CITY OF MARINE CITY
Community & Economic Development Board Agenda
260 South Parker Street, Marine City, MI
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:00 PM

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:** Board Members Heather Hatcher, Cheryl Ross; Planning Commission Representative Joseph Moran; City Commission Representative Jennifer Vandenbossche; TIFA Board Representative Robert Weisenbaugh; Business Representative David Warner; Chamber of Commerce Representative Paul Merchant; City Manager Scott Adkins

4. **COMMUNICATIONS**

5. **APPROVE AGENDA**

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**   *Anyone in attendance is welcome to address the Community & Economic Development Board. Please state name and limit comments to five (5) minutes.*

7. **APPROVE MINUTES**
   A.   August 23, 2023 Minutes

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
   A.   Discussion: 13 Ways to Kill Your Community (#5)
   B.   Redevelopment Ready and Best Practices - Adkins

9. **NEW BUSINESS**
   A.   St. Clair County EDA – Kristy Jones
   B.   Business Attraction & Retention Strategy – Discussion
   C.   Christmas Decorations

10. **OPEN DISCUSSION**

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

City of Marine City
Community and Economic Development Board
August 23, 2023

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Community and Economic Development Board was held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 260 South Parker Street, and was called to order by Chairperson Moran at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Moran.

Present: **Planning Commission Representative (Chairperson) Joseph Moran; Board Members Cheryl Ross, Heather Hatcher; TIFA Board Representative Bob Weisenbaugh; Chamber of Commerce Representative Paul Merchant; Business Representative David Warner; City Manager Adkins; Deputy Clerk Michele Goodrich.**

Absent: **City Commission Representative Jennifer Vandenbossche**

Motion by Board Member Ross, seconded by Chamber Representative Merchant, to excuse City Commission Representative Jennifer Vandenbossche from the meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Communications

None.

Approve Agenda

Motion by Board Member Ross, seconded by Chamber Representative Merchant, to approve the Agenda. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Public Comment

None.

Approve Minutes

Chairperson Moran revisited outstanding questions from the July meeting: City Manager Adkins confirmed that there was no booth for the Master Plan present at Maritime Days and that the Master Plan survey was still available; City Staff confirmed there was a detailed flow chart outlining the process of opening a business in Marine City on the

application and City Manager Adkins encouraged businesses to visit the City Offices if they had any questions regarding the process of opening a business in Marine City.

Motion by Board Member Ross, seconded by TIFA Representative Weisenbaugh, to approve the Community & Economic Development Board minutes of June 26, 2023. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Unfinished Business

13 Ways to Kill Your Community: Number 4: Deceive Yourself
Board Member Ross expressed that there was a wide spectrum of what "blue collar" may represent and that it did not necessarily define one's personal wealth or success. She stated that Marine City had a cross section of demographics and finances that were important to keep in mind when making decisions.

Chairperson Moran questioned if there were any advantages afforded to the City that should be capitalized on. Board Member Merchant responded about the City's rich maritime history and questioned if the Master Plan defined what a "Nautical Theme" was. Chairperson Moran stated that the City could not dictate how people chose to design their building however, he stressed the need to encourage property owners to adhere to a Nautical Mile theme and design. City Manager Adkins suggested incentivizing the incorporation of a Nautical Mile theme and the incorporation of recommended design standards.

Board Member Hatcher questioned what was being done to address the empty storefronts throughout the City. City Manager Adkins briefly reviewed the moratorium on the Vacant Business ordinance and how it needed to be reevaluated.

New Business

Car Show
TIFA Board Representative Weisenbaugh informed the Board that he had received positive feedback from Algonac and Clay Township about moving forward with a car show that extends through the communities. Clay Township Supervisor suggested October 19, 2024 so that the event could be incorporated into the Sturgeon Festival. TIFA Board Representative Weisenbaugh advised that he was working on funding for event maps and brochures and suggested that business owners offer discounts during the event. He stated that he would like the Community & Economic Development Board to support the car show concept in an effort to help promote the event.

Motion by Chairperson Moran, seconded by TIFA Board Representative Weisenbaugh, to promote the fall cruise set for October 19, 2024 in partnership with Algonac and Clay Township. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Chairperson Moran informed the Board that he would present the fall car show during public comment at the next City Commission meeting.

Redevelopment Ready and Best Practices
City Manager Adkins presented a brief overview of what the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program entailed and how Marine City was beginning the process of becoming "re-engaged" in an effort to become "engaged" or "certified" based on the 6 Best Practices outlined by the program handbook. He summarized what the 6 Best Practices were and encouraged the Board to read the full descriptions on their own. City Manager Adkins requested that the Community and Economic Development Board start to discuss the Best Practices over the course of the next meetings and proposed bringing in guest speakers. City Manager Adkins informed the Board that the perimeters of the program had changed over the course of time and smaller communities now had a better opportunity to become "engaged" or "certified" and that the Master Plan update would significantly help Marine City complete the process.

Open Discussion
Chairperson Moran stated that the Vacant Building Ordinance was derived from the Community and Economic Development Board was valid, well researched and developed and his opinion that it needed to stay in effect. City Manager Adkins believed that the ordinance needed to be retained but with modifications. He stated that the current moratorium would give the City time to work on the gray areas and Commission concerns. He was in the process of reviewing the ordinance against several other municipalities and the City's business license procedure.

