



MINUTES

Economic Development Commission

Virtual Meeting

August 25, 2021

7:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Shane Randall called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

Commission Members present via WebEx: Shane Randall, Chair; Grant Tayrien, Vice Chair; Marc Valenzuela; Jason Barney; Chris Clark; Perry Rea; Brent White; Nancy Hormann; Perry Berry; Brian McKean, Mark Schnepf, Warde Nichols

Absent Members: Carson Brown; Jenna Kahl; Derek Neighbors; Gordon Mortensen; Matt McWilliams; Council Member Wheatley; Council Member Turley

Staff present via WebEx: Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director; Jennifer Lindley, Downtown Development Manager; Marissa Garnett, Economic Development Coordinator; Brett Burningham, Planning Director; Erick Swanson, Planning Administrator; Bruce Gardner, Assistant Town Manager; Joy Maglione, Deputy Town Clerk

2. Public Comment: There will be no public comment at this meeting, but the public can listen to the meeting electronically by audio or on the computer.

3. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

A. Consideration and possible approval of the May 26, 2021 minutes

Motion to approve the May 26, 2021 minutes as presented.

1st: Perry Berry

2nd: Grant Tayrien

Vote: Approved unanimously

B. Introduction of Matt McWilliams as the new Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) liaison

Chair Shane Randall announced Matt McWilliams as the new P&Z liaison for the Economic Development Commission, replacing Steve Sossaman who stepped down from P&Z. Mr. McWilliams is a Queen Creek resident and has been on P&Z since 2019. His background includes residential builder, title company owner and a real estate attorney.

Chair Randall thanked Steve Sossaman for his service with the EDC and his contributions to the Town of Queen Creek. Steve served 20 years on the Planning & Zoning Commission and recently received the Distinguished Public Official Award from Arizona Planning Association. Chair Randall said that Steve would be missed on EDC.

C. Discussion and possible action on the Chair and Vice Chair positions

Chair Randall opened the floor for the annual election of Chair and Vice Chair positions, (currently Shane Randall is Chair and Grant Tayrien is Vice Chair). Chair Randall welcomed suggestions for those interested in the positions. He said that he and Grant do not mind continuing in their positions if needed.

Commissioner Marc Valenzuela made a nomination to keep Mr. Randall and Mr. Tayrien in their positions. There were no other comments or suggestions.

Motion to nominate Shane Randall as Chair and Grant Tayrien as Vice Chair

1st: Marc Valenzuela

2nd: Perry Rea

Vote: Approved unanimously

D. Discussion and possible approval of the Annual Work Plan priorities for FY21-22

Economic Development Director Doreen Cott said our bylaws require the Commission to develop an Annual Work Plan each year. Ms. Cott presented the Draft Plan to the Commission for consideration and asked for any additional ideas.

1. Work with staff to implement recommendations outlined in the updated Economic Development Strategic Plan, including the development of a Job Creation Program/Quality Jobs Program.
2. Assist staff with the planning of an Economic Development Summit in 2022, promoting development opportunities, community success stories and the Town's pro-business climate.
3. Review Façade Improvement applications to ensure that applications within the Downtown Core Zoning reflect the new requirements and design guidelines; make recommendations to staff.
4. Provide input and recommendations on new Arts and Placemaking programs/projects that may benefit Queen Creek, including an Arts and Placemaking Master Plan.
5. Review Major General Plan Amendments as appropriate.
6. Provide input on educational updates to share at the monthly meetings to keep Commission informed on different issues, programs and development.

(Ms. Cott suggested a site visit to Drive48, an advanced manufacturing training center, located in Pinal County)

7. Provide updates on the Town Center Plan and the Downtown Core as appropriate. *(The Commission added this item).*

Motion to approve the Economic Development Commission Annual Work Plan as presented.

1st: Shane Randall

2nd: Nancy Hormann

Vote: Approved unanimously

- E. Discussion and possible approval of the proposed updates to the Façade Improvement Program

Downtown Development Manager Jennifer Lindley gave an overview of the Façade Improvement Program objectives and the eligible improvements. She explained that changes are being proposed to better reflect the new Downtown Core Zoning and Design Guidelines as follows:

- Refine the program boundaries and narrow the focus to the area in the Downtown Core Zoning and Ocotillo II. (Currently anyone in Town Center qualifies, including the big box shopping centers).
- Add language to provide examples of improvements that are **ineligible** to better focus on the intent of the program.
- Create a score sheet to use when reviewing applications to assure quality projects and let applicants know what areas need improvement.

Ms. Lindley said these are minor changes to refine the program and it would not require Council approval.

The Commission had questions on the budget, signage and using program funds for new buildings vs older existing buildings.

Ms. Lindley said \$50,000 is allocated for the program, which has been sufficient each year so far. She said new development is ineligible to apply and the new boundaries will encourage the improvement of older buildings. She said signage is not allowed, unless it is part of a bigger package.

Motion to approve the updates to the Façade Improvement Program

1st: Brian McKean

2nd: Nancy Hormann

Vote: Approved unanimously

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

Staff provided the following updates:

- The Downtown Arts & Placemaking Subcommittee meets every other month, and the next meeting is September 9, 2021 at 4 p.m. The Council appointed new member, Lisa Dalton to the subcommittee.
- The Town will be issuing two RFPs for town owned property next week. This includes the remainder of the hotel site for retail, restaurant or another hotel and one smaller property on Old Ellsworth Road near QC Accounting.
- The Circle K land swap next to the Post Office is moving forward in escrow.
- The PAD next to Caine's and several other projects will be announced soon (not shareable yet).
- Single-family home and commercial construction is still very strong. The Fry's on Riggs Road is under construction and Costco is moving along as well.
- The State land has drawn local and international attention. The Invest QC website was refreshed to showcase Queen Creek opportunities.

Commissioner Perry Berry provided the following updates for the Queen Creek Unified School District (QCUSD):

- The groundbreaking for the new high school site off Cloud and Riggs road is on Monday, August 30.
- The Queen Creek Schools Education Foundation will have a Drive-In Movie fundraiser on November 11 at Schnepf Farms.
- QCUSD exceeded 2000 new students and is in double-digit growth.
- Schnepf Elementary School opened in July 2021, at Harvest at Queen Creek subdivision.

Commissioner Perry Rea inquired about a Federal plan for Amtrak service between Phoenix and Tucson and asked where the proposed Queen Creek stop would be.

Assistant Town Manager Bruce Gardner said if it becomes a reality one proposed location for a park and ride is adjacent to Olive Mill and Schnepf Farms on Town property or somewhere in the Town Center.

Commissioner Rea said there is a 17-acre vacant parcel owned by the Union Pacific Railroad that could be a logical alternative location. Mr. Gardner thanked him for the recommendation and will share the information with staff.

4. **Announcements**

None.

5. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 a.m.

Shane Randall, Chair
Economic Development Commission

ATTEST:

Joy Maglione
Deputy Town Clerk

I, Joy Maglione, do hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing Minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the August 25, 2021 Economic Development Commission. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Passed and approved on September 22, 2021