

NOTICE

A meeting of the City of Evansville Economic Development Committee will be held on the date and at the time and location stated below. Meetings are typically held the 3rd Monday of each month. Notice is given that members of the City Council might be in attendance. Requests for persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made by calling City Hall: (608)-882-2266 with as much advance notice as possible. The meeting will also be held virtually in response to COVID-19. To participate via video, go to this website: <https://meet.google.com/kwi-pdcb-xnj>. To participate via phone, call this number: 1 347- 754-4157 and enter PIN: 382 008 665# when prompted. (Your microphone may be muted automatically)

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**

Regular Meeting

31 S Madison, Evansville, WI 53536

Monday, January 17, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Motion to approve agenda
4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the December 20, 2021 regular meeting and approve them as printed.
5. Civility Reminder
6. Citizen appearances, other than listed agenda items
7. Monthly Reports
 - A. Community Development Update
 - B. Chamber of Commerce Report
 - C. Tourism Commission Report
8. Discussion
 - A. CUP Compliance and Code Enforcement to Enhance Economic Development
 - B. Comprehensive Plan Update
 - i. Business Survey
 - ii. Goals for Economic Development chapter update
9. Next Meeting Dates:
 - A. February 21, 2022 at 6:00 pm
10. Motion to Adjourn

-James Brooks, EDC Chair

These minutes are submitted by the Community Development Director and are not official until approved by the City of Evansville Economic Development Committee.

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
Monday, December 20, 2021, 6:00 PM
Meeting held virtually and in-person

MINUTES

1. Call to Order Brooks called meeting to order at 6:03pm

2. Roll Call:

	Present/Absent	Others Present
Chair James Brooks	P	City Administrator Jason Sergeant
Ben Ladick	P	Community Development Director Colette Spranger
Vacant	-	James Otterstein, Rock Co. Development Alliance
Jason Knott	P	Christina Slaback, Evansville Chamber of Commerce
Abbey Barnes	P	Bill Lathrop, Evansville Today
Sue Berg	P	
Brandon Rutz	A	

3. Motion to Approve Agenda by Berg, seconded by Ladic, approved unanimously.

4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the November 15, 2021 meeting and approve them as printed by Berg, seconded by Ladic, approved unanimously.

5. Civility Reminder Brooks reminded the committee of the City’s commitments to civil discourse.

6. Citizen Appearances, other than listed agenda items. None

7. Monthly Report

A. Community Development Updates. Spranger and Sergeant shared the Report. Sergeant gave an extensive update of evolving concept plans for Lake Leota and West Side Park.

B. Chamber of Commerce Report – Slaback summarized the Chamber’s annual report.

C. Tourism Commission Report: Berg shared recent updates and planned events for the upcoming year.

8. New Business

A. CUP Compliance and Code Enforcement to Enhance Economic Development

The committee had a lively discussion about how to increase visibility of the downtown, in light of the fact that some of Evansville’s historic storefronts are currently underutilized. Brooks began the discussion, presenting the issue of enforcing conditional uses as a way to ensure a property is providing the highest and best use of the property.

This led to a discussion where suggestions were given about bolstering visibility and business within the City. Barnes comments that she has fielded questions regarding storefronts in the downtown that appear unused, but the current building owner is not interested in renting to a business tenant. Sergeant brought up ordinances elsewhere that require participatory downtowns or business districts, that require that some sort of presence be active with the outside community. He noted that such initiatives are not typically politically popular. Otterstein added that Evansville is not the only city dealing with issues like this, and that any sort of enforcement would have to be fair, consistent, and timely. Rollout of any sort of program would have to be aggressive. Brooks asks if this group feels it could ask the Council to progress to the next step of exploring things further. Sergeant brought up that prior enforcement efforts, such as stair compliance, were largely done out of the building owner's pocket. Suggests that the committee first start looking at ways to start marketing to business and building owners the City's Building Improvement Grant, which has not been used in the past few years. The committee agreed to keep this discussion on the agenda for future meetings.

