsman, and he would be coming to the next EDA meeting to give a presentation on the topic.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that she does not believe that the following statement was in the previous version of the guidelines that she had shared with the Authority:

Definition: An expedited review project is defined in Section 24-147 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance as “*any site plan which the Economic Development Director determines to create or significantly expand a use which contributes to the achievement of the economic development goals of the Comprehensive Plan.*”

Ms. Bledsoe stated that this definition helps clarify the types of projects that qualify for Expedited Review and answers some of the questions raised at the previous EDA meeting.

General discussion ensued regarding a discussion about having a similar policy in place for workforce housing that was brought up during the Workforce Housing Task Force.

Ms. Jordan noted that the County can utilize this process and streamline the process for significant economic development projects; but, the County has no control over the outside reviewing agencies or the engineering firms working on behalf of the applicant. The County can only streamline processes and operations on its side. She also noted that a more definitive definition of what constitutes a significant economic development project.

Ms. Bledsoe asked what other localities do for economic development projects.

Ms. Carson stated that the City of Williamsburg must have some form of expedited review since it has already gotten a portion of the Broad Street development project already open with the Earth Fare store.

Mr. Odle stated that other localities have certain threshold requirements to qualify projects. Some utilize a specified tax review threshold; some utilize job creation as well as utilizing the discretion of their economic development office. For example, building a Costco store would be about a \$6 million investment, but everyone would be up in arms about landing a Costco and getting that store open in under a year.

Ms. Bledsoe asked Mr. Odle how other localities get the outside reviewing agencies to come to the table and work within a specified timeline.

Mr. Odle stated that James City County is in a little bit of a unique position in that the County does not control its roads. The Virginia Department of Transportation still controls the County's roads.

Ms. Jordan stated that is not the case with cities and with some larger counties in Virginia.

General discussion ensued regarding the planning process in the County and some of the frustrations within the development community.

Ms. Bledsoe stated that it makes sense as an EDA to help develop a policy that will support the development community. If economic development is a fundamental goal of the County, then there needs to be policies in place to support that goal. She questioned if it was possible for the EDA to look at best practices for the planning process and the development community. For clarification, if a business wants to come into the County and they cannot reasonably expect an answer to questions and concerns within a specified timeframe, then shouldn't the EDA be concerned about that?

Mr. Odle stated that it is very expensive for developers to go through the planning process in the County. You cannot reasonably manage the financial risk because the developer does not know what is going to get approved or not; and the developer is having to go back to the drawing board several times to come up with a plan that will meet approval. He stated that he believes there should be a greater ability for administrative approvals to handle minor changes to master plans instead of having to go back through the legislative process.

Ms. Jordan stated this is a bigger issue and really is a Board of Supervisors discussion. There is an extra layer of approvals that are in excess of what is required by State Code.

Ms. Bledsoe queried then how does it get fixed and inquired how do other localities deal with these issues?

Ms. Jordan recommended this be brought up at the next EDA meeting when Mr. Johnson does his presentation.

General discussion ensued about form-based Building Codes and making the process more efficient.

The Committee generally agreed to bring these discussion points up at the next EDA meeting.

D. CLOSED SESSION

1. The discussion or consideration of: 1) the disposition of a portion of publicly held real property located at 8925 Columbia Drive in James City County where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(3); and 2) the investment of public funds for a shell building at 8925 Columbia Drive where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the EDA and the County would be adversely affected pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(6)

A motion to Enter a Closed Session was made by Christopher Odle, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

Ayes: Carson, Bledsoe, Odle

At 8:50 a.m., the Committee entered into Closed Session.

At 9:09 a.m., the Committee reentered Open Session.

2. Closed Session Certification

A motion to Certify the Closed Session was made by Robin Carson, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

Ayes: Carson, Bledsoe, Odle

E. **ADJOURNMENT**


1. Adjourn until 8:30 a.m., on August 16, 2018

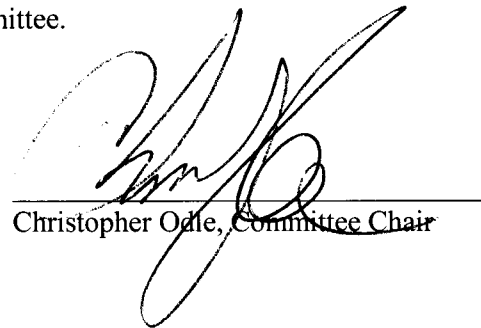
A motion to Adjourn was made by Robin Bledsoe, the motion result was Passed.

AYES: 3 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

Ayes: Carson, Bledsoe, Odle

At 9:55 a.m., Mr. Odle adjourned the Committee.



Amy Jordan, EDA Secretary

Christopher Odle, Committee Chair