



DRAFT Economic Development Authority Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 6, 2022 ❖ 7:00 pm

Viget Offices, 105 W. Broad Street, 5th Floor, Falls Church VA 22046

1. **Call to Order:** at 7:07 PM by EDA Chairman Bob Young
2. **Meeting Attendees:**
In Person: Ross Litkenhous, Debbie Hiscott, Matt Quinn, Sandy Kiercz, Bob Young, Letty Hardi, Phil Duncan, Renee Rojural, Tim Stevens, Matthew Downs, Becky Witsman, Andrew Painter, Pirouz Khanmalek
Virtual: Matt Quinn, James Snyder, Simon Lee, Craig Cheney
Absent: Ed Saltzberg
3. **Approval of November Minutes:** Unanimous approval.
4. **Byron Special Exception Amendment (SEA)/Andrew Painter representing the owner/applicant Simon Lee** – Andrew Painter reviewed the leasing history of the Byron and the challenges that have been encountered due to the business use restrictions approved in the last SEA that was approved by City Council. Problematic restrictions have included a prohibition on a number of retail service uses such as salons and dry cleaners, a maximum five-year plus one five year option lease term restriction for unit 110C (former Edward Jones office and reason for last SEA approved) and that retail service uses are limited to occupying no more than 40% of the W. Broad Street frontage. As a result of these leasing issues and vacancies experienced in the past, the applicant is requesting changes to their approved Voluntary Concessions to include:
 - a. A revised list of permitted and prohibited uses that reflects on the conditions imposed on more recent projects
 - b. The elimination of the 40% frontage restriction
 - c. The elimination of restrictions on the terms of leases.
 - d. A commitment that the current Harvey's space will be restricted to only future restaurant space and the current Penzey's space must remain a retail sales use until such time as City Council may change the Voluntary Concessions.
 - e. The addition of a Parking Management Plan
 - f. The addition of a commercial signage plan
 - g. Enforcement of parking restrictions by towing
 - h. Maintenance of the existing bicycle parking rack
 - i. Encouraging the owner to install energy-efficient lighting and water efficient plumbing fixtures

There was discussion between the applicant and EDA members about why it has been so challenging to lease to an office tenant in the former Edward Jones space, the possible precedent is might create if developers are repeatedly successful in relying on SEA's for changes, whether or not the parking space stenciling will be refreshed as needed and the degree to which there have been parking issues, both in the past and currently. Ultimately, with a motion by Jim Coyle and a seconded by Ross Litkenhous, the EDA voted to generally support the requested changes to the Voluntary Concessions but



encourages the applicant to, upon resubmission, include a more detailed Parking Management Plan with exhibits and including providing for the issue of refreshing the striping as well as a detailed signage plan including exhibits.

5. **Holiday tree lighting event recap** – photos from the event and rave reviews were shared.
6. **The Little City Gift Card Update** – Renee Rojural provided a detailed report on the tremendous success the gift/bonus card so far. Due primarily to Renee’s efforts and after just about 10 days, there are 69 City businesses participating in the program and almost \$62,000 in bonus gift cards have been distributed. Total gift card funds purchased has been \$123,488, for a combined total of \$185,476 of gift and bonus cards purchased and available to be used at City businesses. Tracking of the card purchases indicates that the cards are being purchased at locations throughout the U.S. and all over the DMV. Even with only 10 days of availability, the gift cards are being used at a very long list of City businesses. Renee’s savvy marketing efforts have included business recruitment via door to door visits, social media, the press, email, several newsletters and the City web site. Her support of the program has been aimed at assisting businesses with well-designed mini fliers, sticker and window decals and even social media graphics comprising a “business toolkit” to arm businesses to themselves promote as much gift card usage as possible. Renee also shared a new video promoting the program; the video and many other promotional efforts have been provided by the staff in the City’s Office of Communications. One “not completely unanticipated” result of the huge success of the program so far is that the program needs more funding if it will be ensured to be available until through and after the holidays. Therefore, EDO staff requested that the EDA loan an additional \$35,000 of their operational funds to the program, to be repaid with ARPA funding when the City Council considers their next budget amendment in the spring of 2023. An additional \$15,000 of remaining gift card funds that had originally be designated for other purposes will also be shifted for a combined additional amount of \$50,000 to be invested in the gift card program. With a motion offered by Ross Litkenhous and seconded by Sandy Kiercz of: “The EDA supports designating/loaning \$35,000 of their EDA operating funds to supplement The Little City Gift/bonus Card program via additional funds to Yiftee, to be reimbursed for their investment during the spring City Budget Amendment process. During the spring city Budget Amendment process, it is understood that the \$35,000 will be shifted from the ARPA Parklet monies to the EDA”, the transfer of the EDA funds was approved unanimously.
7. **ARPA Parklets update** – Jim Snyder gave a brief overview of the status of the parklet program including “Why Parklets”, the intent to focus the location of the parklets on the S. Washington Street corridor and reviewing the three locations where parklets are being contemplated. It’s possible that the Hillwood/Corrales alley will be the first parklet project undertaken and that it would include a mural, some landscaping and seating, lighting and possibly an arched entryway.
8. **Other matters** – Chair Bob Young expressed some frustration over the challenges yet to be faced with the parklet program. He also advised that he is working with the owner of



Bedo's on solving the current sidewalk width and utility encroachment issues at that location. More news on that project will provided at a later date. He also advised that the long-awaited settlement of the EDA-owned Virginia Village properties is still scheduled for mid-January and that Wesley Housing is investigating the possible purchase of another Virginia Village unit with City strike force funds.

9. Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.