9. Next Meeting Dates: January 17, 2022 at 6:00pm

10. Motion to Adjourn by Ladick, seconded by Berg, approved unanimously.



Community Development Updates

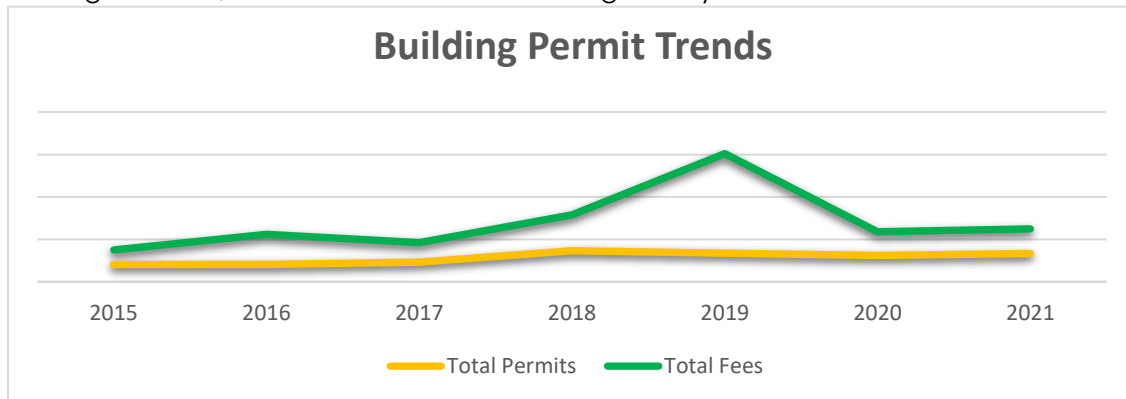
January 17, 2022 Colette Spranger, Community Development Director

Recent and ongoing community development activities:

- Ongoing negotiations with local developers regarding proposed subdivision plats
- Fielding inquiries from two potential businesses looking to relocate in Evansville
- 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update: it's underway!
- 2021 Economic Development Year-in-Review (Thanks Brandon!)

Other Updates:

- **Building Permit Updates:**
- 2021 Total to date: 333 permits and \$62,246 in collected permit fees
- 2020 Totals: 310 permits and \$59,764 in collected permit fees
- 2019 totals: 338 Permits and \$151,861 in collected permit fees (Includes ECSD building improvements and construction)
- 2018 Totals: 366 permits and \$ 79,549.5 in collected permit fees (Includes Library building improvements and construction)
- 2017 Totals: 230 permits and \$ 46,451 in collected permit fees (Includes Delong Addition, Brown School Place II and Night Owl)
- 2016 Totals: 205 permits and \$ 56,440.54 in collected permit fees (Includes Delong Addition, Brown School Place II and Night Owl)



Evansville Economic Development Year in Review

Coming into 2021 brought significant uncertainty as we all cope with the ongoing pandemic and what life and business might look like as we move forward. Evansville was similar to many areas as businesses were having trouble filling and retaining positions of need.

Year Highlights

- TC Countertops has purchased the former auto auction site. City staff helped with floodplain and insurance questions. (March)
- The City acquired 170 E Church, formally known as Nelson Paint and adjacent to the VFW Post. There are some lot line overlaps and will most likely require clean up. (March)
 - Discussions with various developers on the City owned 155 E Main and 170 E Church (Allen Creek Redevelopment) continue. Economic Development Committee has set a priority of multi-story buildings with commercial on the main level. (June)
- Met the new MadREP president and conducted the first business retention visit in conjunction with MadREP which was Baker Manufacturing. (April)
- Upgraded City Hall Chambers with a new AV system to allow enhanced in person/virtual interactions during meetings. (April)
- Cruise Nights came back to Creekside for 2021 (May)
- Hired a new Community Development Director: Colette Spranger (November)
- New Holiday Lights have been selected, purchased and installed (November)
- Met with Hughes family to discuss their plans for development within Evansville (November).
- Received Gold Shovel Certification for 551 S County Rd M! (December) Along the way of becoming Gold Shovel Certified we also:
 - Agreed on terms and conditions for the development of the site with the Economic Develop Committee and Common Council.
 - Created and agreed upon a marketing plan for how to roll out the site and attract potential business.
- Implemented iWorq online permitting software to allow for easier permitting. (December)

Ongoing 2021 Items of Note:

- Residential planning and zoning continues on the west side of Evansville to create additional residential lots and allow for interconnectivity (bike path).
- Continued working with Park Board Members on enhancing West Side Park. MSA Professional Services began project meetings, designs, and obtained public input on what West Side Park should look like.
- Dollar General continues to move forward with development on the N Union Street lot.
- Outdoor City murals went from a research stage to reality. One or two murals should be completed in 2022.
- Energy Independence team started creating an updated long range plan for sustainability and carbon neutrality goals.

