



## City Council Economic Development Subcommittee

### MINUTES

Conference Room A  
City Hall, 501 Primrose Road – Burlingame, California  
Thursday, December 21, 2017 – 8:30 a.m.

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#### **ATTENDANCE**

**Members Present:** Council Member (CC) Keighran and Council Member (CC) Colson

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Economic Development Specialist (EDS) Cleese Relihan, Parks and Recreation Director (PRD) Margaret Glomstad, and Community Development Director (CDD) William Meeker

**Also in Attendance:** Karen Andreacchi (Create-a-Couch), Angeline Stafford (DBID/Massage Envy) and Ross Bruce (Broadway Commercial District)

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### *Commercial Leasing Trend for Retail in Burlingame:*

CC Colson noted a recent conversation she had with a Downtown property owner in which it was stated that there are multiple retail vacancies on the horizon. Brick-and-mortar stores are struggling due to the impact of on-line shopping venues. There needs to be more encouragement to shop locally. The local schools have been promoting on-line deals. CC Keighran stated that the schools shouldn't approach local businesses for donations if they don't patronize the businesses. CC Colson added that the PTA Council and Burlingame Education Foundation have offered to introduce DBID representatives to these bodies in order to put a face on the problem and in turn encourage patronage of local businesses; the Economic Development Subcommittee could help facilitate this discussion.

Angeline Stafford noted the prevalence of on-line shopping and the powerful marketing tools that these business entities use. There is a need to collectively re-message the local businesses. The City should send reminders to "shop local" through the e-newsletter with an explanation of why doing so is so important.

CC Keighran indicated that the "concierge tours" should start again in an effort to help familiarize hoteliers with offerings in the business districts. Staff should check to see if the Burlingame promotional video prepared a few years ago is still available and being used at the hotels.

There was a general discussion of the high cost of doing business in Burlingame. Much of the cost is associated with the high rent rates. There is also difficulty hiring staff due to the high cost of housing in the area. CC Colson also noted that the "deep bay" retail spaces are part of the problem due to the rent charges; there is not always a need for such a deep depth for a retail space. EDS Relihan suggested investigation of opportunities to permit office uses to locate at the rear of large retail spaces as long as the retail portion of the business faces the street.

CC Keighran indicated that there is a need to look at trends in the last few years. She has not noticed a lot of vacancies on Burlingame Avenue. She doesn't like having offices on the first floor; she wants to maintain high levels of foot traffic. The City should look at entertainment options for adults within the Downtown area. A venue that creates an "experience" would help occupy larger spaces.

Karen Andreacchi suggested that the City should look at ways of further streamlining the permitting process. She noted that La Panotiq’s process was very slow. CDD Meeker explained the permitting process and that the problem faced by La Panotiq was the difficulty faced hiring staff in an area with such high housing costs. CC Colson suggested linking the DBID members with the Job Center at Burlingame High School. CC Keighran also suggested finding a means of broadly disseminating information regarding available jobs throughout the community. CC Colson stated that the City could perhaps create a “jobs” page on its website. CDD Meeker said that the dbids could post available jobs on their webpages and the City could possibly link to those sites.

Ross Bruce stated that he believes that restaurants and entertainment venues are the future direction of both downtown areas.

Angeline Stafford noted that the DBID can no longer afford to fully fund the “First Friday” events. Bruce suggested pursuing sponsorship opportunities as a means of funding events.

*Standards of Maintenance of Windows of Available Commercial Spaces:*

EDS Relihan reviewed mock-ups of decals and scoring sheets for the proposed award program for business doing a good job of maintaining their facades. Both CC Keighran and CC Colson liked the design featuring the Centennial logo.

CC Colson suggested that staff work on an ordinance related to maintenance of vacant storefronts. Any drafts may be forwarded to the Subcommittee for input prior to meeting again. CC Colson also suggested pursuing options for allowing “pop-up” businesses.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Meeker  
Community Development Director