Board Member Ross presented a handout of MiMLS listings and questioned if the Board could have general conversations regarding what was available in the City.

Chamber of Commerce Representative Merchant stated that the CNG Newspaper ads were wonderfully successful and that the use of the coupons featured in the newspaper was indicative of measurable success. He informed the Board that the Chamber was contracting a drone to come into the City to take pictures and videos in an effort to promote Marine City and that the brochures, previously approved, were being delivered to Michigan Welcome Centers. Chamber of Commerce Representative Merchant informed the Board that the Chamber would be holding a networking event on September 6 aimed at manufacturing companies and were hoping to bring in speakers from the EDA and SBDC.

Adjournment

Motion by Board Member Hatcher, seconded by Board Member Ross, to adjourn at 7:30pm. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Goodrich
Deputy Clerk

Jason Bell
City Clerk

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a voluntary technical assistance initiative offered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) which empowers communities to shape their future by building a foundation of planning, zoning, and economic development best practices and integrating them into their everyday functions.

Communities who engage in the RRC process commit to improving development readiness by agreeing to undergo a rigorous assessment and working locally to integrate the best practices. Developed by public and private sector experts, the RRC Best Practices are the standard for evaluation. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and economic development.

WHAT ARE REDEVELOPMENT READY BEST PRACTICES?

BEST PRACTICE ONE: Plans & Engagement: Evaluates community planning and how a community's redevelopment vision is embedded in the master plan, capital improvements plan, and downtown plan or corridor plan(s). It also assesses how a community identifies its stakeholders and engages them, not only during planning processes, but on a continual basis. Comprehensive planning documents are a community's guiding framework for growth and investment. Information and strategies outlined in the plans are intended to serve as policy guidelines for local decisions about the physical, social, economic and environmental development of the community. The master plan is updated, at a minimum, every five years to provide a community with a current and relevant decision-making tool. The plan sets expectations for those involved in development, giving the public some degree of certainty about their vision for the future, while assisting the community in achieving its stated goals. An updated master plan is essential to articulating the types of development the community desires and the specific areas where the community will concentrate resources. Coordination between the master plan, capital improvements plan, and downtown plan or corridor plan(s) is essential. It is important that planning documents establish goals, implementation actions, timelines and responsible parties. Public participation is the process by which a community consults with interested or affected stakeholders before making a decision. Communities have a large toolbox of ever-evolving options for how to solicit public participation ranging from time-tested (and required) tools such as public hearings and notices to more proactive activities such as open houses, social media, and surveys. A public participation plan is essential to formalize those efforts and outline how the public will be engaged throughout planning and development processes. Such a plan can help minimize disputes later in the development review process and ensure diverse and equitable stakeholder engagement.

BEST PRACTICE TWO: Zoning: Evaluates a community's zoning ordinance and how it meets community goals, enables the form and type of development the community is seeking and includes modern approaches to zoning. Zoning is a key tool for plan implementation. Obsolete zoning regulations can discourage development and investment. Outdated regulations can force applicants to pursue rezoning or variance requests thus extending project timelines, increasing costs, and creating uncertainty. Communities should look to streamline requirements and regulate for the kind of development that is truly desired. Zoning should be used to shape inviting, walkable, vibrant communities, rather than inhibit them.

BEST PRACTICE THREE: Development Review: Evaluates the community's development review policies and procedures to ensure they integrate predictability throughout. Unnecessary steps or unclear instructions increase time and expenses associated with development. Community leaders should look to simplify and clarify policies and increase efficiency to create an inviting development climate that is vital to attracting investment. To do this, sound internal procedures need to be in place and followed. Making information on the development review process and resources readily available assists applicants of all experience levels in understanding what they will need to know as they invest in the community.

BEST PRACTICE FOUR: Boards & Commissions: Assesses the tools a community has put in place to strengthen their boards and commissions. Diversity on boards and commissions can ensure a wide range of perspectives are considered when making decisions on development and financial incentives. Being intentional when a community conducts recruitment and orientation for newly appointed or elected officials and creates a solid foundation for the community to build upon. Additionally, communities that prioritize training and collaboration provide officials and staff with opportunities to expand their knowledge and ultimately make more informed decisions about land use and redevelopment issues.

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Conclusion

Redevelopment Ready Communities® assists communities in maximizing their economic potential by embracing effective redevelopment tools and best practices. Through the creative reuse of space, embracing economic innovation, and proactively planning for the future, Redevelopment Ready Communities® are more attractive for investments that create places where talent wants to live, work and play.

Communities not formally engaged in RRC, but wanting to learn more about these best practices and RRC in general are encouraged to complete the free online training. To be vibrant and competitive in today's economy, Michigan communities must create the types of places where talent and businesses want to locate, invest, and expand.

Communities who have successfully achieved Essentials or Certified level in RRC send a signal to business owners, developers, and investors that the community has removed barriers to development by building fair, consistent and deliberate processes. Communities will always face challenges, but by identifying assets and opportunities, planning for new development, and focusing limited local resources, communities will have the tools to ensure they remain competitive for business and talent attraction for years to come.