



Joint City Council and EDA

EDA & City Council Joint

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, February 28, 2022

5:00 PM

City Center - Community Room

1. Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Blake Roberts	EDA Member	Present	
Judy Huntosh	EDA Member	Present	
Sam Husnik	Councilmember	Present	
Mara Bain	Mayor	Present	
Mark Finnemann	EDA Member	Present	
Jennifer Lorge	EDA Member	Present	
Kelly Monson	Councilmember	Present	
Kathy Bystrom	Councilmember	Present	
Leif Erickson	EDA Member	Present	
Hanna Valento	Councilmember	Present	

2. Roll Call

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Downtown Plan Summary and Directives – HKGI

Bruce Chamberlain, HKGI, presented a general overview of the Downtown Plan and directives. He noted that the community comments were very positive and provided an opportunity for the group to comment.

Planning Commissioner Young commented for public knowledge that this project will take significant public and private funding to accomplish the directives in the Plan. She also noted that this work won't get done overnight but will take some time. Councilmember Bystrom was in agreement with the time frame but also noted that comments from the community has been very positive. Jerry Grundtner suggested providing the public with a preliminary time frame to provide a better view to the community. Bruce Chamberlain noted that a time frame will be provided. Mayor Bain commented on the round about as an obstacle to the Plan. EDA Commissioner Finnemann commented about the boat launch and Jerry Grundtner commented on the "Vannellis Block" and redevelopment there. Bruce Chamberlain noted he has heard comments about at-grade crossings and safety concerns from the residents.

1. Lake Street Corridor

Bruce provided information regarding the Lake Street Corridor along with directive feedback that included mitigation of pedestrian comfort level of crossing and streetscape amenities.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about a turn back of Highway 61. City Engineer Goodman noted that MNDot needs to be engaged to answer those questions.

2. District Parking

Bruce noted that a way to address parking shortage would be to provide a municipal parking lot with a pedestrian overpass that would connect parking to Lakeside Memorial Park.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about funding for a municipal parking lot. Bruce provided examples that he has seen in other cities. Planning Commissioner Young commented about the parking scenarios that were provided and noted that scenario #3 is not realistic. She commented that scenario #1 is most favorable or even a blend of scenario #1 and #2. She also suggested that a strategy of adjusting the zoning code to reduce parking requirements should be removed from the strategic goals as it is not conducive to resolving the parking issues. EDA Commissioner Finnemann agreed with Commissioner Young. There was further discussion regarding where parking would go, and it was noted that height of buildings could pose an issue for the community. Commissioner Young noted that the height of a building depends on location.

3. Centennial Drive

Bruce noted the strategies of narrowing the roadway, maintaining two-way traffic, implementation of streetscape enhancements, providing parallel parking, and adding wayfinding signage. Mayor Bain commented that many strategies have been suggested for this roadway and this puts extra demand on the area. There was discussion about crossing areas and concerns of where pedestrians can cross over to the lake side of Highway 61.

4. Retail Loop (Broadway to 2nd Avenue NW)

Bruce commented on the strategies of making minor adjustments to the zoning code and offering financial incentives to establish continuous retail frontage as part of the loop. Bruce noted that private property owners would be asked to create downtown retail store frontage within the area and the City would provide incentive to do that. Mayor Bain expressed concern over providing incentives that the market may not be able to withstand. Commissioner Young noted that the US Chamber of Commerce reported that there has been a return to brick and mortar structures for retail purchases.

5. Downtown Greenway Loop

Bruce noted that the strategy of establishing an amenity-rich pedestrian greenway route is important for this directive as well as making minor pedestrian improvements to the through route within Lakeside Park. Mayor Bain commented on "amenity-rich" and what components should be included.

6. Lake Recreation

Bruce discussed the strategies for Lake Recreation which included increasing and enhancing boat slips, improvements to the shoreline and providing winter programming. Jerry Grundtner commented on Your Boat Club and the addition of a kayak launch and noted that adding a launch would not be a safe environment. Bruce commented that he will review design work on how the docks are currently laid out to see if he can provide a better area for a kayak launch. Bruce suggested a potential study for the relocation of the boat launch. There was also discussion about the number of boat trailers in the parking lot. Commissioner Roberts suggested remote trailer parking.

7. Trail Invitation

There was discussion about the strategies for Trail Invitation which included the creation of a wayside park on 1st Avenue SW Alignment between Lake Street and Centennial Drive. It was also noted that the wayside park could include bike lockers, a picnic facility, drinking fountain, and an information kiosk. EDA Commissioner Finnemann expressed concern over the City maintaining another park. There was discussion and agreement for bicycle-focused mixed use amenities of the space next to the trail.

8. Social Sidewalk Network

Bruce commented on the expansion of sidewalks within the 10-minute walking loop of downtown. City Engineer Goodman commented that there have not been any street improvements in this area and noted there are good opportunities to include sidewalks as part of any future improvements.

9. Viewshed to the Lake

Alternative design solutions and created landscaped edges on either side of Broadway as an approach to the roundabout were suggested to impact the viewshed to the lake. EDA Commissioner Finnemann also discussed relocating the beach house to remove the obstruction of the viewshed. Mayor Bain expressed concerns about redoing the esthetics of the large round about. Councilmember Bystrom commented on the beach house relocation and consideration of summer and winter activities.

10. Wayfinding

Bruce commented that strategies include directing people to the downtown area.

11. Activation

Bruce noted that one of the components of the plan is to create a natural activation of every-day and event happenings in the area. He noted that working with city partners will help to create a robust calendar.

Bruce finished the conversation with the group by noting his next steps as well as the project budget based on the comments on the directives. He indicated he will be providing draft chapters of an implementation plan.

5. Adjourn