

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
April 26, 2016 – 7:30 a.m.
Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Mr. Fowler.

Roll Call/Attendance

Members Affrunti, DeHaan, Maule, Reece, Saidler, Schroll, and Fowler were present. Members Dalzell and Leech were absent. Haig Haleblian was also present.

Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Community Development, and Katie Cowlin, Planner, were present from staff.

Approve Minutes of the March 22, 2016 Meeting

Mr. DeHaan moved to approve the minutes from the March 22, 2016 EDC meeting as presented. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, DeHaan, Maule, Saidler, Schroll, Fowler voted aye. Mr. Reece abstained. Motion passed.

Public Participation

There was no one present who wished to speak.

I Shop Crystal Lake report

Ms. Cowlin said the members were provided with the weekly stats for postings on Facebook and Twitter. They looked at the last Facebook postings that had the biggest “likes.” The posts were all different, not just one type (i.e. ads, the sign campaign, etc.). Ms. Maule stated that there is a stronger presence tied to other postings. They took photos during the Community Cleanup and directed people to the Chambers website to get the photos. Ms. Cowlin said people do like the old photos and they are trying to put together a Throwback Thursday.

Ms. Cowlin noted that the contract with our consultant will be ending on May 31. They will be sending information to other companies shortly and will wait a few weeks for their responses.

Mr. Affrunti asked about the number of females for Facebook. Ms. Cowlin said that the majority of Facebook users are female. She added that there are 2,200+ Facebook followers and a smaller number for Twitter.

Business anniversaries and tour updates

Ms. Rentzsch said the business anniversary presentations will be May 3 and 17. Information will be sent to the members to remind them.

Ms. Rentzsch said it has been a challenge to arrange business tours. She has heard from Mathews Corp. and they said no thank you for a tour. They are not interested in one at this time.

Mr. Saidler asked if staff had contacted Crystal Lake Graphics. Ms. Rentzsch said she had not. Ms. Maule said she will contact Knaack about a tour, but there have been many changes there and she is not sure she will be able to arrange one. Mr. Haleblian said he will contact Althoff Industries about a tour. Mr. Reece suggested that they be at the end of the day and not on Tuesdays. Mr. Fowler said that Vo-tech would be a good tour but he has no contacts with that company. Ms. Cowlin said she will try to contact them. Mr. Haleblian suggested Container Corp. Ms. Rentzsch said they are just moving in and she will contact them after they have had a chance to settle in.

GIS Presentation

Ms. Rentzsch showed the EDC portion of the presentation given to City Council during the budget review. It reviews the businesses that have come to Crystal Lake in the past year. Also there has been a noticeable move in home building. It is moving slowly, but it is moving forward. Ms. Maule asked about Bryn Mawr. Ms. Rentzsch said the revised plan was recently presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The new plan was denied by the PZC and will move forward to City Council for their review. She noted that there were many property owners who attended the PZC meeting objecting to the smaller lot sizes, etc.

Ms. Rentzsch said the City does survey our customers and there is a 99% very positive rating. When we do receive a survey with concerns, it is reviewed and acted upon, which sometimes leads to a change in procedure.

Ms. Rentzsch informed the members that the former Cub Foods building will be taken down soon. Mr. Fowler asked about the hotel site that was approved by Portillos. Ms. Rentzsch said they have contacted several hotel companies regarding the two sites that have been approved for hotels. Mr. Haleblian asked about the former Sherman Plumbing building that recently housed a fitness center. Ms. Rentzsch said there is movement to fill that space with another fitness center.

Ms. Rentzsch showed the members the City's GIS mapping program that is currently available as well as a "story map" which shows sites and has information such as Three Oaks Recreation Area with their hours of operation, fee schedules, etc. This is still in draft form but should be available on the website shortly. She added that there will also be restaurant locations with photos, contact information and possibly PDFs of their menus. They are talking about expanding this to include hotels and special events such as Lakeside Festival. Ms. Maule asked that she be told when this is available so it can be noted on the Chamber's website. Mr. Saidler said this will be good for new businesses to use. He said the community events will drive the usage and get people to go to this site for information.

Mr. Fowler asked if this will be a mobile app. Ms. Rentzsch said that capacity is available for the "story map." Mr. Affrunti suggested they promote outdoor seating. Mr. Saidler suggested that we contact businesses about this since it is a great resource for their employees who mostly don't live in Crystal Lake.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Fowler said the big thing is Willow Creek. Ms. Rentzsch said the church was approved and received a lot of support at the City Council meeting. If needed, they will be dedicating property to relocate the tracks.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Maule said she went to Springfield for Employer Appreciation Day. There were many who wanted to go but preferred that it be closer. She is trying to set up something in Schaumburg to meet with State officials. Also, there is concern with forming a new relationship with our State Representative from the 66th District. Mike Tryon is not seeking re-election and the two running for the seat are both from Kane County. The Chamber wants to be sure we are not left out.

Ms. Maule said there may possibly be a luncheon to present Senator Mark Kirk with an award.

Ms. Maule said there was an article in the Northwest Herald regarding their intern from District 155. They hope that he will stay for the summer. This program has a lot of traction, there are also other programs that are just starting with the District that are business oriented.

Ms. Maule said the Community Cleanup was this past weekend and about 400 people came to the Chamber building. There were others that did not check in there but did work on parks and other areas. They did add other events such as shredding, drug take back, shoe donation and others. Mr. Reece said there are still garbage bags around the City that have not been picked up. Ms. Maule said they are being picked up this week and will check on the locations Mr. Reece provided.

Ms. Maule said they held their Spring Board which is a strategic planning for the year. They will continue to formalize the plan. Also their annual dinner is filling up.

McEDC

Ms. Rentzsch said the Motorola building in Harvard has been sold at auction and she understands they will continue to use it as a manufacturing building.

Ms. Maule said they will need to support the McEDC because of the changes at the County level. Some of the new members have stated that they will not support McEDC or any growth. Mr. Reece said that Pam Cumpata has done a wonderful job for the County. He added that controlled growth is healthy. He asked what makes people stay here? Family? The County Board can't be shortsighted. Ms. Maule said that 30% of the new Board is against growth. Mr. Schroll said he agrees that McEDC is important but is unsure of how to express that to the County Board members. Mr. Reece said the McEDC has been a good partnership of public and private and it may come to a point that it will be private.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Rentzsch said there is a list of recent approvals by City Council included in the packet which includes video gaming, IRB being reserved, etc. Mr. Reece said video gaming is a perfect example of keeping your nose to the grindstone and educating the City on the topic. Ms. Maule said Half Time Pizza would not be expanding if video gaming was not approved by the City.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

There were no comments from the members.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 a.m.