



MINUTES
Economic Development Commission
Electronic Meeting
April 22, 2020
7:30 am

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice Chair Shane Randall called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Commission Members present:

Shane Randall, Vice Chair; Brian McKean; Gordon Mortensen; Grant Tayrien; Brent White; Mark Schnepf; Perry Rea; Chris Clark; Derek Neighbors; Carson Brown; Perry Berry; Jason Barney; Jenna Kahl; Marc Valenzuela; Nancy Hormann; Council Member Brown; Council Member Oliphant

Town Staff: Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director; Jennifer Lindley, Downtown Development Manager; Marissa Garnett, Economic Development Coordinator, Kyle Barichello, Planner II; Erik Swanson, Planning Administrator; Terry Diamond, IT Program Manager; Joy Maglione, Deputy Town Clerk

Absent Members: Steve Sossaman; Warde Nichols

2. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

A. Consideration and possible approval of the January 22, 2020 minutes.

Motion to approve the January 22, 2020 minutes as presented.

1st: Gordon Mortensen

2nd: Perry Rea

Vote: Approved unanimously

B. Welcome and introduction to new Commission Members

Economic Development Director Doreen Cott welcomed new members Marc Valenzuela, Salt River Project (SRP), and Queen Creek resident, Nancy Hormann.

Mr. Valenzuela introduced himself and said he has been in the economic development field for over seven years. He is currently a Senior Project Manager with SRP and previously worked for ASU and the City of Mesa. Mr. Valenzuela said he is excited to be a part of the Queen Creek Economic Development Commission.

Ms. Cott said that Nancy Hormann is a Queen Creek resident and has experience working in the downtown realm and she is excited for her to join the

team. Ms. Cott said that Ms. Hormann is having trouble with the audio connection at this meeting and will introduce herself at the next meeting.

C. Thank you and congratulations to Lee Ester

Vice Chair Shane Randall acknowledged Lee Ester's service to the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and his role as Chair. He congratulated him on his retirement and said it has been an honor to serve with him.

Mr. Ester said he moved to Queen Creek in 2003 and has watched the Town grow and he is grateful for the privilege of serving on the EDC for the last twelve years. He said he has worked for SRP for 34 years and is now ready to enjoy retirement and he has enjoyed working with everyone over the years.

Ms. Cott thanked Lee for his service on behalf of the Queen Creek staff and Town Council and said it has been a pleasure working with him.

D. Presentation on Economic Development's COVID-19 efforts

Ms. Cott outlined the assistant efforts to help local business owners and facilitate economic growth.

- Utilized resources from local and professional organizations and updated Town website with a dedicated page with information for local businesses and workforce
- Relaxed business signage standards & waived permit fees
- Provided maps for area restaurants on Queen Creek website and actively promote businesses and weekly specials. Developed a form to capture information from businesses
- Working with the Finance Department regarding budget impacts

Commissioner Chris Clark reported on efforts from the QC Chamber of Commerce. A survey with the East Valley Chamber Alliance (EVCCA) was conducted to capture the needs of local businesses. He said the Chamber is in contact with Congressman Biggs and the Governor regarding loan options, funding and the three phases of tentative re-opening.

Vice-chair Randall gave an update from the banking perspective and said the volume of small business loan applications is very high, but is running smoothly and he gave a timeline for additional federal funding.

E. Update on projects in the pipeline

Planning Administrator Erik Swanson provided a brief overview of the following projects:

1. Temporary Banners

- Allowing flexibility for business and homebuilder signage during COVID-19.
- Allowing additional banners per business and removing timeframes
- Relaxing A-Frame sign restrictions for businesses
- Waiving permits and fees

2. Recently Approved Projects

- QC Station / Ellsworth & QC Rezone – triangular piece of land north of the railroad and west of Ellsworth changed to Mixed Use designation consistent with the General Plan. High density, commercial, retail and office was always planned for this area.
- Ocotillo Eleven – created a new Residential Commercial (RC) Zoning District for eleven properties west of Ocotillo and Ellsworth Loop. Allows properties to maintain residential zoning or convert to business. Common feature in downtown areas.

3. Projects in the Pipeline

- Zimmerman Dairy – a General Plan Amendment from last year that is now rezoned for commercial. The application is submitted and the applicant is moving forward despite the current economic situation
- Empire Point – Has been in the works for a couple of years. Largely residential but has a small commercial aspect.

Mr. Swanson concluded with a report on single family home permits. He said that in light of the current economic environment the department is keeping a close watch on permitting activity. Last week they received 6 single family home permits and in March there were 169 single family residential permits. Mr. Swanson said the department is also reaching out to homebuilders to see where the Town can assist them. He reported that no intention of a slowdown is being seen according to the housing market and the local home building community.

F. Summary of current events – Reports from Chair, Commission Members and Economic Development staff.

- Ms. Cott reported that the hotel is still moving forward with an anticipated 4th Quarter 2020 opening date and the Fry's/Kroger project is still moving forward as well.

- Downtown Development Manager Jennifer Lindley reported that the RFP for the Library/Communiversy site is under exclusive negotiations with LGE. The conceptual plans depict a walkable, pedestrian-friendly area with office, retail and restaurant uses.
- Ms. Cott gave an update on the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The last update was in 2016. The project is on hold temporarily and information to the Commission will be forthcoming.
- Commissioner Perry Berry (Queen Creek Unified School District) gave an update on online learning portals and the success of the large amount of Grab'N Go meals that are provided by the school district in Queen Creek. He said challenges include planning for the unknown and graduation details for this year's senior students.

5. **Announcements**

None

6. **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 a.m.

TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK

Shane Randall, Vice Chair
Economic Development Commission

Prepared by:

Joy Maglione
Deputy Town Clerk

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: May 27, 2020