



MINUTES

Economic Development Commission

Virtual Meeting

September 22, 2021

7:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice Chair Grant Tayrien called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m.

Commission Members present via WebEx: Shane Randall, Chair; Grant Tayrien, Vice Chair; Marc Valenzuela; Jason Barney; Chris Clark; Perry Rea; Brent White; Matt McWilliams; Perry Berry; Brian McKean, Warde Nichols, Mark Schnepf; Carson Brown; Jenna Kahl; Derek Neighbors; Council Member Wheatley

Absent Members: Gordon Mortensen; Nancy Hormann; Council Member Turley

Staff present via WebEx: Jennifer Lindley, Downtown Development Manager; Marissa Garnett, Economic Development Coordinator; Erik Swanson, Planning Administrator; Steven Ester, Planner; Joy Maglione, Deputy Town Clerk

Matt McWilliams, the new Planning & Zoning Commission liaison, introduced himself and gave a brief background of his career.

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 August 25, 2021 minutes

Motion to approve the August 25, 2021 minutes as presented.

1st: Jason Barney

2nd: Perry Rea

Vote: Approved unanimously

- B. Introduction of David Solum, General Manager of Horseshoe Park and Equestrian Centre (HPEC) and update on HPEC activities

Downtown Development Manager Jennifer Lindley introduced David Solum, who served as Interim HPEC General Manager for fourteen months and is now the HPEC General Manager.

Mr. Solum was saddened to announce that former HPEC General Manager Tim Lynch passed away after his battle with cancer.

Mr. Solum said HPEC hosts more than 200 event days per year and presented an overview of major events that are booked or in the works. The list included AZ Cutting Horse Association; Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association; Art of Cowgirl; RME Hunter Jumper Shows; Southern AZ Quarter Horse Show; Barrel Racing; Shelley Production World Series Roping; Gilbert Rodeo Days; Roots N Boots PRCA Rodeo; PBR Bull Riding; Six Horse Hitch Draft Horse Show; country music concerts and more.

Mr. Solum said HPEC is an economic impact for Queen Creek and last year over \$6.9M was spent in the general community. He emphasized the impact the events have on lodging, food and entertainment for the Town.

Mr. Solum provided an overview of the park features, seating capacity, arenas, RV bays and general amenities. He said that HPEC has top rated Kiser certified footings, which are very important in the industry. He noted that we have won awards for best footings seven times in the last ten years.

The Commission commended him on the events, the footings and recognized the progress on the long-term investment.

The Commission asked how close we are to full capacity for events and what is needed to close the gap in regards to Town subsidization.

Mr. Solum said we are 95% full but continue to work on getting better events. They evaluate the numbers after each event/show to get even higher attendance and more revenue. Mr. Solum said last year revenues were up 54% and it is a priority to close the gap.

Council Member Wheatley asked about the amount of RV space at HPEC.

Mr. Solum said we have 320 stalls and 500 stalls would be ideal. He discussed options and pricing for installing more RV spaces and stalls and said they are in demand at many of the events. Mr. Solum said leasing the stalls is not economical and said the return on investment for new stalls would be four years.

- C. Discussion and possible approval of the Façade Improvement Program Application for the property located at 20515 E. Ocotillo Road.

Applicant Andrew Augustyniak gave an overview of his project, Desert Bungalow, which is an indoor/outdoor studio available to rent for photographers, families and businesses. The property, located in Ocotillo 11, will have a Spanish Modern theme and will keep the look of a residential home. He said it would be a one of a kind quality project that will also support the Downtown Core vision.

Ms. Lindley reminded the Commission of the recent program changes, which include the properties in Ocotillo 11. She presented pictures of the proposed project and said it is a \$150K investment by the applicant. The applicant intends to come back for a second application, which is allowed per program guidelines. She said the applicant will need to go through plan review and permitting through the Town.

Applicant: Desert Bungalow – Andrew Augustyniak – 20515 E Ocotillo Rd

- Stucco
- Windows

Exterior improvements apply to the street facing portions of the building only and the actual bid was used to determine the costs.

Proposed bid (adjusted by $\frac{3}{4}$ of the amount): \$45,056.25

Requested Reimbursement (50% of proposed cost): \$22,528.13

Max Allowed Reimbursement: \$20,000

Questions from the Commission:

What is the Town's view on parking for the Ocotillo 11 properties; will parking be appointment only for this project?

Ms. Lindley said that parking for this project is being addressed with the Planning Department. The intent for Ocotillo 11 properties is for low impact businesses.

Planning Administrator Erik Swanson said we evaluate parking on an individual basis by hours of operation and business type.

Applicant Augustyniak said this type of venue is low impact. He said for instances where he may need more parking, he has plans to talk to the church next door for a mutually beneficial parking agreement for occasional use of their lot.

Will the zoning ever change to full commercial in that area? Can it be used as a business and revert back to residential?

Mr. Swanson said Ocotillo 11 zoning was crafted for flexibility for residential homes and for conversion to low impact business. The potential exists for a larger request if multiple properties were acquired, but we would look at it as a case by case for parking, circulation and traffic

Mr. Swanson said it can be used a residential and business combo. If it was converted to a business and the owner wanted to change back to residential, it would be allowed as long as it meets building code.

The Commission had additional discussion on the vision for the Ocotillo 11 area; impacts to neighbors; and parking. They discussed scenarios where the applicant is using Town funds for commercial improvements with the potential to revert back to residential.

The Commission discussed the intent of the Façade Improvement Program, which is to beautify the downtown and to stimulate economic development activity, and they said the project meets these criteria.

Chair Randall advised that the application be considered on the current merits of the program, not the overall picture for the Ocotillo 11.

Motion to approve the Façade Improvement Application in the maximum amount of \$20,000 for Desert Bungalow located at 20515 E. Ocotillo with the stipulation that all necessary permits and approvals are obtained through the Planning Department and all work is complete to Town standards before reimbursement is made.

1st: Brian McKean

2nd: Derek Neighbors

Vote: Approved unanimously

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

Staff provided the following updates:

- RFP bids for the sale and development of town owned property are due November 1. This includes the remainder of the hotel site and one smaller property on Old Ellsworth Road near QC Accounting. A pre-bid meeting will be held on September 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and the Commission is invited to attend.
- A veterinarian hospital is under construction at Heritage Square.
- The pad between Chop Shop and Mod Pizza in QC District is under construction. There are no users at this time.
- A liquor license application for a beer and wine tap room in Power Marketplace is going to Council in October.

Commissioner Mark Schnepf provided the following updates for the Fall season at Schnepf Farms:

- Pumpkin and Chili Party (October 1 – October 31) - It is a large premier event that brings in approximately 80k visitors through October. It will still be limited in daily attendance due to Covid.

- Shea Homes Good Life Festival (November 6) – Previously held at Encanterra, will feature America, The Guess Who, Don Felder formerly of the Eagles and Nate Nathan and the Mac Daddy-O's.
- Kevin Costner (star of Yellowstone) and his band, Modern West (November 7)
- Christmas Events at the Farm (Opening November 24th through December)

4. **Announcements**

None.

5. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 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 September 22, 2021 Economic Development Commission. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Passed and approved on: December 15, 2021