

MINUTES

Community and Economic Development Commission
Village of La Grange

November 07, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

A meeting of the Community and Economic Development Commission was held on November 07, 2019 in the auditorium of the Village Hall at 53 South La Grange Road, La Grange, IL and was convened at 7:09 p.m. by Chairman Russ Riberto.

Present: Commissioners Buttron, Carlson, Dillon, DiDomenico, Hall, Hanson, Hayes, Matteucci, Palmer and Chairman Riberto.

Absent: Commissioners Cassidy, Janevski, McGee, Sher, and Wimbush.

Also Present: Trustee Michael Kotynek, Community Development Director Charity Jones, and LGBA Executive Director Nancy Cummings.

Chairman Riberto welcomed Commissioner Hanson to the CEDC.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Carlson, the minutes of the August 08, 2019 Community and Economic Development Commission meeting were approved.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

Community & Economic Development Activity Report

Director Jones gave a brief presentation of sales tax trends, permit activity, and new business openings.

Valet Program Update

Director Jones provided an update of the valet service; service ended in mid-September after the roadway and parking lot construction was completed and is set to resume the weekend following Thanksgiving. After the conclusion of the winter season, the CEDC will evaluate the performance of the program.

Commissioner Hall asked if any businesses have reported customer complaints when the valet service ended in the fall. Director Jones responded that she had not heard of any but would reach out to restaurants to inquire. Commissioner Matteucci asked if valet users are

La Grange residents or from other communities and if there is any noticeable difference in sales tax revenue when we have valet versus no valet. Director Jones responded that we do not know where the valet users are from. Staff has performed analysis and cannot identify any sales tax trends attributable to the valet program.

Commissioner DiDomenico asked how the CEDC will say if the valet program is successful, what is the metric for success. The Commissioner discussed metrics such as number of businesses benefitted, cost per vehicle parked, and total program volume. Director Jones added whether the stands are generally operating at or near capacity.

Chairman Riberto asked if our visitors or residents are unaware of parking options. Commissioner Buttron said he feels it's a visitor issue. Commissioner Hall noted that businesses should update their websites to include information about the valet program. Commissioner Dillon noted that there's a certain cache to a valet program, but the Commission also has to consider the return on investment; perhaps those complaining about parking are not representative of the general population. Commissioner Palmer asked Director Jones and Ms. Cummings to host a meeting with restaurants in advance of the return of the valet program.

The Commissioners discussed various ways to collect data on valet use. Ms. Cummings suggested a survey asking residents and visitors if they use the valet, and if not, why they don't. Commissioner Hanson suggested having students survey valet users. Commissioner Palmer suggested having the valet attendants hand out a survey of valet users.

Commissioner Hanson asked if there is actually a parking problem or if it is a perception. Chairman Riberto replied that it depends on the customer's perspective, but that the parking surveys the Village has conducted have not reflected a parking problem. Commissioner Hanson questioned whether the Commission has the data needed to evaluate the program. Commissioner Dillon noted that this is the third winter the Village has been running the program and she feels they have the data. Commissioner DiDomenico reiterated that the program needs criteria by which success is determined, so the Village can communicate that to the business community.

Commissioner Palmer stated that he believes the perception is that La Grange has a parking problem, and that in reality there is a parking problem; he noted that many senior citizens have complimented the valet program. Commissioner Carlson noted that perception is reality.

Commissioner Hall said she feels businesses need to help promote the program to try and keep it, unless the Village wants to allocate the \$15,000 to fight the perception of a parking problem. Commissioner Matteucci noted that it is difficult to know if the valet service is driving revenue or not but \$15,000 may be a good investment for prestige, so long as people are using the service.

The Commissioners discussed leaving all three stands operational and whether to leave one stand on Harris Ave. or to move it back to La Grange Road. Commissioner Matteucci said

the location on Harris may be attractive in the same way the stand in Lot 5 has been, particularly once the Elm opens and draws more customers in this area. The Commissioners agreed that the stand is best located on the north side of Harris Ave., near Village Parking Lot 3.

Branding Implementation and Gateway Signage Update

Director Jones gave a brief summary of the branding implementation efforts to-date, including the new kiosk directory and banner designs. She provided an overview of the 2016 gateway signs the CEDC had previously recommended and noted that at the next meeting she would bring revised gateway sign concepts that align with the new brand. The Commissioners discussed the signs and a desire to have them lit in some manner, so they are more visible in the winter months.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

There being nothing further to come before the Community and Economic Development Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Dillon and seconded by Commissioner DiDomenico that the meeting be adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Charity Jones
Community Development Director