

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jesse Avitia, President
Leon Valdez, Vice President
Ezell Foster, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 22, 2021 @ 4:30 p.m.

Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Jesse Avitia, Leon Valdez, Ezell
Foster.

Staff Present: Richard Morrisroe, Douglas Powers, Mireya
Huizar, Ateria Allen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Thursday, March 25, 2021.

Motion to approve March 25, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes made
by Leon Valdez. Second by Ezell Foster.

Questions/Comments: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

MR. AVITIA: Since we don't seem to have any Old
Business let's move on to New Business.

Staff we have here today?

MR. POWERS: This is Doug Powers, City Planner of East
Chicago.

MR. MORRISROE: Richard Morrisroe, Legal Counsel.

1 MS. HUIZAR: Mireya Huizar, Recording Secretary.

2 MS. ALLEN: Ateria Allen, Assistant Recording Secretary.

3 MR. AVITIA: Mireya, you're going to be our Recording
4 Secretary?

5 MS. HUIZAR: For the time being it's going to be a
6 Ateria. But I'm just for backup.

7 MR. AVITIA: New Business. Can I have you, Mr. Powers,
8 make some comments on this Resolution 2021-62?

9 MR. POWERS: Absolutely. As the Board is aware
10 previously the Resolution had lapsed in timeframe that was
11 permitted. So we're presenting a new Resolution so that we
12 can continue to do the Citywide and the North Harbor Grant
13 Facade Project.

14 This Resolution that you see before you is fairly
15 similar to what has been presented to you in the past. One
16 alteration that you may notice in regards to the Main Street,
17 what is being included is now we're proposing going down to
18 Columbus Avenue. So this will permit for approximately five
19 to six other individuals to benefit from the 80/20 Grant.
20 Previously it did not go all the way down to the 3700 and
21 3800 blocks.

22 Other than that it's still the same 80/20 in the
23 North Harbor area and the 50/50 throughout.

24 So what we need is we would need a motion by Board
25 determination to approve this ratified ordinance. And if you
chose to approve it, then we will present this to the Common
Council.

MR. AVITIA: I have a question. How hard was it to get
the extension to Columbus Drive?

MR. POWERS: So what we've done is, as you've seen
before you in the previous meetings, cataloged exactly how
many people have benefited from this project and then shown
the possibility on the increased impact to the Community.

Because the reality is that any of the dollars that
we're looking at appropriating, we want to be able to verify
and demonstrate that they are helping the Community and that
taxpayer dollars aren't going to waste.

25

1 So by cataloging the data as to what's been done
2 there the various potential properties that may be eligible
3 for this, that can show what the potential economic impact
4 could be in regards to how much money they're eligible for.

5 MR. AVITIA: So you were able to convince the Council to
6 approve the extension?

7 MR. POWERS: So this has not been presented to the
8 Council as of yet. This would need your approval prior to
9 sending or submitting this to the Council.

10 MR. AVITIA: So what we need to do is ratify here?

11 MR. POWERS: That is correct.

12 Motion to approve Resolution 2021-62 made by Ezell Foster,
13 Second by Leon Valdez.

14 Questions/Comments: None.

15 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
16 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

17 MR. VALDEZ: I would like to add something right now.
18 If we had other speakers here and guests here, it would be my
19 suggestion that we would wait to sign documents until after
20 the meeting with all due respect to the person who is
21 talking.

22 We went through this once before when a gentleman
23 was here from G&J auto parts. And I was not able to
24 concentrate on what he was saying because I was too busy
25 signing. You guys know what I mean. But there's nobody
here. It's acceptable right now.

 MR. AVITIA: Any other comments about this?

 MR. POWERS: No. And if that's how you prefer to do
business, that's completely fine. That's your determination
how it is that you like to proceed with the approval of
resolutions whether we sign it at the time which it's
occurring or if you would like to pass it to the Recording
Secretary and then have her get signatures as needed. That's
completely fine.

 MR. AVITIA: Any other Commissioners have any questions
on this item?

25

1 MR. FOSTER: No.

2 MR. VALDEZ: No.

3 MR. MORRISROE: I have one question. It talks about
4 Facade Resolution Number 2021-62. And that assumes we've had
61 prior.

5 MR. POWERS: That's the number that was given to the
6 previous Resolution that went in front of the Economic
Development Commission.