City of Evansville
Evansville Tourism Commission
January 2022 Summary Submitted by Sue Berg

The Evansville Tourism Commission does not meet in January.

Sue Berg and Colette Spranger met early in January for a general get acquainted / tourism debriefing meeting.

Upcoming events with tourism potential:

- a. Chocolate Extravaganza Feb. 12
- b. Chili Cookoff Feb. 26
- c. Vintage Shop Hop March 4-5
- d. FFA Farm Toy Show March 6
- e. SpongeBob Square Pants: The Broadway Musical April 22-24
- f. Cruise Night May 5
- g. Art Crawl May 6

Next meeting date is February 10.



City of Evansville

Community Development Department

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To: Economic Development Committee
From: Colette Spranger, Community Development Director
Date: January 14, 2021
Subject: Discussion Items for January 17th Meeting

Increasing Awareness of Funding Opportunities

At the December 20th EDC meeting, the committee had a fruitful discussion regarding the mechanisms that could be used to bolster business development in the community, particularly regarding underutilized storefronts in the downtown. Some of the suggested enforcement items included a downtown overlay zoning district that would have stricter requirements for highly-visible buildings in the downtowns.

Also mentioned at this meeting was to increase, or reintroduce, the business community's awareness of available City funds, like the Building Improvement Grant and Revolving Loan Fund. Additionally, the State currently has a Main Street Bounceback Grant, which grants \$10,000 to businesses and non-profits that relocate to previously vacant commercial spaces. The Madison Region Economic Partnership (MadREP) also keeps a listserve of angel investors and other grant opportunities. These funding opportunities may whet the appetite of some of the cost-conscious or tenant-reluctant building owner, without the effort or force of new zoning code changes. This would be a way to gauge interest in the business community.

One of the tools I've inherited in my position is a newsletter that could be dusted off and better utilized. My thought is to, on either a monthly or quarterly basis, provide available opportunities, City-led initiatives that may be of interest to businesses, and other pertinent information. An inaugural post, like one outlining these potential sources of funding may be a good start. In order to target downtown building owners, the content of that newsletter could be sent to some of the building owners downtown.

For discussion: I would appreciate the Committee's thoughts on sending such a letter, as a way to jumpstart local interest.

Comprehensive Plan Business Survey – Questions and Methods

This month, the Common Council and Plan Commission approved the Public Participation Plan for the 2022 Comprehensive Plan update. Part of this effort is a survey of existing business owners to gauge the current climate in Evansville.

Currently, my thought is to engage EDC members on direct conversations with other members of the business community. There would be a short list of questions that would serve less as data point and more as opportunities to start conversations about operating a business in Evansville.

For discussion:

- What questions should we ask? (Remember, keep it short!)
- Direct conversations (in person, phone, or e-mail) versus a written, traditional survey
- Timeframe and assignment/goals for EDC members

Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies for Economic Development

Next month, we will begin discussing in greater detail updating the content of the existing Economic Development chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Given the importance of economic development in the community, this update presents an opportunity. A large effort of the Comprehensive Plan will be to convert our text-heavy goals and policies to ones that are more actionable, measurable, focused, and reasonable, given the City's resources and constraints.

As it happens, there is enough funding in the City's budget allocated to the Plan update to consider hiring out for this chapter of the Plan. Getting a set of outside eyes on what the City has done and where it can focus its efforts in the future could prove very useful. This isn't to say that there would be no input from the City and Committee on the Economic Development chapter, but that someone with a good understanding of state and regional trends might be able to get us to think outside our current parameters.

For discussion:

- What are the pros and cons of hiring out?
- How do we make sure such a document is tailored for Evansville and not generalized?