



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

3:30 p.m.

701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

City Council Chambers

STUDY SESSION

Mayor Keith called the Study Session to order at 3:35 p.m. Council Member Fergusson arrived at 3:38 p.m.

Mayor Keith led the pledge of allegiance.

SS1. Council review and possible direction regarding the Business Development Division Business Plan, the Business Development Program Budget, and the Council Business Development Subcommittee ([Staff Report #12-035](#))

Staff presentation by Justin Murphy, Community Development Manager ([Attachment](#))

Staff responded to Council questions.

The following members of the public spoke regarding the item:

- Ray Mueller urged Council to consider the types of businesses it wants to attract to Menlo Park and specifically to look at bioscience companies, and to support the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office coming to Silicon Valley.
- Jim Bigelow asked Council to direct staff to seek funding for regional transportation projects that will support local economic development efforts.
- Fran Dehn encouraged Council to seek strategic partnerships with outside agencies and specifically the Chamber of Commerce to achieve business development goals.

Council discussed the following:

Keith – (1) Engage with San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA) (2) Develop a list, similar to the City of San Carlos, identifying the types of businesses Menlo Park wants to attract (3) Update on the timeframes for completing the ECR/Downtown Specific Plan and the Housing Element (4) Hold a City-sponsored event reaching out to downtown property owners with current, long-term vacancies (5) Council to reach out to top 25 sales tax generators (6) Prepare a letter in support of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office coming to Silicon Valley (7) Jobs-to-Housing ratio

Cline – (1) Help small businesses grow and stay in Menlo Park, specifically tech and software companies and those with most potential for growth (2) Focus on recruitment and retention through a more formal strategy involving outreach by the Mayor, a unified message, tracking and follow-up.

Ohtaki – (1) Concentrate on downtown vacancies, consider short term leases, engage and collaborate with regional and state organizations (2) Focus on and engage top sales tax generators to ensure they stay in Menlo Park (3) Start up an incubator system to help small businesses grow in hopes that they will expand into the industrial/business districts of Menlo Park and not elsewhere (4) Look into California Fresh Works Fund and the possibility of attracting a grocery to the Belle Haven area (5) Streamline the permit process

Cohen – (1) The need for a synergistic organization working together to address business development issues (2) Seek available grant money and staff support to do this (3) More outreach to realty, venture capitalist and personnel firms; he would like to do this (4) Hold an event with the Chamber of Commerce and City Commissions to discuss mutual interests and services (5) Have the Business Development Manager act as the liaison to the Chamber of Commerce in order to avoid Brown Act violations

Fergusson – (1) Staffing levels and status of employees currently handling business development activities (2) Seek more transportation grants (3) Support U.S. Patent and Trademark Office coming to Silicon Valley (4) Maintain composition of Council business development subcommittees (5) Support incubator model (6) How to fund Council business development priorities

Council had consensus on the following:

1. Support Business Development and Community Development's highest priorities.
2. Fund 1 full-time employee to support business development activities. Staff will review Council's feedback and direction and make a recommendation on what position would be appropriate.
3. Have 2 Council Business Development subcommittees - One committee to focus on business development (recruitment and retention) to be led by the Mayor and one to act as a liaison to the Chamber of Commerce.
4. Sponsor an event at the City reaching out to property owners with long-term vacancies downtown in order to work together in filling vacancies.
5. Prepare a letter in support of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office coming to Silicon Valley.

The Study Session adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Council reconvened at 5:40 p.m. in the 1st floor Council Conference Room at City Hall with all members present.

There were no members of the public present to comment on the Closed Session item.

CL1. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6 to conference with labor negotiators regarding labor negotiations with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Attendees: Alex McIntyre, City Manager, Starla Jerome-Robinson, Assistant City Manager, Bill McClure, City Attorney and Glen Kramer

The Closed Session adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

There was no reportable action from the Closed Session.

/s/

Pamela Aguilar
Deputy City Clerk

Minutes accepted at the Council meeting of March 27, 2012