

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jesse Avitia, President
Ezell Foster, Member
James Portalatin, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 27, 2022 @ 4:30 p.m.
Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Jesse Avitia, Ezell Foster,
James Portalatin.

Staff Present: Richard Morrisroe, Douglas Powers,
Ateria Allen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Wednesday, December 15, 2021.

Motion to approve December 15, 2021 Regular Meeting
Minutes made by Ezell Foster. Second by James Portalatin.
Questions/Comments: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

MR. AVITIA: Since the agenda has no Old Business I'd
like to move to New Business. And the first item on the
agenda is Election of Officers for this year.

I'd like to nominate Ezell Foster for President.

MR. FOSTER: I accept.

MR. AVITIA: I would also like to appoint or ask
James Portalatin for Vice-President.

1 MR. PORTALATIN: I accept.

2 Motion to nominate Ezell Foster 2022 Board President made by
3 Jesse Avitia. Second by James Portalatin.

4 Questions/Comments: None.

5 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
6 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

7 Motion to nominate James Portalatin 2022 Board Vice-Present
8 made by Ezell Foster. Second by Jesse Avitia.

9 Questions/Comments: None.

10 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
11 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

12 MR. AVITIA: Congratulations to both of you.

13 MR. PORTALATIN: Thank you.

14 MR. AVITIA: Second item is Redevelopment Meeting
15 Minutes for review for December 7 and 21.

16 Do you have any comments at all on that?

17 MR. POWERS: We did skip an item on the agenda. If we
18 can just backpedal here real quick, we will discuss this.
19 And then you can go forward.

20 So property address 4405 Euclid Avenue. We've
21 discussed this property before. It has received some
22 changes. And I will point out to you the location as well.

23 If you're looking at the illustration plan, this is
24 just a comprehensive plan of all the areas that shows what
25 the process is about.

26 So if you're looking at this property here in the
27 green where it's showing residential along with some office
28 space, this is the area that we're looking at, that parcel
29 that goes from Cline Avenue to Euclid which I believe
30 Mr. Portalatin is familiar with this property.

31 MR. PORTALATIN: That is correct.

32 MR. POWERS: Well, I've personally gone out there to get

1 some additional information about what's going on. So the
2 property owner is currently looking at sale options trying to
3 figure out what the future is for that site as well as the
4 other site that there are several buildings on. Some of them
5 in good standing, others not so much.

6 So beyond looking at the potential for that site he
7 is actively cleaning up the foliage and debris that have
8 grown over the years on that site.

9 So that's what we've seen, that the previous
10 building in the front has not been rented in approximately 12
11 years. So they were getting that area ready for it to be
12 utilized by someone else while trying to increase the curb
13 appeal.

14 Now mind you as this moves forward, if it moves
15 forward, they will end up having to submit development plans
16 for any improvements to the property whether that is pavement
17 or what have you.

18 So there will be future plans if they continue to
19 do as they are. But I just want to make you aware, as this
20 came up in the past, what the situation is with this
21 property.

22 MR. MORRISROE: That's why there's such a mess in front
23 of it?

24 MR. POWERS: That is correct. They were cleaning out
25 the area. Now they're actively trying to do the landscaping.

26 I went out there along with the Building Inspector,
27 Keith Jackson, who was able to go with me. And the City
28 Engineer, Julio Arichavala, was able to go and investigated
29 the current standing of the site and get a little information
30 about what's going on.

31 So if there's no other questions on that, please
32 feel free to move forward. I just wanted to make sure that
33 it was brought to your attention.

34 Mr. Portalatin, do you have the map? Are you able
35 to see it?

36 MR. PORTALATIN: I am able to see it. I brought it up
37 to my GAS.

38 MR. POWERS: I have the original. It was shown back

1 then being the possibility for additional housing. Some of
2 that being single-family and then possible addition for
multifamily and some office space.

3 That office space was like partially at the
4 lakeshore area.

5 Just wanted to give you all that background as to
6 how this is going.

7 MR. FOSTER: I have a question. What was the last
8 building operation that was going on?

9 MR. POWERS: It was steel related. Many of these
10 companies are dealing with steel processing.

11 If you look at site from GRS such as Mr. Portalatin
12 has seen, there's a network of alleys or paths going to
13 building to building.

14 That's because the previous tenants had worked in
15 similar fields that they had a cohesive relationship.

16 MR. FOSTER: Because I remember the first one on Euclid
17 they used have trucks come and load and unload steel off of
18 that thing, like a crane. I remember that because I used to
19 go there.

20 MR. POWERS: We will see substantial changes because I
21 believe at least one if not two of the structures they're
22 proposing be demoed. So they'll be coming in for a demo
23 permit on those.

24 But there should also be some improvements because
25 they have plans to try to market this and hoping to get a
tenant in by end of this year. But they realize it may be
first quarter next year.

So we should see some active changes just keeping
this in mind.

MR. AVITIA: I do have a question on this. I think at
one time we discussed the comprehensive plan.

MR. POWERS: That's correct.

