



Economic Development Board Minutes – May 10, 2017

Members Present: Tom Shoemaker, Darcy Johnson, Jarod Albers, Logan Baker, David Custer, Randy Heitmann, Judy Jackson, Leah tenBensel

Members Absent: Jan tenBensel (*excused*)

Others Present: Diane Henderson, Melissa Jackson, Morgan Farquhar

Meeting Called to order: 12:05 p.m. by Tom Shoemaker, Open Meeting law noted.

Amendment to Agenda: Morgan Farquhar presented the concept of creating a walking trail that will connect the Harvest Meadows Subdivision to the town of Cambridge in an easier manner than walking along the highway or busy airport road (road 410). He has been in conversation with the Park Foundation and members of the Golf Board. The Boards are in agreement that a path needs to be created, but the city technically owns the land that it would be on, so those Boards' hands are tied until the city approves use of the small amount of land it would require. Morgan said he planned to attend the June 15 Cambridge City Council meeting to begin discussion about getting this project moving forward. With a simple OK from the city to access the property included, Morgan said he will find the funding and any other necessities, without use of city or ED Board funds; he just needs approval to access the land. ED Board members were supportive of Morgan's plan. Randy Heitmann made a motion to approve a statement for the City Council about the proposal, as follows: "The Economic Development Board highly recommends that a walking trail connecting Harvest Meadows with downtown Cambridge be pursued, as it would be in the best interest of the City of Cambridge in terms of promoting safety and connectivity between the town and subdivision. Logan Baker seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried. Chairman Tom Shoemaker directed ED director Diane Henderson to share the Board's recommendation with City Council.

Consent approval of minutes and bills: Darcy made motion to approve, seconded by Judy. All in favor, Motion carried.

New Business:

A Joint Committee meeting is slated for May 18 to discuss a proposal by Lance Shifflet for construction of a seed-distribution center on a free commercial lot in Harvest Meadows. The effort would provide two full-time jobs and provide the opportunity for the city to capture TIF funds. Questions regarding this project included where funding come from; personal inputs; bank loans, or pre-existing company (AG Venture), and any other funding sources. Diane will be addressing these questions of Lance prior to the Joint Committee Meeting.

Greg Borland has expressed interest in building a new home in the Harvest Meadow Subdivision, and Diane is following up, as needed.

Planting/Weed and Dust Control: Cambridge resident Stan Hilker has expressed interest in planting cover crops on the Harvest Meadow subdivision, now that Jan tenBensel is no longer providing this service. Stan would like to plant seed including cane during the summer and possibly a rye cover crop for fall and winter. Diane has presented the information to Mayor Mark Hurst, who directed her to contact Tom Patterson to access the agreement previously reached with Jan tenBensel, and develop a similar one with Mr. Hilker so City Council can review and make a decision.

Harvest Meadow Brochure: LOOKS GREAT. Diane has sent to homebuilders and will continue to send out the brochure to encourage interest in building in Harvest Meadows.

Diane is continuing to meet with local business owners/managers and has come to the conclusion that there are many needs and that she will be unable to meet with every business on a quarterly basis, as she had hoped, but instead about twice per year officially – and as needed throughout the year. Board members shared encouraging comments about the work that has been done and ongoing enthusiasm that Diane has stimulated in Cambridge.

- **Corner Café has not made a payment** on its revolving loan several months. Diane reported that a letter has been sent, and the Board offered to visit with owner to see about making arrangements for payment.
- **Downtown Revitalization Grant Program:**
 - Planning Stages: Phase I grant approved for planning downtown revitalization, and Miller & Associates representatives held a meeting in Cambridge about what local business owners believe needs to happen downtown. About 40 people attended and some of the needs that were repeated most included: repairing of sidewalks; drainage; use of upstairs space in downtown buildings; the need for an “entry” to downtown (signage); business banners, lamp posts, and general “branding” of the downtown area. A plan mapping out priorities should be ready by Sept. 1, 2017. That plan would be used to submit a second grant application to the state for completion of the project.

Subdivision Update:

- Meeting of Joint Committee on Thursday, May 18, at 5 p.m. in the city meeting room.

Housing/Rental:

- Potential builders have been contacted via a packet of information about Harvest Meadows, which hopefully will begin to stir interested. If Diane does not get calls in response to the mailing, she will begin calling those to whom she sent packets to see what it might take to get them to build in Harvest Meadows or elsewhere in Cambridge.
- Diane would like to do a housing inventory of Cambridge since there is the potential of using LB 840 funds to work on existing homes if needed. Darcy explained that one had been done at some point, and Diane agreed to find out what’s available and start there.
- There was discussion of the ED Board and investment club just getting a spec home/duplex done due to a seeming lack of interest from contractors but the enormous need for housing in Cambridge, especially rental housing.

Alumni Database: No updates

Supporting Existing Business: No update

Director's Report: (Diane has been very busy; written update included in Board packets.)

Action items:

1. Intern grant applications for approval:
 - a. Cambridge Clarion: Motion for approval by Tom, second from Jarod. Motion approved.
 - b. Cambridge Memorial Hospital: Motion for approval by Tom, second from Jarod. Motion approved.
 - c. Mr. Sam LLC: Motion to deny and ask for more information made by Tom, second from Jarod. Motion carried. Diane agreed to talk with Sam and see if additional information is available.

2. Façade program
 - a. Diane noted that the Methodist Church has finished its façade improvement and submitted required documentation to the Board for payment of the 50% grant. Darcy motioned to approve payment of the grant, and Judy seconded. Motion approved.

Melissa's report: Nothing to add; continued work on social media. Downtown spruce-up was a success, with about 20 volunteers turning out to plant whiskey barrels of flowers, clean out the downtown park, and complete other general cleanup in the downtown area.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Next meeting: June 14 at noon; lunch will be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah tenBensel