



Village of Arlington Heights
Arlington Economic Alliance
Community Room, 3rd Floor
Arlington Heights Village Hall, 33 S. Arlington Heights Rd.
July 17, 2024
7:30 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes 3/20/24

IV. REPORTS

- A. Development Update
- B. Arlington Alfresco

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Economic Alliance Work Plan - 2024

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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Arlington Economic Alliance
7/17/2024

Item: Minutes 3/20/24

Department: Planning & Community Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Minutes 3/20/24

Type

Minutes

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON MARCH 20, 2024 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Andrew Stengren – Chairman
Rich Casey
Tonia Etoh
Tony Guido
Terry Iverson
Kerri Oots
Marc Poulos
Brian Roginski

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Heather Larson
Ellen Para
Michele Petrie
Andi Ruhl
John Toliopoulos

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Mertes – Business Development Manager

ALSO PRESENT:

Mary Ellen Graf, Township High School District 214
Keith Moens, Resident

Call to Order

Chair Andrew Stengren called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2024

The meeting minutes of January 10, 2024 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

RICH CASEY MOVED AND BRIAN ROGINSKI SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT JANUARY 10, 2024 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Development Update

Mr. Mertes introduced Marc Poulos, the newest Alliance member, to the Commission. Regarding Arlington Park, the Chicago Bears issued a statement regarding plans for a stadium near their current site in Chicago. The Village issued a follow-up statement stating that the Bears have continued interest in the Arlington Park site, that the Village remains committed to beneficial development at that location and will continue to work with relevant entities regarding the site.

The Plan Commission recommend to the Village Board an extension of zoning entitlements for six more months for the Arlington 425 project. Last year, the development was approved for a one-year extension. Since that time, the developer has been approved by the Design Commission for some architectural changes to the planned building on Campbell and parking garage. Further, the developer has applied for a building permit to allow construction of the Campbell Building, Highland Avenue garage, and sitework necessary to prepare the site for construction. In regards to the Zero Interest Loan program, two loans have been approved to help existing small businesses in Arlington Heights.

Arlington Alfresco

This year's Alfresco program commences on Friday, May 3. Streets will be closed down earlier in the week to allow for set-up. License agreements have been sent out to participating businesses utilizing the public streets/sidewalks. Restaurants with approved sidewalk dining areas can begin serving customers on April 1. Alfresco runs until September

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23, and streets will remain closed that week for *Harmony Fest featuring the Taste of Arlington Heights*. Restaurants with approved sidewalk dining areas can continue to do so through October.

Economic Alliance Work Plan – 2024

Regarding “Thank You” messaging to businesses, Mr. Mertes provided potential draft note that was reviewed by Ms. Para. He requested feedback or edits from the Commission. Additionally, an Economic Alliance reference card, explaining the purpose of the Commission, could be included with the note. There are approximately 80 businesses celebrating five-year or ten-year anniversaries, which would mean that each Alliance member could write six or seven personalized notes.

A potential “State of the Economy” program was proposed by Ms. Larson and Mr. Mertes. They also wanted to discuss with Ms. Petrie, the Alliance’s financial representative, regarding key points of discussion and potential speaker. In general, the Alliance members felt this would be a program worth pursuing.

Economic Development Statistics Report

Mr. Mertes provided a report of local economic data that is typically presented to the Alliance once or twice per year. The Village has not yet received full-year sales receipts from the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR), but through first nine months of 2023 Village-wide business sales were down 4.1%, and tax receipts were down 1.9%. Some media outlets have reported strong fourth quarter sales though, especially regarding e-commerce.

Retail sales hit a municipal record \$1.57 billion in 2022, a 22% increase from 2019. Key areas of growth have been in *Eating & Drinking Places* and *Lumber/Hardware*, the latter likely due to an increase in home projects during COVID. The area with the highest growth was *Drugs & Miscellaneous* retail, doubling since 2019. From 2020-2021, Illinois began collecting sales taxes for online purchases, helping bolster tax returns for municipalities. In terms of new businesses in 2023, At Home reoccupied 100,000 square feet of vacant space, while Red Bull will be occupying 60,000 SF of new industrial space. Other new large employers include Gerry’s Café, EcoShield, and Action Behavior Centers, all of which are employing 30-50 workers in Arlington Heights.

Retail vacancy was currently at 4.9%, a 10-year low. Office demand is still struggling, locally and nationally, due to working from home, company downsizing, and other COVID-related reasons. The Village’s current office vacancy rate is at 22.8%, lower than the overall submarket’s 29.8% rate, but still higher than pre-pandemic numbers. To combat this, potential re-use or redevelopment of appropriate sites can be considered, such as medical office or multi-family housing. On a positive note, industrial vacancy continues to decline. The main source of existing vacancy is the recently-completed Northwest Gateway Center, which has 450,000 square feet available. If this facility were to be completely occupied, it would greatly reduce overall industrial vacancy in Arlington Heights.

