



**CITY OF WAUWATOSA**  
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## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Council Chambers

**PRESENT:** Alds. Roznowski, Pantuso, Wilke, Walsh, Wilson, Berdan, Birshel, Causier, Donegan, Ewerdt, Jay, Meaux, Nikceovich, Organ – 14

**EXCUSED:** Alds. Hanson, McBride

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor Didier; J. Archambo, City Admin.; A. Kesner, City Atty.; P. Enders, Econ. Devel. Dir.; W. Porter, Public Works Dir.

Ald. Meaux as chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

### **Proposed creation of a Community Development Authority**

Ms. Enders introduced Bob Simi, Chair and Tim Kronquist, member of the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Mr. Simi thanked the Council for their continued support for the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and the work they are doing. They are very excited about where the EDAC is going in Wauwatosa and they think they are on the cusp of something special. He noted that the committee followed closely the Horton URS report and the formation of a Community Development Authority (CDA) is directly referenced in the report.

Mr. Simi described the vision, structure, and implementation plan they have been charged with:

- a) The EDAC is an advisory body
- b) They are charged with fostering and facilitating the development of a diverse economy in Wauwatosa
- c) The Committee members are a small, but agile entity from different parts of town and different professions. He noted that Community Development Director Welch has been an important member of every meeting.

Mr. Simi announced that on June 1, 2011 they will be rolling out a showcase of the work they have been doing to date including their “SPI” initiative which encompasses individual subcommittees including Structure, Process, and Incentives.

Mr. Kronquist, a member of the committee, described the transition to a CDA which will make development in Wauwatosa more nimble. They will need an ordinance to assist with economic development issues in the city. He suggested rolling some of the commission together into a seven member board which will become the CDA. This will be an efficient body that will streamline the process of bringing businesses to Wauwatosa. A CDA can also get business’ honest assessment of economic ideas in the city. Many cities in the area have a CDA. Mr. Simi was excited about moving forward.

Ms. Enders characterized this formation of the CDA as an attempt to make the organization customer friendly by combining the Redevelopment Authority and the Housing Authority into the CDA.

Ald. Meaux, Council President, thanked the members of the EDAC for putting in a lot of time and energy for this effort.

Ald. Pantuso asked if there were other groups that will be included in the CDA. Ms. Enders responded that the Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), and certain parts of the Plan Commission, specifically TIFs will come under the CDA umbrella.

Ald. Roznowski asked how much more friendly the CDA will be for new business. Ms. Enders responded that in a week she might get ten calls asking for financial assistance. There are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds available from different sources. They could wrap all that assistance into one organization, the CDA, and it could become one stop shopping.

Ald. Nikceвич applauded the work the committee was doing and for presenting a lot of good and different ideas. She wanted to know the bigger picture.

Mr. Simi noted that there are regulatory issues the need to be addressed. There is a lot that goes through the Community Development/Planning Departments right now. He suggested that the financial and regulatory issues can come together. They are trying to make developers' lives easier and therefore more attractive to locate in Wauwatosa. He added that they are creating a vision of Wauwatosa beginning over the past 50 years. He pointed out that Nancy Welch, the Community Development Director, has done the very difficult work of shepherding the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee project onto the County Grounds. He announced that attendees will see some of that illustrated at the June 1<sup>st</sup> event.

Ald. Nikceвич asked about small businesses. Mr. Simi stressed that everything includes small businesses. He explained that if they can bring some good solid deals producing an increasing tax base, they can do more for struggling small businesses.

Ald. Walsh observed that the process has gotten away from the WEDC, but what is replacing it is somewhat similar. He noted that people liked the WEDC because it was a public/private partnership. In that situation there was an advocate to navigate the process. He asked how the new organization will be better. Ms. Enders responded that her role is to be the individual that will shepherd the customer through the process and through any trouble spots. She would advocate for the businesses as well as the city and maybe offer financial incentives.

Mr. Simi concurred that their focus is one stop shopping with a whole team working together. He noted that Wauwatosa has a reputation for being okay, but they want to be the best. They want to create a demand for housing, schools, etc.

Ald. Pantuso loved the idea of creating demand. He asked if the committee felt that the city has missed out on some opportunities in past years and will this organization open more doors. Mr. Simi responded that the city has possibly missed out on some development opportunities and this organization will definitely open more doors. Ms. Enders added that she has made cold calls. It is just something that has to be done.

Ald. Wilson thought that with the EDAC was being charged with suggesting ways to improve on the model and what was being presented was a thoughtful first step.

Ald. Organ noted that the proposal sounds fantastic; however, she asked what the possible downside would be to going forward with this plan. Mr. Simi responded that he honestly couldn't think of any. Ald. Meaux added that the committee will learn from what worked and what didn't work.

Ald. Causier asked if there were any financial obligations on the part of the city. Ms. Enders noted that she would just need to provide staff assistance, but there would be no extra cost.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Carla Ledesma, City Clerk  
City of Wauwatosa

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