



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Thursday December 19, 2013

PLACE: El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue
Hillside Conference Room

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:45 pm

I. Roll Call

Economic Development Board Members Present:, Tess Taylor, Vikram Bajaj, Jean Shrem

Staff: Dwayne Dalman

Council Liaison: Mark Friedman

Absent: Sonja Givens-Thomas, Ann Lehman, Ken Lerch, Wendy Horng Brawer, Mark Friedman

II. Public Comment: None

III. Approved minutes from meeting of November 20, 2013 – Board unable to approve November minutes as only three members present

IV. Oral Communications

Liaison Update - none

Staff Update – Dalman gave an overview of the last meeting including the change from an Economic Development Board to an Economic Development Committee and an overview of the Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP). Dalman discussed the need for an EDAP, the process for creating one, the past efforts and the simultaneous efforts of the Strategic Plan, the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and others.

V. Discussion of Economic Development Board Activities

Economic Development Action Plan

Dalman gave a brief overview of the proposed goals and corresponding strategies for the EDAP. The committee then discussed the following Action Plan items:

1. Leverage opportunities with progressive and motivated business and property owners
 - The committee discussed the challenges of working with property owners that do not have a commitment to the community and the challenges of funding tenant improvements

2. Identify ways to increase place-making in vital commercial districts
 - The committee talked about capitalizing on opportunities to promote the positive aspects of El Cerrito
3. Assist in effort to make permitting process business friendly
 - The committee talked about the need to make the permitting process less costly and to reduce instances of “deal breakers”
4. Support economic sustainability of existing El Cerrito businesses
 - The committee discussed the need to check in with small businesses to see how they are doing and to learn about their issues
5. The committee came up with a proposed new goal centered around the concept of Marketing/ Promotion/ Branding for El Cerrito
 - The committee talked about identifying “what is the message that we want to convey”, “what is the soul of El Cerrito” and “what is it that we wish we were or already are known for”.

VI. Set Next Agenda

For the next meeting, the committee was charged with reviewing the proposed goals and strategies in order to discuss them at further meetings. The goal is to complete this process during the January, February and March meetings. In addition, the committee was charged with addressing short-term strategies to implement in the near term.

VII. Adjourned to Next Meeting - January 16, 2014
Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm