



**ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

January 20, 2022

7:30 a.m.

Via Zoom – Recording Link

[https://cityofpleasanton.zoom.us/rec/share/
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CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 7:31 a.m. by EVC Chair Tracy Farhad followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmember Jack Balch, Steve Van Dorn, Ellen Pensky-McGraw, Harsh Gohil, Shareef Mahdavi, Steve Baker, Tracy Farhad, Reena Gupta, Will Doerlich, Steve McCoy-Thompson, Laura Brooks, Roderick O’Brien, Kelly Mokashi, Tiffany Cadrette, Sylvia Tian, Julie Testa (City Council alternate), and Amos Nugent (non-voting attendee). Andres Ripa was in attendance for a portion of the meeting.

Absent: Brian Wilson, Daniel Watson, and Michael Li

City staff: Economic Development Manager Lisa Adamos, Acting Assistant City Manager Pamela Ott, and Economic Development Office Assistant Cailin Gavagan

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

No agenda amendments were made.

Economic Development Manager Lisa Adamos briefly shared the Economic Development priorities as included in the City Council Two-Year Work Plan. She explained that every two years after a general election, the City Council develops a work plan of City priorities. The items noted are based on the Economic Vitality Committee recommended priorities and provides a roadmap for programs and initiatives for which the EVC will prioritize its activities this year.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The November 18, 2021, meeting minutes were approved as presented on motion by Will Doerlich and second by Steve Baker by a vote of 15-0-0. Alternate EVC member and Councilmember Julie Testa abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER MATTERS

City Council Liaison Report

Councilmember Jack Balch provided the following updates:

- City Council is working with the City of Livermore to address EMS challenges
- The Youth Cricket Tournament was held the Sunday after Thanksgiving
- Hometown Holiday Celebration was held on December 4
- Nelson Fialho retired from City Manager position in late November
- At its December 7 meeting, the City Council:
 - Adopted a resolution to apply for CalRecycle's Beverage Container Recycling City/County Payment Program
 - Approved second reading of an ordinance to implement Senate Bill 9 regarding two-unit housing developments and urban lot splits in single-family residential zones
 - Approved additional design services for the Downhill-Only Mountain Bike Trail at Augustin Bernal Park Project
 - Approved final design services contract in the amount of \$3.4 million for the PFAS Treatment and Wells Rehabilitation Project
 - Introduced an ordinance to add Restrictions on Smoking at Townhomes, Condominiums and Buildings with three or more attached units to the Municipal Code
 - Considered adoption of a resolution for expanding statewide access to rooftop solar through a successor Net Energy Metering 3.0 program
- At its December 21 meeting, the City Council:
 - Received second reading to add Restrictions on Smoking at Townhomes, Condominiums and Buildings with three or more attached units to the Municipal Code
 - Introduced first reading of an ordinance to amend and extend the Stoneridge Shopping Center Development Agreement by one year
 - Approved amendment to contract for drought rate and connection fee consulting services
 - Ratified calendar year 2022 City Council assignments to boards and commissions, and Councilmember Arkin selected as Vice Mayor for 2022
 - Reviewed draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2.0 and draft Initial Study Negative Declaration
 - Considered approving a long-term downtown parklet program
- At its January 4 meeting, the City Council:
 - Received input from the community regarding boundaries and composition of districts to be established for City Councilmember district-based elections.
- At its January 18 meeting, the City Council:
 - Adopted a resolution to renew the Tri-Valley Tourism Marketing District and a resolution requesting consent to administer assessments

- Approved agreement for development of the sewer collection system hydraulic model and related studies
- Received input from the community regarding boundaries and composition of districts to be established for City Council district-based elections
- Discussed proposed Ballot Measure 21-0016 which provides that local land use and zoning laws override conflicting State laws
- Housing Element Update review and approval of potential sites was continued to the February 1 meeting

Downtown Parklet Program

Associate Planner, Megan Campbell, provided an overview of the Parklet Program, where she noted that the City allowed businesses to temporarily expand dining and other business activities into the right-of-way – these temporary areas are known as “pop-ups.” The pop-ups, which were subjected to a small list of standards as the goal was to allow businesses to continue operating, were generally well-received from the residents and received positive feedback such as added vitality and community connection. Some criticism of the “pop-ups” included appearance and impacts to adjacent business visibility, utilities, and traffic signals. On July 20, 2021, the City Council advised that the pop-up program would end with the calendar year and directed staff to prepare a more formal parklet program.

With consideration of both positive and negative feedback from the community, other programs, and best practices available around the Bay Area, and discussions with other cities, City staff developed standards for the parklet program. Ms. Campbell provided an overview of the program, which included location and size parameters, emergency access, utilities, site distance/visibility, and fire and traffic access. Staff conducted a survey based on all the parameters and identified 106 locations on Main Street and side streets that would not qualify for this program due to proximity to corners, turns, utilities, etc.

The approved program consists of two design paths for businesses with both options requiring compliance with the design guidelines as follows:

1. Design Review - this process will require more investment from businesses to develop plans but offers more flexibility to use parklets that are already designed. Application process will open on January 24.
2. Pre-Approved Parklet – this is a streamlined process which provides cost savings for the businesses as well as some minor customization. Pre-approved designs will be available in April 2022.

The permit process will include a parklet design review or over-the-counter approval of pre-approved parklet where the business, upon approval, will be issued parklet and encroachment permits. A parklet agreement will outline operational expectations, maintenance, and insurance requirements. The permits will be reviewed on an annual basis. Ms. Campbell added that there are City fees associated with the program; one includes the use the City’s right-of-way. The fee will be waived for the first year, and City Council can make future considerations after that.

EVC member questions and comments included:

- Is there any discussion of closing the street downtown permanently or on the weekends?

- Ms. Ott commented that the topic of closing Main Street permanently was considered as part of the Downtown Specific Plan and was not incorporated into the recent Downtown Specific Plan update. However, an update on closing Main Street on the weekends will be provided later in this meeting. Ms. Ott further noted that we will note the interest in response to a comment that the plan was updated pre-COVID.
- Support for rethinking Main Street as a pedestrian street.
- Will the downtown (lease rates) remain affordable?
 - Ms. Ott responded that the City's role is not in the negotiation of lease rates between tenants and property owners.
 - Will Doerlich noted that there is a perceived value within the downtown area, but there is also a large amount of inventory on the market.
- How has the City applied this to other businesses that are not located downtown?
 - Ms. Campbell commented that the City offers an Outdoor Dining Permit for which businesses outside the downtown can apply to expand their dining area.
- Support for design parameters of the parklets.

Economic Development Manager, Lisa Adamos began the Parklet Grant Program overview by noting that in April 2020, City Council approved a Business Assistance Program to provide relief to local businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. An element of the program included the Business Support Fund—a \$3 million special fund which provided zero percent interest, unsecured, short-term loans to independently or locally-owned businesses. To date, the City has assisted 115 Pleasanton businesses with over \$1.3 million. Staff recommends allocating up to \$250,000 of the approved \$3 million to fund the Downtown Parklet Grant Program.

The proposed Downtown Parklet Grant Program will reimburse eligible expenses related to the outdoor development, construction, and operation of a parklet. The grant amount will reimburse up to 50 percent of the total cost, not to exceed \$10,000 per business.

Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis beginning March 1, 2022. The program will end on March 1, 2023, until total funds are exhausted, or a date determined by the City Council. Ms. Adamos reviewed the eligibility criteria for businesses which include, but are not limited to:

- Be an approved parklet by the City of Pleasanton
- Be physically located in the Downtown District
- Possess an active City of Pleasanton Business License
- Be in good standing with the City of Pleasanton and demonstrate compliance with the County Health Order
- Be an eating or drinking establishment or a retail establishment (considered on a case-by-case basis)

Businesses that are corporately owned chains, franchise establishments, home-based businesses or hotels are not eligible. Ms. Adamos reviewed the eligible expenses which include, but are not limited to:

- Furniture
- Umbrellas or other City-approved weather protection
- Lights, heaters, etc.
- Construction materials
- Physical improvements or construction services to install the approved parklet

- Cost of architecture/design services with a limit up to \$5,000

Expenses not eligible for reimbursement include, but are not limited to:

- Business furniture that is not associated with and approved as part of the parklet program (e.g., indoor furniture, back patio furniture, etc.)
- Façade and other site improvements not specifically listed or approved as part of the parklet permit
- Branded or sponsor-type products or structures

Ms. Adamos reviewed the process for businesses to apply, which would include an application, itemization of paid expenses, and copies of receipts.

EVC member questions and comments included:

- Is installation and delivery included in reimbursable expenses?
 - Ms. Campbell responded that as written, it is a potential expense.
- Comments were expressed regarding not including other businesses outside of the downtown area in this program.
- How did the City determine \$250,000 as the cap?
 - Ms. Adamos responded that roughly 22 businesses set up temporary pop-ups. Given the potential applications from these businesses at the maximum of \$10,000, plus some room for additional applications, provided a rough estimate of \$250,000.
- What is the length of time between when a business submits their application to when they can install their parklet?
 - Ms. Adamos commented that once a business receives the Downtown Parklet Program approval and all necessary permits, construction may begin. Once they have receipts and invoices then businesses can apply for the Parklet Grant Program.
 - Ms. Campbell clarified that the Downtown Parklet design review application will open in the coming week, and approved parklets may be installed beginning March 1.

Weekends on Main Program Update

Acting Assistant City Manager, Pamela Ott, provided a brief update on Weekends on Main. In August 2021, City Council reviewed the Weekend on Main program and gave direction to City staff and the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA) to create a framework for Weekend on Main 2.0 and what it might look like for the community and downtown. An advisory group was assembled to better understand the necessary considerations; the group consists of a restaurateur, a retailer, a service business located downtown, a resident who lives in the downtown area, a resident who does not live in the downtown area, and representation from the PDA.

Comments from retailers, restaurants and residents included a consideration for additional programming/activities to be added to Weekends on Main. City staff and the PDA will bring recommendations to City Council in February.

Economic Development Information/Updates

Ms. Adamos acknowledged the information items provided in the packet.

EVC member Steve Van Dorn inquired on the status of Costco. Ms. Adamos responded that Costco resubmitted its design review application in December which is now being reviewed. The two hotels on Johnson Drive also submitted applications and are moving forward.

Councilmember Balch commented that the District Elections and the Housing Element Update are on the City Council's upcoming agendas and encouraged members to watch the City Council meeting and ask the public to provide their opinions. Ms. Ott noted the City's webpage for the district elections at http://cityofpleasantonca.gov/gov/hottopics/district_elections.asp.

EVC member Kelly Mokashi requested consideration for a conversation to help engage our youth and young adults back into our community, specifically with downtown events and activities.

Councilmember Testa referenced the Council's recent discussion on the Our Neighborhood Voices proposed ballot measure, noting the statewide initiative's focus on local control for municipalities, and offered to provide additional information and opportunity to support the measure. Councilmember Balch noted that instead of promoting the initiative at this meeting, the meeting video was available for review by anyone interested in the Council's discussion.

Ms. Adamos noted that the City website provides contact information for the public to contact members of the EVC. She requested that if there are any changes or alternate email addresses to be listed, that members contact her.

Ms. Farhad noted that Visit Tri-Valley's Taste the Tri-Valley Restaurant Week will be returning February 18 through February 27.

MATTERS INITIATED BY ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE

None were noted.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 a.m.