MR. AVITIA: I think trying to maintain updates on what
the changes are. Actually the date of this is October 8.
Are you going to add something that's going to be updated?

1 MR. POWERS: That is correct. Currently one of the
2 things that is in process is preparing draft documents to
either amend or adopt a new comprehensive plan.

3 So that is in process. So those have been
4 requested through Common Council.

5 If those are approved, then we will start the
6 process of getting various community members engaged to
draft.

7 So hopefully by the end of this year we can produce
8 an ROP to get some people interested. And hopefully have
them selected so next year they're going to start working on
amending this.

9 Now mind you regarding the maps if you recall the
10 Transit District helped with facilitating that process.
They're also helping with creating some new maps.

11 That may not be an illustrative plan. But it will
12 be similar maps that are being prepared that will be much
more modern.

13 This is just a map that's from the current
14 comprehensive plan. And that is why I added it to this
packet.

15 MR. AVITIA: Because I can see changes that need to be
16 updated pretty much.

17 MR. POWERS: Absolutely. All these sites that are
18 highlighted or a different color, those are areas that will
be for possible development.

19 MR. FOSTER: What color?

20 MR. POWERS: Green, the areas that have like a green
21 boundary that are a different color. Those are areas that at
the time were seen to be a possibility for future changes.

22 MR. AVITIA: Michigan Avenue, that needs to be totally
updated?

23 MR. POWERS: You're correct. Comprehensive plans are
24 typically amended every five years because what makes sense
for a community in 2008 doesn't necessarily make sense for
25 the community after 2013.

1 MR. AVITIA: East Chicago is going through changes.

2 MR. POWERS: There will a request from representatives
3 of the EC2 to play a role in helping regarding the RFP.

4 So we'll be contacting you. You'll get that
5 information as well.

6 MR. AVITIA: That will be very interesting seeing an
7 updated copy of this.

8 MR. MORRISROE: It will probably be updated in pieces.

9 MR. POWERS: Yeah. We all seen the plan that shows more
10 modern updates. That was in 2018 I believe. So we have
11 pieces. We'll continue to see some more pieces.

12 But when the actual drafting process of the amended
13 comprehensive plan is done, there will certainly be an update
14 on that.

15 MR. AVITIA: Any other comments?

16 PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

17 COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

18 MR. AVITIA: The only comment that I have for myself is
19 I would like an update on any other businesses that are
20 coming to East Chicago. Do we have any news at all on that?

21 MR. POWERS: So we do have some new businesses.
22 Recently there were a couple of proposals submitted to
23 Redevelopment Commission which I believe we will be seeing
24 one property over there along Michigan at the next meeting.

25 So that would something know to keep your eyes open
for that at the next meeting.

MR. MORRISROE: That has been vacant for a long time.

MR. POWERS: We have had numerous requests for other
items. One item that is coming in front of the Plan
Commission soon is the property, the owner reference is
El Popular, is doing some additions to their property.

That should be coming in front of the Planning
Commission not this next meeting, but should be coming the
meeting after.

1 We do have a request to rezone property as well for
2 a new business located at the former Fresh County Market.
3 We'll see what happens with that one.

4 And we recently had the Dunkin Doughnuts approved.
5 And you can see that is moving along quite rapidly now.

6 Those are just a few. There are of course various
7 businesses that change ownership. Like I am sure you're all
8 aware that the BFW has been sold.

9 Hopefully we'll see that new owner present soon
10 because they have requested a business license. But I
11 haven't seen any other action.

12 Those are a few new ones. Obviously the City is
13 involved in trying to rehab them and make them more viable
14 for potential interested parties.

15 I would say there certainly is property for some
16 other industrial. Those are a little too preliminary for me
17 to discuss candidly. But certainly in a couple of months
18 check back. And I wouldn't be surprised if there are some
19 other opportunities.

20 MR. AVITIA: We'll be interested in you keeping us
21 updated.

22 MR. POWERS: Of course. So the property is on Main
23 Street, the former PNC Bank and Dr. K building.

24 There are a couple other properties that are being
25 listed too. There's a realtor listing those properties. I'm
sorry. I just got it. Hopefully we can see some more
information in the future about those.

 Certainly I will keep you informed.

 MR. AVITIA: That's the kind of information we would
like to see.

 MR. POWERS: Absolutely.

 MR. AVITIA: Thank you.

1 * Next Regular Meeting Date: Thursday, February
2 24, 2022 @ 4:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers.

3 Motion to adjourn was made by Ezell Foster.

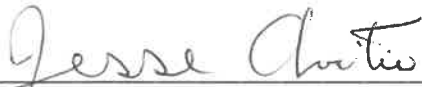
4 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
5 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

6 * Meeting ended at 5:00 p.m.


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1 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
2 Thursday, January 27, 2022

3 Approved and Signed February 28, 2022

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6 Jesse Avitia, President

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8 James Portalatin / Zoom
9 James Portalatin, Member

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17 Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary

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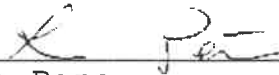
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa Pena, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 25th day of February, 2022.



Lisa Pena
Notary Public Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003483

