

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

June 9, 2021

The Richmond Economic Development Commission's monthly meeting convened at 11:30 AM on June 9, 2021, via Zoom webinar.

Call to Order 11:44 PM by Chair, Ayoka Nurse

1. **Roll Call:**

A quorum was present with commission members A. Anderson, A. Nurse, B. Evans, D. Wear, G. Sewell-Murphy, K. James, O. Willis, J. Lee, L. Dandie

2. **Absent:**

A. Shields, A. Delgado, and R. Yazdi,

3. **Staff:**

Thomas Omolo, Gabino Arredondo, Shasa Curl, and Justin Stovall

4. **Council Liaison:**

Demnlus Johnson III

5. **Guest:**

Eric Zell, Mark English, Samidha Thakral, Banke Abioye, Osaretin Ogbemor, Alicia Gallo, Stephen Baiter, & Jackie Keliiaa

6. **Minutes:**

1st –A.Nurse, 2nd – A. Anderson, and Unanimous Approval

7. **Presentation:**

Eric Zell and ProLogis representatives: Presented an update on ProLogis's plans to redevelop the Hilltop mall area. The site will be designed according to sustainability guidelines and to create a mixed-use neighborhood that will serve as a center of business and e-commerce for the surrounding community. The district is intended to be walkable and bicycle-friendly as well as alternate support modes of transportation to avoid large amounts of surface parking. The immediate next steps are to conduct community outreach possibly in partnership with the EDC's community engagement subcommittee.

Osaretin Ogbemor: Provided an update on the Richmond Clothing Company, events held in 2020 and planned events for the store. These events will primarily be community engagement events that will lead up to a larger event at the end of August which will include food trucks and other activities. The Osaretin also mentioned that the company plans to partner with MasterMinding Habits, an organization that supports children with learning disabilities, to teach children strategies to be successful in their academics.

Alicia Gallo: Provided an overview of Richmond Main Street Initiative role in revitalizing the Richmond's downtown area. RMSI's approach includes marketing for businesses, ensuring public spaces in the district are clean and safe, fostering entrepreneurship, design and accessibility support, and strengthening community relations. During the pandemic RMSI gave out open for business signs in collaboration with Leftside Printing, as well as increased the amount of small business mailers delivered which contained info on health guidelines and relief resources. RMSI also conducted periodic check-ins with businesses.

Stephen Baiter, Jackie Keliiaa: Provided an overview of The East Bay Economic Development

Alliance which serves as a member network to connects 150+ organizations across Alameda and Contra Costa. The East Bay EDA hosts regular panels and mixers on current economic development trends and topics and an award ceremony called the East Bay Innovation Awards which promotes innovative companies. The organization wants to connect with the port of Richmond, as it is a major hub of economic activity in the city.

Gloria Sewell-Murphy: Discussed the creation of a Sustainable Industrial Plant Based Products/Business Expo subcommittee to review industrial hemp and other related industrial plant-based businesses within Richmond and assessing the potential of a business expo. The business expo would be open to Richmond-based businesses both for-profit and non-profit.

Commissioner Anderson placed a motion to create a Sustainable Industrial Plant Based Products/Business Expo subcommittee. Seconded by Commissioner Willis. The motion passed with eight YES, two ABSTAIN and zero NO.

James Lee: Provided an update on the Reimaging Public Safety Community Task Force. The task force would fund social community benefit programs to address issues such as homelessness, housing shortage, and youth programming.

8. **Committee Reports:**

- Policy – Currently in discussion with HR&A about different contingencies. Submitted a letter which is now in record, and all of the questions put forth by the commission have been answered. The next step is community engagement and outreach.
- Community Engagement (D. Wear) – Started the distribution of 200 flyers to businesses, as well as advertised the restaurant revitalization program's webinar. Many businesses brought up concerns over high rent prices during the pandemic. 36 business registered for the webinar but only 11 attended. There were 12 attendees for the short-term recovery action plan webinar.
- Taste of Richmond – No update
- Cannabis (A. Ayoka) – No update, the updated timeline will be available by the next EDC commission meeting.

9. **Report from City Council:**

10. **Staff Reports:**

Finance Department

- ARP, LaShonda White – The City of Richmond will be receiving a \$22 million allocation through the act. The first half of the fund will be received this year and the second half will be received next year. The deadline to spend it is 2026.
 - Measure U Update – Finance Department Staff – Did not receive any proposals for the RFP. There continue to be weekly cross-department meetings.
- ##### City Manager's Office
- Update on Black Wall Street Event – Black Wall Street wants to have an event in downtown Richmond for black entrepreneurs. A meeting is set up, and the expected time for the event to take place is early in the Fall.
- ##### Mayor's Office
- Update on Commissioners – Dominique– There are currently two to three vacant commissioner positions. One person was just approved that fit the criteria, and there will be a vote to confirm her in the next City Council meeting.

11. **Public Comments/Announcements/Handouts Presentation:**

12. **Next meeting:** 7/14/2021

13. **Adjournment:** 1:08 PM