

# COVINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

City Council Chambers  
16720 SE 271<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Covington, WA 98042  
253-480-2400

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## MINUTES Thursday, January 22, 2015

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Jeff Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

Members Present: Jeff Wagner, Zach Steele, Hugh Kodama, Krista Bates, Laura Roth, Ed Cook, Kevin Holland, Lisa Agron

Members Absent: Steve Pand, Sherry Corbey

Also Present: Richard Hart, Kathryn Groves, Derek Matheson

### **Approval of Minutes from December, 2014:**

Moved and seconded to approve minutes. Minutes approved 8-0.

### **Announcements:**

Chamber – Kathryn Groves, Chamber Manager

- 2 new Chamber members: All Flooring Wholesales, Shine On Signs.
- Upcoming Chamber Events:
  - February 12 Luncheon: Representative from Boeing will be speaking.
  - February 24 Business After Hours: Communities in School of Kent will be hosting at Cedar Heights Middle School.
  - Annual Dinner Auction: adding golf tournament and business awards this year. Now accepting nomination and looking for event sponsors and auction donations.

City of Covington – Richard Hart.

- Wendy's construction making progress.
- Chick-fil-A still working on design and intend to move forward in old Burger King location. The property owner is cooperative, giving 30 day extension to get work done.
- First pipe laid for new sewer line extension. Will eventually require road closures on Wax Road and Covington Way. Working on public outreach to minimize impact.
- MultiCare Hospital construction is moving along.
- Mixed-use housing going in behind Safeway has cleared trees.
- Maple Hills subdivision along 204<sup>th</sup> is moving along well.

### **Speaker: Derek Matheson, CAO, City of Kent**

- Background on Kent: 123,000 people, 6<sup>th</sup> largest in Washington and 3<sup>rd</sup> in King County.
- Challenges the city is facing: budget is not sustainable partly due to high amount of services being provided with dated service delivery model.

- Revenue model used in the past to sustain the city is no longer working partly due to streamlined sales tax programs which shifted sales tax revenue for online purchase to the purchaser's location rather than the sellers.
- Presented an overview of Kent's 2009 Economic Development Plan including vision, 5 goals and 6 economic development strategies.
- Current projects include:
  - Revitalizing downtown, new residential development such as "The Platform" south of Kent Station.
  - Kent is a finalist for FAA Northwest Regional Headquarters which would bring 1,500 jobs to Kent. City will sell 9-hole golf course for site, helping the city pay debt and support the city's other golf course.
  - Amazon Fulfillment Center in Kent Valley bringing jobs to the city.
  - Moving away from warehousing and towards office parks, encouraging existing warehouses to add retail space to help with sales tax problem.
  - Green River Levee Project.
  - Railroad grade separations: 2 main railroads making 75 trips per day with 1 to 2 hours a day in closure times. 1 project already in the works, trying for 3 more.
  - Revitalizing current shopping centers: Marketplace at Lake Meridian improving with Trader Joes and several other new businesses moving in, trying to do something similar at Panther Lake Shopping Center.
  - Midway Subarea Plan: light rail extending down to Federal Way, working on alignment and station location, work to start in 2018 and open in 2023.
- Final thoughts: Need to revitalize shopping areas and develop higher income homes. Challenge Kent is running into is lack of land to develop. Any development must be re-development rather than new development.
- Questions & Comments:
  - Laura commented on increased jobs from Amazon and FAA means increased residents in Covington, perceptions of school district affecting whether people will choose to live in Kent, Covington, or Maple Valley
  - Hugh asked what is meant by Neighborhood Urban Centers referenced in the Economic Development Plan. Derek defined these as higher density housing with walkable revitalized shopping centers.
  - Ed asked how Kent Station is doing, Derek commented that it has improved the downtown area and they hope that new residential development in the area will increase demand for these retail spaces.
  - Ed asked about the possibility of a Transportation Benefit District, Derek commented that there was a proposal involving a \$20 vehicle licensing fee that the city decided not to approve. Instead they are using reserve funds and continue to look into other options.

### **Discussion on 2015 CEDC Initiatives:**

- Collaborating Across Organizations: No update, did not meet.
- Healthy Community: Discussion on events and programs to promote a healthy community, such as the fun runs. Hugh brought up the idea of outdoor exercise equipment on walking paths. Richard commented on integrated trail systems, if you build them people will use them and they are a minor expense compared to what you get out of it. Kevin brought up the idea of competitions integrated with fitness trackers.
- Business Expansion and Education: Working on the Business Breakfast which will be April 29<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 9:00am. Derek Brandes and Colin Lund confirmed for panel of

speakers, still waiting for confirmation from Josh Parnell. Also working on Business Survey, discussed whether survey email should come from a Chamber of City email address? Regan will setup an email account for CEDC through the City. Kathryn and Laura will setup a Survey Monkey account with new email address.

- Branding: Did not meet. Will start meeting now that Covington Days is coming up. The City has new pins, mugs and shirts for sale.

### **Comments:**

- Ed: Although he feels safe walking through the community, how do we make others feel safe? Hugh replied that having designated walking paths would make it safer and more interesting and exciting.
- Regan: Is happy to be here, economic development is a passion of his and he is looking forward to working with CEDC
- Kevin: Glad to be back and meeting again.
- Zach: Asked if Covington has a published economic development plan like the one Kent has. Richard commented that it is part of the Comprehensive Plan, but it could be taken out and published separately. Regan commented that we could try to make it more accessible and it would be a good idea to review it at a future meeting. Regan will email the plan to everyone before the next meeting.
- Hugh: Auburn planning to create edgy urban centers to attract a younger population. They have a clear vision of their target population. Covington needs to define what population we want to target and what types of businesses we want to attract.
- Jeff: Commented on the Economic Development Conference. King County is doing well, 2015 will be better than 2014. They are doing well with high and low income but need to focus more on the middle class. Also commented on the SSCCLC Breakfast, panel of state legislators spoke and they hope to get a transportation package passed this year.

Next Meeting: February 26, 2015 6:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm.

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### **CEDC Members**

Zach Steele, Co-Chair  
Hugh Kodama  
Krista Bates  
Lisa Agron  
Sherry Corbey

Jeff Wagner, Co-Chair  
Kevin Holland  
Laura Roth  
Steven Pand  
Ed Cooke

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### **Staff**

Regan Bolli, City Manager  
Richard Hart, Community Development Director  
Kathryn Groves, Covington Chamber of Commerce Manager