7 So it's referring to the original Resolution that
8 needed to be ratified. That is not saying what this
9 resolution number is. The Recording Secretary will assign a
number to that.

10 MR. MORRISROE: We haven't had many yet this year?

11 MR. POWERS: No, we have not. In regards to if it's
12 going through the Economic Development Commission, this would
be second the thing we'd be presenting in front of them.

13 MR. MORRISROE: This 62 then refers to the prior one?

14 MR. POWERS: It's referring to the resolution that went
15 in front of the Economic Development Commission that they
signed at a previous meeting.

16 MR. MORRISROE: Then it shouldn't be 2021. It should be
whatever year.

17 MR. POWERS: They signed it this year. I believe it was
18 at the January meeting.

19 MR. MORRISROE: Really?

20 MR. POWERS: Yes.

21 MR. AVITIA: Mr. Morrisroe, anything else?

22 MR. MORRISROE: No. Just usually they're low numbers
23 because we don't have a lot of them. I was curious where the
62 came from and where the other 61 were.

24 We'll look at that and see. If there's any need to
report back, we'll do that for the next meeting.

25 MR. AVITIA: Now next item says Redevelopment Meeting

1 Minutes for Review April 6, 2021.

2 We were just handed the packet. And I have to make
3 the statement that this should be probably handed in to us a
4 couple days before so we can read them. I don't think
5 anybody can speed read this.

6 MS. ALLEN: Those minutes just got approved last night.

7 MR. POWERS: Mr. President, if it's all right with you,
8 I would suggest that we can go ahead and postpone it. We can
9 review them at the next meeting.

10 These minutes were approved two days ago. So they
11 were not available prior to these meeting packets.

12 We wanted to make sure that you had them as soon as
13 they were available. But if you would like to discuss it
14 further, we can certainly do that next meeting.

15 MR. AVITIA: So circumstances prevented us from getting
16 this?

17 MR. POWERS: Exactly. That was two days ago.

18 MR. AVITIA: That explains that then.

19 MR. MORRISROE: So then we'll have that on our next
20 agenda.

21 MR. AVITIA: Can you put that on the agenda for next
22 meeting so we can have a discussion on the April 6 meetings?

23 PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

24 COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

25 MR. AVITIA: Commissioner Comments. Ezell, any
comments?

MR. FOSTER: No.

MR. AVITIA: Any comments? You have so much time now.

MR. VALDEZ: Yes. I noticed on the corner of 145th and
Homerlee there used to be a big building there. It's all
gone now. But they have a new sign up there with a picture
of a building there. So they're going to build something
modern there; am I correct?

1 MR. POWERS: So there's plans that have been submitted.
2 We haven't gotten all the necessary documents yet for the
3 Technical Review.

4 They are proposing an industrial complex at that
5 site. I'll gladly let you know as that proceeds forward.
6 It's just we've gotten some preliminary documents.

7 We're working with an engineering firm. They need
8 to get us some additional documents before the Technical
9 Review Committee can review them.

10 MR. VALDEZ: Because they did a lot of cleanup there, a
11 lot. A lot.

12 MR. FOSTER: I was just thinking, Leon, whoever it was
13 that was doing that stuff, they didn't come and talk to you
14 all?

15 MR. VALDEZ: No.

16 MR. FOSTER: I know they did Keith. You know who Keith
17 is?

18 MR. VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

19 MR. FOSTER: All them people in that block, the guy came
20 and told them what they were planning on doing across the
21 fence. I figured since you all was just right there. That
22 is why I asked did they come see you all.

23 MR. VALDEZ: No, they didn't.

24 MR. POWERS: And mind you that the group that was doing
25 that preliminary cleanup isn't necessarily the same group
that's proposing this project.

MR. VALDEZ: I understand.

MR. MORRISROE: The one who came, he went door to door
on those two blocks.

MR. FOSTER: Yeah.

MR. MORRISROE: And he even had a couple of extra
meetings. There were a couple of people who had some serious
questions. And he had a special meeting with the councilman,
with Monica to discuss back in December.

25

1 MR. POWERS: And this is a similar project that you were
2 presented a little over a year ago that required public
notice.

3 And one of their representatives is supposed to be
4 coordinating with our office. So at the printed time they
can bring this back to you because a public notice is
5 required as part of their agreement.

6 So you will have the opportunity to speak to one of
those individuals hopefully next month.

7 MR. AVITIA: I have a question. On Euclid the building
8 behind the school there's a lot of cleanup going on, a lot of
equipment being taken out, the scrap piled up in the front.

9 It's unusual to see that much activity in that
10 area. Can you enlighten me as to what's going on there?

11 MR. POWERS: I can certainly look into that for you too
and see what additional information I can give you.

12 You're saying the alleyway is being cleaned out
13 behind those properties?

14 MR. AVITIA: No. It looks like they're inside the
building scrapping, cleaning up equipment from inside the
15 building, cleaning the yard.

16 Go down Euclid. You could see the pile of old
equipment that's being put outside the facility.

17 MR. FOSTER: Mr. Avitia, I know at the end of the
18 building you've got the Intergenerational Center, whatever.
And then you've got the drivethrough.

19 Is it the little cream colored building in the back
20 you're talking about?

21 MR. AVITIA: No.

22 MR. FOSTER: The across from that one?

23 MR. AVITIA: Before you get to the parking lot of the
school building, what you used to be Washington Elementary.

24 MR. FOSTER: Okay.

25 MR. VALDEZ: He is talking about across from all the --

1 MR. FOSTER: Yeah.

2 MR. AVITIA: I think that used to be Northern American
3 Rail. I think only I can remember that was North American
4 Rail.

4 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. They're doing a lot of the
5 scrapping.

6 MR. POWERS: Let me look into that and see.

7 MR. AVITIA: Let's find out basically what's going on
8 there. It looks like somebody is getting ready to do
9 something on that building.

9 MR. POWERS: Absolutely.

10 MR. MORRISROE: The company that is in there which I
11 think is named Green Lake does metal processing. They have
12 been trying to negotiate with the City and threatening on the
13 same hand to go over to LaPorte County because their primary
14 clients are over in Middlebury, the recreational vehicle
15 market.

13 So I don't know whether they got what they wanted.
14 They were negotiating.

15 That property stretches all the way to Cline
16 Avenue. And it's owned by the people on Cline Avenue where
17 they store the steel and then reprocess it and sell it, kind
18 of used pieces. But rolls and rolls of steel.

17 And I just don't know the status. And perhaps
18 Mr. Powers and I can look into that.

19 I had not notice those changes. It's either
20 upgrading which is what they had explored, were exploring
21 with the City or migrating to the LaPorte County.

21 MR. AVITIA: It's just there's a lot of like old
22 equipment that's piling up in front of it. It looks like
23 somebody is doing some cleanup in the building.

23 MR. POWERS: We can look and see what types of building
24 permits they've pulled.

24 MR. AVITIA: I'm very familiar with that kind of labor
25 because we used to do a lot of that when I used to work.

1 MR. POWERS: Absolutely.

2 MR. VALDEZ: Well, on that note I was not aware that was
3 going on. But if they're scrapping equipment, the City has
4 to send someone over there to make sure that the fluids on
5 whatever equipment is there is not being dumped onto the
6 ground. That goes into the ground and contaminates the
7 ground.

8 As a prior health inspector that was a pet peeve of
9 mine how they would pollute the ground. You know what I'm
10 talking about?

11 MR. FOSTER: Yeah. That is a health issue, that's
12 right.

13 MR. VALDEZ: It's a health issue. Can you kindly look
14 into that?

15 MR. MORRISROE: And it makes the brown field reuse of
16 the property that much more difficult.

17 MR. FOSTER: Because right there at the corner across
18 Chicago Avenue that's a Super Fund Site, 4700 block of
19 Euclid, Parrish, Ivy, Grasselli.

20 MR. VALDEZ: I would like to make sure they're not
21 contaminating the ground or the air with different
22 pollutants. Thank you.

23 * Next Regular Meeting Date: Thursday, May 27,
24 2021 @ 4:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers.

25 Motion to adjourn was made by Leon Valdez. Second by Ezell
Foster.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

* Meeting ended at 4:53 p.m.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
Thursday, April 22, 2021

Approved and Signed May 27, 2021

Jesse Avitia
Jesse Avitia, President

Leon Valdez
Leon Valdez, Vice President

Ezell Foster
Ezell Foster, Member

Ateria Allen
Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa Pena, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 7th day of May, 2021.



Lisa Pena
Notary Public Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003483

