

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

April 20, 2010

3:35 P.M.

Councilwoman Scott, Chairman, called the meeting of the Economic Development Committee to order with Councilmen Rico, Ladd, McGary, Murphy, Berz, Gilbert, Robinson and Benson present. City Attorney Michael McMahan and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Beverly Johnson, Karen Hundt, Larry Zehnder, Jerry Stewart, Gary Hilbert, Chief Maffett, Chief Rawlston, Dan Johnson, Chief Parker, Solomon Hatch, Richard Beeland, David Johnson, Dennis Malone, Steve Leach, Chief Williams, Chief Dodd, Missy Crutchfield, Jim Templeton, Daisy Madison, Bill Payne, Randy Burns, and Frank Hamilton.

On motion of Councilman McGary, seconded by Councilwoman Robinson, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as published.

MOCCASIN BEND GATEWAY PLAN

Chairman Scott noted that Karen Hundt was present from RPA to introduce the Moccasin Bend Gateway Plan and what it entails.

Ms. Hundt stated that they had been doing some work on this and orientated everyone with a map and showed a picture of how they hoped this would look. She stated that they had met with property owners in the area and were ready to take the next step to make this official. She stated firstly, that the Moccasin Bend district will be an incredible archaeological resource; that we hope to have a major amount of visitors and for this to be a major economic boost. She went on to say that there are some questions to be answered such as how will people get there? She stated that not all will drive cars; that they want to make sure it is a safe route. Another question is Where will people park? She stated that there would be options. Another question, Will this be a pleasant experience? She stated that it should be the most beautiful place in the City; that it needed to be enhanced with the WOW factor and should sweep people off their feet. She stated that there should be an influx of people coming in, opening of doors for such businesses as kayaks and food vendors. She mentioned the educational opportunities, noting the industry could be showcased, such as the Moon Pie Factory. Also some educational opportunities would be available with the Wastewater Treatment Plan. She stated that they wanted to extend the Riverwalk to the new Interpretative Center, and the question had arisen as to how the path will connect with Stringers Ridge and that was an issue they were looking at. She mentioned that they were working with businesses and industry in the area and also with Shelley Andrews with Friends of Moccasin Bend; that they would come back with recommendations on how to make this formal.

Councilwoman Robinson stated that this was “déjà vu”; that back around 1985 we were dealing with the Tennessee Riverpark Master Plan—that it was a vision that had taken 20 years; that this was really Phase II and the same kind of imaginative opportunity; that this will be a safe passage, picnic area, and give access to the river. She noted that not everything was about the Aquarium; that this would be something for our own citizens who pay the taxes. She stated that she was very pleased with this conceptual plan; that people had been working on this since 1982.

Councilwoman Berz asked if this was another 20-Year Plan? Ms. Hundt responded that she thought yes. Councilwoman Berz stated that it was an exciting plan and asked about the funding. She asked if funds were in place? Ms. Hundt responded that the Park and Interpretative Center are Federal; that this area is the gateway area, and we want it to look nice; that this is a plan in progress, and we will look for funding from a variety of places.

Councilman Murphy asked if she was asking for authority to make a plan for the Gateway to the Prehistoric Park? Ms. Hundt responded that she just wanted to make the Council aware and to get an official go-ahead. Councilman Murphy stated that he thought the Gateway would be miles of road. She stated that it was a couple of miles. Councilman Murphy asked about public or private property. Ms. Hundt responded “mostly public areas”; however they were working with private owners, too.

Councilman Benson noted that a hotel was supposed to go there and asked if this was still a plan? Ms. Hundt stated that it was not in this plan, but they would be in contact concerning this.

Councilwoman Berz stated that she was all for this; that she would like to say “sure” we are behind you, but she still questioned the funding. Ms. Hundt responded that they were not asking for any funding right now. Councilwoman Berz verified that the Council was not allocating funding.

Councilwoman Robinson added that private property was the way the Tennessee Riverwalk got built; that property owners have embraced this, mentioning Alstom. She asked Ms. Hundt to touch on this.

Ms. Hundt stated that the Riverwalk coming through their property was one of the reasons that Alstom Engineering had located here; that they would maybe actually help build it.

Chairman Scott thanked Ms. Hundt for her presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.