



Economic Development Authority (EDA) Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 11, 2023 ❖ 7:00 pm

Viget Headquarters, George Mason Square, 105 W. Broad, 5th Floor Falls Church VA 22046

1. **Call to Order:** at 7:04 PM by EDA Chairman Bob Young
2. **Meeting Attendees:**

EDA Board Members Present:

In Person: Chairman Bob Young, Jim Coyle, Brian Williams, Matt Quinn, Sandy Kiersz

Virtual:

Council Liaison Present: Letty Hardi

Student Representatives Present: Matthew Downs, Elliot Lam, Liam Ross

City Staff Present: Jim Snyder, Becky Witsman, Naomi Goodwin, Sarah Swinton

Public Attendees: Phil Duncan, Nick Benton, Elise Neil Bengston, Alex Rame, Brin

Absent: Ross Litkenhous, Ed Saltzberg

3. **Approval of June 6, 2023 EDA Meeting Minutes:**
[June 6, 2023 EDA Meeting Minutes](#)

Jim Coyle motioned to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2023 EDA meeting, Matt Quinn seconded. Unanimous approval.

4. **Status of Council Work plan item**

Lisa Benjamin (Senior Managing Director, Newmark) provided an overview and lead a discussion regarding:

Council work plan item: 'Identify top commercial uses desired in new developments, which also reflect current market trends, in the City, and negotiate for those uses in the Special Mixed-use ground floor voluntary concessions – using data reflecting post covid economic trends will be used'



In summary the City is seen as being well placed to take advantage of post COVID-19 changes in the retail environment with consumers increasingly seeking experiences and opportunities for social interaction in walkable suburban environments. An increase in preference for smaller retail footprints, due to the current financing climate (by businesses) and for small local businesses rather than national chains (by shoppers) is seen as reinforcement.

Demand continues for grocery anchors and dining with other suggested potential retail uses for mixed use projects in the City being:

- Co-working or other gathering spaces
- Day care, education/test prep
- Sports training/play oriented uses
- Unique food uses (EG: butchers, bagels, ice cream, cheeses)
- Med spas, urgent care, wellness
- Pet related products and services
- Design studios, kitchen and automobile showrooms

Updates/discussion:

a. Status update of Virginia Village Memorandum of Understanding/closings

Pricing received from two more contractors (both significantly better than pricing received previously). Project scoping continuing with a path forward anticipated to be determined in the next two weeks. Mid-to late September anticipated for closing with Wesley.

b. Updates on:

i. Parklets

No update provided.

ii. Commercial district amenities – new furniture at Mr. Brown’s Park

- 15 street light pole planters have been planted and are being watered.
- Mr. Brown’s Park turf has been refreshed and irrigation system fixed.
- EDO staff are working with Recreation and Parks staff on allocating ARPA funds for parks maintenance.



iii. Parking update study funding and staffing

No update provided.

iv. Hiring/managing a marketing consultant

Research underway to identify and possibly hire a marketing consultant.

Marketing scope of work to include:

- Research and analysis
- Design and develop website
- Marketing strategy
- Creative Development
- Digital Marketing & Branding
- Media relations
- Branding
- Measurement and evaluation

v. Restaurant week and mini-tourism web site

Preparation for Restaurant Week 2023 continues with logos, website, contact list, marketing plan and timeline created. Currently a 'Save the date' postcard is being developed and a meeting is set with Vienna and Fairfax EDO to review their restaurant week event details.

A number of firms are being researched as potential contractors to develop a mini-tourism website.

vi. Little City Gifts Cards

Consideration will possibly be requested to allocate funds for a less generous Little City Gift/BONUS Card program for the 2023/2024 holiday period (through to the end of Restaurant Week 2024) during discussions on the fall budget amendment process. EDA and ARPA funds are also likely to be requested for the same purpose.



5. Request for financial support for dues for FC EDO for participation in Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NVEDA)

City staff provided background to request for financial support for \$10,000 in dues for participation in Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NVEDA). Discussion ensued.

Jim Coyle motioned that the EDA supports the expenditure of \$10,000 from EDA funds, to pay for the first year of Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance participation fees. Matt Quinn seconded. Unanimous approval.

6. Updates on new business openings and City projects/retail

Overview of progress on numerous commercial projects in the City provided by staff with a focus on major developments and anticipated new businesses/openings.

7. Other member issues

Letty Hardi advised that the Cities 2023 Community Survey results had been released. It was noted that the City benchmarked favorably against other local jurisdictions with 80% of respondents satisfied with local restaurant choices.

Brian Williams raised a concern regarding the state of the sidewalk adjacent the Atlantic project. Staff said they would bring the matter to the attention of the relevant staff as a repair issue.

Bob Young advised that the appraisal process for the Bedo's property needed for sidewalk improvements is underway.

8. Adjournment at 8:35 PM

Next meeting: 7:00 PM, September 5, 2023 at City Hall, Dogwood Room
300 Park Ave. – (adjacent main entry)