



## City Council Economic Development Subcommittee

### MINUTES

Conference Room A  
City Hall, 501 Primrose Road – Burlingame, California  
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 – 8:15a.m.

---

#### **ATTENDANCE**

**Members Present:** Vice Mayor Beach and Councilmember Ann Keighran

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Economic Development Specialist (EDS) Cleese Relihan, Community Development Director (CDD) Kevin Gardiner, Parks and Recreation Director Margaret Glomstad, City Manager Lisa Goldman (CM)

**Members of the Public Present:** Ryan Guibara (property owner), Georgette Naylor (Burlingame Chamber of Commerce)

#### **READ AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY AND MARCH MEETINGS**

Approved.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### Shop Local Campaign:

EDS Relihan presented the spring version of the Shop Local flyer. Subcommittee members suggested that the flyer be distributed to merchants to be posted on windows, and also be distributed to schools to remind parents to shop local. The schools could receive hard copies as well as electronic versions. The District would need to be contacted for approval. Nicole Acquisti in the Park and Recreation Department is familiar with distributing flyers to the School District, so should be contacted for guidance.

Subcommittee members also suggested including the flyers with the water bills that are sent to property owners. This would involve coordination with Finance staff.

There was some subcommittee interest in investing in a contractor to build a robust Shop Local marketing campaign. The intent would be to create a unified branding effort that would be more than just a newsletter. The concern is that the current effort could be piecemeal, but the campaign should be speaking with a single voice.

However there was not full agreement on this matter, with another subcommittee member suggesting that promoting Shop Local is the responsibility of the merchants themselves. The concern is that merchants expect the City to do the work, but they need to invest themselves in the effort as well.

There was further suggestion that if the Downtown Business Improvement District (DBID) has a social media presence, it could be effective to promote the Shop Local campaign. In previous meetings it

appeared that the DBID and the Broadway BID were open to working with each other on some joint marketing. The Chamber of Commerce could help convene such an effort.

Subcommittee members inquired whether the City could offer something that could attract business, such as having no sales tax on a particular day, or free parking on a Saturday. CM Goldman responded that the City would not be able to waive sales tax since the sales tax is split among a number of entities, but it could consider parking incentives.

Subcommittee members also suggested closing the street once a week during the summer. It could be a “Streets Alive” format with astroturf on the street, seating, etc. Restaurants and cafes have suggested such an event, and seem to like special event closures. It would not need to be overdone, just provide the space and some music. There was discussion of whether to have such an event on a weekday or weekend, and in Downtown perhaps it could be a Thursday evening to coincide with the Fresh Market. It would allow Burlingame residents to have a healthy night out. Direction was provided to bring up the topic with each of the BIDs to gauge reaction, and to invite subcommittee members if it would be helpful.

There was a further suggestion to talk to the hotels, and remind them to send people into town when people are looking for things to do.

*Burlingame Talks Shop:*

CM Goldman remarked that the event went well, and the panels were really good. The panelists had interesting and unique things to share. Subcommittee members regretted that it appeared many of the property owners left early and did not stay for the roundtable discussions.

Subcommittee members agreed one of the overriding themes was promoting a wide range of types of businesses, and changing regulations to expedite businesses coming in.

CDD Gardiner noted that the Commercial Recreation ordinance amendment to the Burlingame Avenue Commercial District (BAC) will be returning to the City Council for consideration, and wanted to confirm the direction the amendment should take. Subcommittee members agreed requiring a 15-foot active display area at the front of the storefront would be sufficient. For example, Orange Therapy in Downtown San Mateo has this type of active display area in the front.

Members of the public suggested that rather than having a fixed number, there could be a more general requirement to have an active front area. The concern is that whenever there is a hard number, it becomes a constraint and could have unintended consequences. The suggestion was that staff could make a determination, based on having worked with the applicant through the application process, and convey the recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Subcommittee members agreed with this approach, and liked that if offered more flexibility. If it turns out there are things that don’t work, the regulations could be tightened up.

Subcommittee members agreed that the Commercial Recreation uses in the BAC District should be limited to the 1400 block, between Primrose Road and El Camino Real, as had been suggested in the previous City Council meeting.

Returning to the Burlingame Talks Shop discussion, subcommittee members noted that there were many suggestions for bringing more entertainment and culture to Downtown. Subcommittee members suggested that if public land were able to be used for such purposes, it would be less expensive to bring entertainment. Staff was directed to look into the prospect of bringing entertainment for events, and determine what constraints there may be.

Vacant Property Maintenance Document:

EDS Relihan presented a draft reformatted vacant property maintenance document. Per subcommittee direction, the previous “checklist” document had been simplified. The revised document had key points, illustrated with photos.

Subcommittee members recommended that the window coverings be listed first, and that active imagery be encouraged. Unacceptable window coverings should be listed next.

Generally, subcommittee members suggested that the simpler the bullets, the better.

While enforcement has overall been effective, there are still instances of property owners or managers being unresponsive to the violation letters that the City has sent. Subcommittee members asked staff to determine whether administrative fines could be used for enforcement. For ongoing violations, a second letter would provide a second notice that would mention that the City Council will be considering implementing fines.

**FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS**

Subcommittee members expressed an interest in evaluating the feasibility of vacancy taxes as a future discussion item.

Subcommittee members asked that when the June meeting is announced to the distribution list, the announcement should also mention that the August meeting will cover management of parking for the upcoming Village at Burlingame construction.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no further public comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Gardiner  
Community Development Director