



City Council Economic Development Subcommittee

MINUTES (DRAFT)

Via Zoom

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 – 8:15 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Vice Mayor Michael Brownrigg, Councilmember Donna Colson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager (CM) Lisa Goldman, Community Development Director (CDD) Kevin Gardiner, Parks & Recreation Director (PRD) Margaret Glomstad, Finance Director (FD) Helen Yu-Scott,

Members of the Public Present: John Kevranian (President of Broadway Business Improvement District (BID)), Ross Bruce (Secretary Broadway BID), Chris Diez (Treasurer Broadway BID)

READ AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, JANUARY 12 AND JANUARY 12 SPECIAL MEETINGS

- Approved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Annual Meeting with the Broadway BID

CDD Gardiner introduced the topic by first discussing the Broadway Specific Plan that received grant funding through MTC/ABAG. Staff is still working through the contracting process, and they are hoping to start work on that in the summer.

John Kevranian provided some background information about the current strength of Broadway, noting that the district has nearly 100% occupancy. However, he noted that “showroom” retail with limited hours or hours by appointment only are not activating the street, and he advocated for possible minimum hours of operation (similar to some malls).

Councilmember Colson asked for feedback about the possible changes to the business license tax structure. Ross Bruce noted some concern from nearby merchants if the City were to move to a gross receipts structure and suggested that it may be easier to administer if businesses were charged a flat rate based on their business type.

CM Goldman discussed the rationale behind the possible changes to the tax structure, noting that the current flat fee is inequitable when larger businesses pay the same rate as substantially smaller businesses. Working with HdL, staff brought three possible models to the City Council at their February 22, 2022 Study Session on potential tax measures. After Council feedback, staff is examining other models that would potentially limit the amount a business pays based on business

type while still factoring in gross receipts. It will be discussed by the full Council at a later date.

Mr. Kevranian suggested establishing a subcommittee of different merchants to provide their thoughts on the business license tax structure. CM Goldman noted that the City has to have all of the language for any general ballot tax measures (like the possible business license reform) ready prior to July 5, 2022 due to the Council recess in August and ballot requirements to have the language prepared 88 days prior to the November vote.

Councilmember Colson noted that the drop in transient-occupancy tax (TOT) has caused the City to look at various ways to recover revenue. She highlighted that the City is the only one in the area to have a flat business license rate, and also has one of the lowest TOT rates in the County.

Mr. Kevranian will solicit opinions from the Broadway BID Board and send the City Council their recommendations after their next meeting.

Discussion of Subcommittee Work Plan for the Year

Based on conversation in the last meeting, CDD Gardiner noted that the standing meetings with the DBID, the hoteliers, and the commercial linkage fee will be in future meetings (the DBID in April, the hoteliers in May, and the fee studies as an ongoing topic).

Councilmember Colson mentioned a conversation she had had with County representatives concerning a parcel tax for all commercial and residential buildings in the County to help fund sea level rise protections. She advocated for a presentation to the Subcommittee, though CM Goldman suggested that the full City Council would be better suited for that discussion. Vice Mayor Brownrigg noted that external taxes would be considered as part of the commercial linkage fee discussion, even if the Subcommittee does not directly discuss the County measure.

Councilmember Colson suggested more advanced planning for the holiday lighting and decorations, potentially a discussion with both BIDs in September.

Vice Mayor Brownrigg suggested that major development projects could come to the Subcommittee as a “first stop” prior to the Planning Commission or full City Council. CDD Gardiner noted that the structure has been used before, particularly if there are policy questions related to a potential development.

Other meetings will be left on a rolling basis, with some possible topics including an update on Topgolf and its potential tie-in to the Women’s Western Regional Golf Tournament in Millbrae in 2023 or 2024, or a meeting with Burlingame Plaza. CDD Gardiner suggested that the Topgolf update could be combined with the hotelier meeting, as they are also interested in the project.

Mr. Kevranian suggested a meeting with the Burlingame Community Education Foundation (BCE) to help promote local businesses, rather than having BCE partner with large online firms. Councilmember Colson noted the City could encourage them to, but she recommended that the BIDs

interact directly with the School Board as the City has no jurisdiction over them.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Councilmember Colson inquired if there are any cannabis businesses that have submitted applications. CDD Gardiner noted that there are two approved applications, but neither have gone to the Planning Commission for their Conditional Use Permit (CUP). There is still some Council interest in a cannabis tax on the November 2022 ballot.

Vice Mayor Brownrigg discussed the smoke shop opening on Broadway. Mr. Kevranian noted that the BID had no concern with the business after signage requiring customers to be 21 or over was posted, and most of the concern was raised from residents.

Action Items

- EDS Sanfilippo will schedule the annual Subcommittee meeting with the DBID for the April meeting

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

The April meeting will include the annual meeting with the Downtown Business Improvement District (DBID) and possibly an update on the commercial linkage fee study.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Sanfilippo
Economic Development & Housing
Specialist