



Economic Development Authority Meeting Minutes

Tuesday November 1st, 2022 ❖ 7:00 pm

Council Chambers, City Hall, 300 Park Ave, Falls Church VA 22046

- 1. Call to Order:** at 7:02 PM by EDA Chairman Bob Young
- 2. Meeting Attendees:**
In Person: Ross Litkenhous, Matt Quinn, Sandy Kiercz, Bob Young, Letty Hardi, Phil Duncan, Renee Rojural, Tim Stevens
Virtual: Brian Williams, Ed Saltzberg, Emily Bazemore, Matthew Downs, James Snyder
- 3. Approval of September Minutes:** September-2022-EDA-Meeting-Minutes-(fallschurchva.gov). Motion to approve by Jim Coyle, seconded by Ross Litkenhous. Unanimous approval.
- 4. East End Small Area Plan referral by City Council** - Jim Snyder introduced Emily Bazemore to the EDA as well as the topic of the small area plan/process that occurs in the City. Followed by this introduction, Emily Bazemore reviewed a presentation with the group that was followed by an opportunity for questions and answers. The presentation contained information on the following: an overview of the small area planning process, an overview of the East End, community engagement process to date, the history of the East End, the draft small area plan's vision statement and subsequent goals, the draft chapters and their strategies, and finally the upcoming community engagement period and various outreach efforts occurring throughout the fall. The group had questions and discussion on the redevelopment potential of the East End and how incentives can possibly be put in place by City Council to jumpstart the redevelopment process. As much of the East End area is zoned M-1 including Eden Center, such incentives include possibly amending the City's M-1 Light Industrial Zone to provide a mixed-use special exception option for redevelopment. There was discussion about the challenges of the area including the current lucrative uses that exist on many of the properties that are a disincentive for land uses changes but also the opportunity that exists in the area with the large size of the properties and the low number of property owners. Several members had questions about the ongoing Ring Road project mentioned in the plan and how it could benefit the East End. Finally, there was discussion about CIP funds for public improvement projects in the planning opportunity area. Overall, the group was supportive of the East End Small Area Plan. Ross Litkenhous made a motion of support for the East End Small Area Plan and Jim Coyle seconded this motion of support. The group voted unanimously (7-0) to support staff's efforts with the East End Small Area Plan.



5. **Yiftee Gift/bonus card via ARPA funds update** – Renee Rojural gave an update on the progress of the e-gift/bonus card program by reporting that the program is now live for businesses owners to sign up to participate in the program at: www.fallschurchva.gov/littlecitygiftcard. Renee has started an aggressive marketing campaign to publicize the program and will also be recruiting businesses door to door, via phone calls, social media and via Chamber of Commerce newsletters. Advertising of the program will also be accomplished via print and digital ads and a “business toolkit” (graphics, copy/content, promotional ideas, decals, flyers) will be provided to participating businesses. This is an extremely attractive offer for both businesses and customers because the City is generally providing a 50% match for the amount of the gift card purchase, with up to a total of \$150 in bonus card value per person. The program will open up to customers on Small Business Saturday, November 26th.
 6. **Parklet ARPA Project Update** – Jim Snyder reviewed a few slides showing a preliminary prospective layout and design of the “triangle” park located at the corner of S. Washington Street and East Annandale Road. He has been working internally with City staff to create a preliminary roadmap for the construction and completion of this first ARPA funded parklet, so that it could potentially be completed by Memorial Day of 2023. EDA Chair Bob Young shared his frustration with the internal challenges that have been encountered regarding the parklets to date, including the lack of sufficient City staffing to assist and help manage the project, possibly preventing a ribbon cutting by next Memorial Day.
 7. **City of Falls Church Art Walk ID plaques/decals** –Letty Hardi gave an update on her continuing efforts on the City’s Art Walk project; specifically, now her efforts to create and install ID plaques or decals on the current 35+ pieces of public art that are included in two self-guided routes that visitors can choose to view that public art. Via her work with the City’s Arts and Humanities group, she requested that the EDA consider funding the cost of the ID plaques/decals for the art pieces. With encouragement from the EDA to identify even more public art opportunities in the City, the EDA moved (Bob Young) and seconded (Jim Coyle) to approve up to \$2,000 for the project.
- 8. EDA Board member issues**
- a. **Future EDA Board meeting location** – EDA members voted unanimously to hold their future meetings at Viget in their offices in the George Mason Square complex.
 - b. **Sidewalk public improvements** – Bob Young brought up the continuing issue of the ADA deficiency of the sidewalk in front of the Bedo’s Leatherworks business on Broad Street. The deficiency is due to the encroachment of power poles/apparatus located within the sidewalk, a long-recognized issue needing a solution. Mr. Young suggested that the property owner now appears to be willing to consider the City’s request to



purchase an easement, so that the utility poles can be undergrounded and the sidewalk rebuilt to current standards. Other non-ADA sidewalk areas with obstructions within the sidewalk were also mentioned, so action on this discussion, possibly including recommending the use of the City surplus monies for the improvement of problematic City sidewalks, was postponed until more information on the inventory of potential similar problem spots can be identified and also considered.

9. Miscellaneous items

- a. **Virginia Village properties owned by the EDA** – Settlement on these properties, transferring them to ownership by Wesley Housing, is now anticipated to occur in mid-January of 2023
- b. **Bolay** grand opening at Birch and Broad on 11/3 at 5:30 PM
- c. **City Holiday tree lighting event** – Monday, November 28th from 6-7 at either Mr. Brown's Park or Founders Row. More info to come.

10. Adjournment at 9:15 PM