Arlington Heights is home to nearly 3,000 unemployment insurance-covered businesses, making it one of the largest business communities in the Chicago area. The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) notes some decline in workers over the past few years, but this has been common among communities with over 30,000 daytime workers.

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Other Business and Public Comment

There was no other business or public comment.

Adjournment

TONY GUIDO MOVED AND RICH CASEY SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 AM.

Andrew Stengren, Chair
Arlington Economic Alliance

Prepared by Department of Planning & Community Development



Arlington Economic Alliance
7/17/2024

Item: Economic Alliance Work Plan - 2024

Department: Planning & Community Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
Economic Alliance - 2024 Approved Work Plan	Exhibits
Business Note of Appreciation	Exhibits
Alliance Reference Card 2024	Exhibits

Arlington Economic Alliance

2024 Work Plan – January 2024

Overview

Over the course of 2023, the Arlington Economic Alliance has discussed and implemented ways to assist existing businesses in Arlington Heights. There were two key outcomes from these meetings. Firstly, the Alliance recommended modifications to the Village's interest-free loan program for small businesses, which was approved by the Village Board in June. Interest in the incentive has grown noticeably since the modifications. Secondly, the Alliance supported a breakfast program aimed at assisting local manufacturers. This was held in early November, with approximately 35 people in attendance.

Looking toward 2024, the Economic Alliance would like to focus on business retention and has outlined three key initiatives to help support existing businesses in Arlington Heights.

➤ Small Business Seminars

The Arlington Economic Alliance would like to plan and execute a series of educational programs bringing our businesses together for networking and learning. Each session would focus on specific segments of the economy and illustrate the interconnectedness of our business community. A networking opportunity for new Arlington Heights businesses to connect is also being considered as part of one of these seminars, or as a separate program.

➤ Small Business Profiles

The Economic Alliance would like to profile small businesses in the community as a way to re-introduce the businesses, and their owners, to Arlington Heights residents and visitors. Village staff is currently working on a webpage that would promote diversity within the Village's business community. The goal of the page is to highlight the participating businesses on an interactive map.

The Commissioners could assist in outreach business owners, in order to provide content for staff to publish on the webpage. Establishment of such a page, coupled with promoting it via social media, will serve as a retention program that would offer free marketing to these businesses. Once this site is established with consistent content, the Alliance can explore potential programs to incentivize demand to local small businesses.

➤ Notes of Appreciation to Businesses

The Economic Alliance feels that directly acknowledging our individual businesses, and what they contribute to the community, is a way to help owners feel appreciated. A simple note card expressing gratitude for their investment in Arlington Heights would be a channel to accomplishing this, and can also educate the business community about the Alliance and its purpose in advocating for them.

The initial target audience would be businesses that are celebrating five-year and ten-year anniversaries of being located in Arlington Heights. The list of recipients would be provided by Village Staff based upon approved business licenses from 2014 and 2019.

Summary

The Arlington Economic Alliance is eager to continue supporting the small business community, and is willing to work with Village staff to accomplish these projects. In the interim, the Alliance is also willing to provide advisement and recommendations to the Village Board at their request, and discuss economic development matters as needed.

Dear Business Partner,

On behalf of the Arlington Economic Alliance, I wanted to congratulate you on five/ten years in business here in Arlington Heights. We are grateful to have you as part of our business community and invite you to reach out if the Alliance can ever be of assistance.

Enclosed is more information on our Commission, and we wish you many more years of great success.

Sincerely,
XXXXX

ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

The Arlington Economic Alliance is the Village Board's appointed economic advisory commission on business issues. It is tasked with providing the business community a strong partnership with the Village and to promote a healthy business climate.

Duties & Responsibilities

The Arlington Economic Alliance promotes economic growth by activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Advising the Village on the development & implementation of business retention/expansion programs
- Advising the Village on the implementation of a marketing program to attract new business and industry
- Monitoring business activity and trends on the local, state, and national levels
- Establishing a focal point for businesses to approach and discuss issues that affect them
- Engaging representatives from community-wide entities at formal meetings, as appropriate
- Researching and advising the Board of Trustees, Village Manager, and other Boards and Commissions on economic development matters

Contact

The administrative contact for the Arlington Economic Alliance is the Business Development Manager, who can be reached directly at 847.368.5220 or planningmail@vah.com.



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