

Village of Lombard

*Village Hall
255 East Wilson Ave.
Lombard, IL 60148
villageoflombard.org*



Minutes

Monday, January 13, 2025

6:00 PM

Village Hall - Community Room

Economic & Community Development Committee

*Anthony Puccio, Chairperson
Brian LaVaque, Alternate Chairperson
Dennis McNicholas, Garrick Nielsen, Matthew Pike,
Paula Dillon, Laine Vant Hoff, Gregory Ladle,
Patrick Kennedy and Lindsay Brown
Staff Liaison: William Heniff*

1.0 Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Chair Puccio at 6:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2.0 Roll Call

Present 5 - Anthony Puccio, Dennis McNicholas, Garrick Nielsen, Matthew Pike, and Lindsay Brown

Absent 4 - Paula Dillon, Laine Vant Hoff, Gregory Ladle, and Patrick Kennedy

Also present: William Heniff, AICP Community Development Director

3.0 Public Participation

None

4.0 Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Pike, seconded by Ms. Brown, that the 11-11-24 meeting minutes be approved.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Anthony Puccio, Dennis McNicholas, Garrick Nielsen, Matthew Pike, and Lindsay Brown

Absent: 4 - Paula Dillon, Laine Vant Hoff, Gregory Ladle, and Patrick Kennedy

5.0 Unfinished Business

None

6.0 New Business

[250027](#)

22 West St. Charles Road (Common Grounds - Vibe Cafe)

Request for consideration of a Retail Business Grant in an amount not to exceed the lesser of 50% of the eligible project costs or \$20,000 for a proposed coffee shop, with an ancillary art supplies sales and class activity.

William Heniff introduced a grant application for a Retail Business Grant for Common Grounds (dba Vibe Café) proposed to be located at 22 W. St. Charles Road. He introduced a revised business plan by the applicant Jeffrey Foster for the proposed business.

Foster introduced himself and his history of the business concept and some of his past endeavors. He previously ran a book sales collection that was used to raised funds for charitable activities. In 2018, he started Common Grounds coffee shop in DeKalb. While that location is closed, he is taking the art concept he had there and wants to open a new business in Lombard that blends the art studio activities with the coffee shop concept. The space will also have co-working space for meetings. He then described the proposed coffee sales options.

Heniff then reviewed the staff packet noting the various components within the Retail Grant Program. He has signed a three-year lease and he is working with an architect. The tenant space was last leased by Ruff Life from 2015 through mid-2024, a retail pet food and supply store. The applicant is estimating the project costs to be about \$30,000, which means the award could be \$15,000. The proposed business model will include a coffee shop, sale of prepackaged food from off-premises catering establishments, a space for art and book displays and related painting activities, and shared spaces available for co-working use by small businesses or individuals. He is working with the DuPage County Health Department on the coffee preparation activities and it is this component which makes up most of the grant request components.

Heniff stated that the applicant is working on securing quotes for individual components of the project. Given the piecemeal of quotes and the developing plan components, he introduced sample language that could provide guidance to the ECDC as they consider the request. Given that the applicant wants to be open soon, staff wanted to bring the request forward for consideration while he works on the remaining activities. He suggested grant recommendation possibilities with established caps before the item is forwarded to the Village Board for grant consideration, referencing a proposed condition in the staff report.

McNicholas stated there is sufficient detail in the grant proposal. He wanted to ensure that there is enough distinguishable now relative to the multiple quote requirement. Heniff noted that sometimes applicants apply for grants before permits are submitted. In this case a permit is under review, so the project scope is better known. Foster noted the history of his tenant space review since he signed the lease, noting that there is more to be considered than initially thought.

A motion was made by Mr. Pike, seconded by Ms. Brown, the ECDC unanimously voted to approve the grant request.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Anthony Puccio, Dennis McNicholas, Garrick Nielsen, Matthew Pike, and Lindsay Brown

Absent: 4 - Paula Dillon, Laine Vant Hoff, Gregory Ladle, and Patrick Kennedy

250029

Retail Business Grant Program

The Economic and Community Development Committee recommends approval of the grant program amendments pertaining to payout provisions for non-restaurant retail businesses receiving a Retail Business Grant.

In review of the Common Grounds grant application, Heniff reviewed the grant program parameters and sought consideration of a few program amendments, relative to the payouts and reimbursements. As currently written, any approved non-restaurant entity receiving a RBG would receive payouts in the final manner: upon completion of 50% of the grant and subsequent Payouts: 20% of the remaining 50%, each year the business is open, ending when the total awarded payout is made.

Heniff questioned the real value of the fund reimbursement waterfall stating that the capital improvement would already be completed and tied to the property. Tenants and property owners are outlaying and paying contractors in current dollars and offering partial reimbursements at the end of a five year period could affect business cash flow and possible debt. Withholding future grant fund disbursement is not going to keep a business open. He also stated that the other grant programs do not have these "hold-back" provisions. He introduced sample language for ECDC consideration.

Brown asked how this language was initially approved. Heniff said that the concept was developed during the Great Recession as a tool to help ensure that the space remain a viable retail space. He also referenced lien provisions that are within the Policy.

McNicholas asked more about the lien waiver provisions. He also wanted to ensure that any amendments were well-defined as to which specific locations and districts. Heniff noted that in discussions regarding the Vibe Café concept, there were representations from the property owner that stated that per his property lender, he cannot consent to any liens being placed upon the property. Foster echoed the representation and Nielsen confirmed from a banking perspective

over the past 10 years, secondary liens are often prohibited. Heniff said that this may be a future challenge to reconcile.

Nielsen stated that the amendment would make the program more attractive.

A motion was made by Mr. Nielsen, seconded by Mr. McNicholas, unanimously recommended approval of the retail business grant payment requirements. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Anthony Puccio, Dennis McNicholas, Garrick Nielsen, Matthew Pike, and Lindsay Brown

Absent: 4 - Paula Dillon, Laine Vant Hoff, Gregory Ladle, and Patrick Kennedy

7.0 Other Business

Heniff stated that staff is going to be releasing the grant reimbursement for Punky's (the wall signage is the only item to be completed, but they have spent more than the grant allotment). Staff continues to work with Grove Tavern on their expenditures and documentation for work completed before January 1 and share that with the finance Department for consideration of a payout for the grant eligible work which was completed.

McNicholas asked about the Carson's redevelopment and Heniff noted the ongoing demolition work. They are on pace to start construction in 2025. Nielsen asked about the former Sid Harvey property and Puccio stated that it would be for stormwater detention as the Park District will complete their construction of the pickleball courts.

8.0 Information Only

9.0 Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Pike and a second by Mr. McNicholas, the meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.