



Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Friday, September 25, 2020 – 8:00 a.m.
Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Mary Trentadue	- Chair, City Council Member
Bob Crockett	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Alejandro Diaz	- Community Representative from Commercial Area
Mark Evans	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Jolene Foreman	- Community Representative from Commercial Area
Kendra Johnston	- Representative Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association
Vera Kobalia	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Richard Patterson	- Representative, Uptown Business Association
Paul Romein	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Rnold Smith	- Representative, New Westminster Chamber of Commerce
Catherine Williams	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community

MEMBER REGRETS:

Artemisa Bega	- Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Councillor Chinu Das	- City Council Representative
Jorden Foss	- Community Representative from Commercial Area

STAFF PRESENT:

Jen Arbo	- Economic Development Coordinator
Carolyn Armanini	- Planner, Economic Development
Blair Fryer	- Manager of Communications & Economic Development
Janet Zazubek	- Planning Analyst
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

1.1 Additions to the Agenda

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Agenda of the September 25, 2020 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted with the following additions:

- 5.4 *Timing of EDAC Meetings*
- 5.5 *Economic Development Work Plan*

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favor of the motion.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of February 7, 2020

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the February 7, 2020 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favor of the motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

Procedural note: Item 3.1 was addressed after Item 3.2.

3.1 Overview of COVID-19 Business & Local Economy Taskforce Work to Date

Blair Fryer, Manager of Communications and Economic Development, provided a PowerPoint presentation, in which he thanked the members of the COVID-19 Business & Local Economy Task Force and outlined the work completed since the inception of the taskforce, as well as upcoming initiatives.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Fryer noted that the final slide of the presentation, entitled “What’s Next”, featured components of both the Taskforce’s priorities and the Economic Development department’s work plan for the year. Mr. Fryer also noted that another component of the work plan included continuing to develop metrics to measure the success of the work being undertaken.

Committee members congratulated City staff for their efforts over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in their support and responsiveness to the business, arts and non-profit communities.

Procedural note: Item 3.2 was addressed prior to Item 3.1.

3.2 Home-Based Business and Service Station Bylaw Review

Janet Zazubek, Planning Analyst, provided a PowerPoint presentation about proposed revisions to the Home-Based Business and Service Station Bylaw, highlighting the following information:

- Proposed changes to home-based business regulations, including an increase in non-resident employees, removal of the 500 sq. ft. restriction for a home-based business, and allowing home-based businesses in laneway houses;
- Proposed changes to service stations regulations, including allowing restaurants in gas stations as an accessory use, allowing outdoor patio or pick-up windows, and allowing EV charging stations in gas stations;
- Items to be processed as site specific rezoning applications, including enhanced tutoring in Queensborough Landing and arcade businesses; and,
- Next steps, including consultation and a Public Hearing.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Zazubek provided the following information:

- The rationale for not supporting drive-through restaurants is to encourage the walkability of the City and encourage patrons to get out of cars and use the front doors of businesses;
- Arcade applications would proceed through a site specific rezoning, and Development Services would look at the broader implications of allowing arcades within future bylaw amendments;
- The proposed changes to the home-based business regulations resulted from a number of inquiries from potential business owners who would not be permitted to operate a home-based business under the current regulations;
- The intention of the proposed changes to the home-based business regulations is to create an environment to allow businesses to incubate and then become established enough to move in to the retail space in the City; and,
- The intention of the proposed changes to service stations is to allow up to 1500 sq. ft. of restaurant within the station, provided all provincial health orders in terms of capacity are adhered to, but the regulations would support outdoor seating as well.

Committee members provided the following comments:

- Drive-through restaurants may be appropriate in certain circumstances; and,
- Restaurant seating areas in service stations may not be ideal during the COVID-19 pandemic as they tend to attract large groups, such as school-age children; however, it is a positive amendment for the long term.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Update on Temporary Sidewalk Patio and Food Truck Policies

Carolyn Armanini, Planner, Economic Development, presented a verbal update on the City's temporary sidewalk patio and food truck policies, noting the following information:

- Temporary sidewalk patio guidelines were approved by Council in May and 6 to 7 businesses had taken advantage since this time,
- A report on extending the temporary policy would be going to Council on September 28th, as the need to keep the patios in place remains;
- Feedback from residents has been positive; however, further research would be conducted into long term aspects of the policy, as well as how to adapt the existing program for winterization and alignment between municipalities;
- Staff would be recommending that the interim food trucks policy, as approved by Council in May, remain in place for 6 months and for re-evaluation to occur in Spring of 2021; and,
- Existing food trucks and private event permits would be permitted to continue but no street occupancy permits would be issued.

The Committee noted that, while it is difficult not to provide support to all types of businesses, this policy is recognizing that retail establishments in the City do not need additional economic pressures.

Procedural note: Item 5.2 was addressed after Item 5.3

5.2 Retail Strategy Work Plan

Carolyn Armanini, Planner, Economic Development, provided a PowerPoint presentation containing information and details on the City's proposed Retail Strategy work, including the actions already completed and in progress:

Committee members provided the following comments:

- It is encouraging to see work on the retail strategy commencing, as it is very timely;
- Partnerships between the business community and the City are essential, and it would be important to include City partners under the Strategy section of the documentation, including expectations and roles of the City's partners, to indicate that this work intends to be collaborative and to ensure that roles are clear;

- In terms of process, it may be difficult to engage with businesses, so personal follow-ups may be important in this work, to ensure good representation and feedback from a wide cross-section of neighbourhoods and sectors;
- It would be important to investigate the ground-floor use of retail, as the occupants at this level can often affect the feel of the street and the interplay between businesses at street level are important; and,
- Market analysis of the past, current and future landscape of the retail sector would be important to highlight in the strategy in order to demonstrate how conditions like COVID affects businesses and helps them to pivot and innovate.

Procedural note: Item 5.3 was addressed prior to Item 5.2

5.3 Crowd Source Event for Non-Profits – Event Recap

Jen Arbo, Economic Development Coordinator, provided a verbal report on the recent virtual event held by the City for Non-Profits, noting that the event had been successful in providing an opportunity for learning, collaboration and support for the Non-profit community. Plans are being developed to hold similar events in the future.

In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Arbo noted that there had been two parts to the event: the first half included a presentation by Legislative Services staff about how to access City grants, and the second half included a moderated panel and breakout rooms about best practices in topics such as fundraising, crisis communications, volunteer recruitment, and donor retention.

5.4 Timing of Meetings

The Committee discussed the timing of EDAC meetings going forward, including attending meetings virtually and in-person. Comments included:

- When meeting virtually, morning meetings with a start time between 8 and 9am can be stressful and challenging for parents, particularly when working from home;
- When meeting in person, meetings during the middle of the day can be disruptive and difficult to find parking at City Hall, therefore the 8 am time would be preferable;
- As meeting in person is not necessary yet, a change could be made for the December meeting and then re-assessed in 2021; and,
- The only implications for staff is in the availability of the meeting room and the Zoom account, but these are generally flexible.

The Committee decided to meet at 9am for the next meeting, in December.

5.4 Economic Development Work Plan

As the presentation in Item 3.1 had discussed the work plan priorities for the Economic Development department, the Committee did not discuss this item further.

Staff noted that the work plan would be discussed further at a future meeting.

6.0 REPORTS

There were no items.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

Friday, December 4, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. (as per Item 5.3).

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Councillor Mary Trentadue
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk