



## **MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA**

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### **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION DECEMBER 17, 2025**

The Michigan City Redevelopment Commission held their regular monthly meeting in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. The meeting was available via Zoom and streaming live on the Access LaPorte County Facebook page.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

President Sheila Brillson Matias called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present: Clarence Hulse, Philip Latchford, Sheila Brillson Matias, and Sheree Wilson (all in person)

Commissioners absent: Tracie Tillman and Thomas Dombkowski

Staff in attendance: Redevelopment Executive Director Skyler York and Attorney Alan Sirinek (all in person)

#### **MINUTES**

*With no additions or corrections to the minutes of the November 17, 2025 executive session and the November 17, 2025 regular hybrid meeting as submitted, the roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.*

#### **CLAIMS & FINANCIAL REPORT**

With a staff member being out on leave, the chair entertained a motion to table approval of the claims for December 17, 2025 and the financial report ended October 31, 2025 until the January 12, 2026 meeting.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Hulse and seconded by Commissioner Wilson to table approval of the claims for December 17, 2025 and the financial report ended October 31, 2025 until the January 12, 2026 meeting. The chair called*

***for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

(None)

**APPROVAL OF MEETING DATES & TIMES FOR 2026**

President Matias asked for approval of the tentative meeting dates as listed for the calendar year 2026, noting that the Redevelopment Commission meets the second Monday of the month at 5:00 p.m., with an executive session prior to that meeting at 4:00 p.m.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Latchford approving the tentative Redevelopment Commission meeting dates and times for the calendar year 2026. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

**SoLa UPDATES/APPROVALS**

Mr. York began the discussion stating that the Commission had an executive session at 9:00 a.m. this morning with SoLa representatives as well as their financial representatives. The meeting concluded after approximately one hour of discussion. Mr. York asked Attorney Sirinek to give a status update on where this project is.

Attorney Sirinek first mentioned that last night the Common Council approved the Economic Improvement Districts (EID's) for the SoLa site. He explained the necessity of the EID's and that it was to allow the developer to assess the value and asses the property of the condominiums, and to be able to assess those tenants certain taxes that would go towards paying off their EID bond. This was a needed component for the financial aspect of the project.

Attorney Sirinek stated that the Redevelopment Commission met this morning in executive session at the request of the developer for a couple of reasons. The first was because the Commission/Developer are operating under an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) amendment, specifically titled "The First Amendment to the Second Amended and Restated Development Agreement" which was executed on June 9, 2025. He said it was important to note that on December 16, 2024, there was also a Second Amended and Restated Development Agreement approved by the Commission. The 2024 Agreement set a closing date of June 30, 2025. At that time, the developer had been unable to receive financial assurances to be able to go forth with the project, so on June 9, 2025, the Commission executed the First Amendment to the Second Amended

and Restated Development Agreement. Attorney Sirinek read into the record from that Agreement, that "Closing Date shall mean the date of the Closing, which date shall not continue beyond December 31, 2025. The Closing Date shall not be extended due to: (a) Force Majeure; or (b) a Cure Period related to an Event of Default. For the avoidance of doubt, the Closing shall be completed on or before the Closing Date or Commission shall have the option, in its sole discretion, to terminate this Agreement without notice or opportunity to cure provided to Developer." He stated that closing is further defined in the same document, that "Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Closing shall occur contemporaneously with the closing of the Developer Bonds, the EID Bonds and the remainder of the funding sources required to fully construct the Project; provided however in no event shall the Closing Date occur after December 31, 2025 (the "Outside Closing Date"). The Closing Date and location of the Closing shall be established mutually by the Developer and Commission. If the Developer is unable to submit evidence of available equity necessary, in the reasonable judgment of the Commission, to complete the Project; either of the Commission or the Developer may terminate this Agreement by written notice to the other party, without further obligation."

Attorney Sirinek stated that the SoLa representatives asked to meet with the Commission for two reasons. One, because they are again unable to show the necessary funding to complete the project and therefore go forth with the closing. Two, to assist with their financial commitments, which is to look at this as more of a two-phase project, with phase one being the hotel and phase two being the condominiums. They indicated they had better financial commitments as it related to doing it in a phased project as opposed to a full project as it was contemplated both in June and December.

Attorney Sirinek gave a brief history of this project stating it began back in 2019 prior to COVID. Certain people from the development team who are still on the development team, but not Scott Goodman or Alan Schachtman, who have been the principals the Commission has been dealing with for the past several years, originally came with the idea that they had a development project for the You Are Beautiful site, now referred to as the SoLa site. COVID hit and then an MOU was ultimately signed by the Redevelopment Commission with that part of the development team in December 2020. Attorney Sirinek continued, stating that in June 2021, he sent correspondence to the original development team terminating project negotiations due to the fact they could not reach an agreement pursuant to the MOU. Sometime thereafter, an amended restatement was approved by the Commission and developer, resuming negotiations after June 15, 2021. In September 2022, the Commission entered into another agreement and has been going forth since that point in time with additional amendments, additional changes, and additional closing dates, etc. Attorney Sirinek said that it brings it to the point of December 16<sup>th</sup> when an outside closing date of June 30, 2025 was set. On June 9, 2025, the Commission entered an agreement that said the closing date would be December 31, 2025.

Attorney Sirinek explained that the executive session this morning was twofold. One was for the developer to ask for the Commission to continue beyond December 31, 2025 to provide an opportunity for a phased or sequenced development to occur with the hotel first and the condominiums second.

Attorney Sirinek said his opinion and advice to the Commission from what was presented at the executive session with respect to the modifications and changes, would be that a whole new agreement is needed because the agreement primarily discussed since 2022 never contemplated a sequenced implementation of the project, it was always one entire thing (hotel, parking garage, condominiums). It was represented that they have sold commitments for some of the condominiums and collected earnest money on those, so the developer would like the opportunity to go beyond December 31<sup>st</sup>. Attorney Sirinek indicated that because it is a substantive change in what the original intent was from the original agreement, a new agreement would be needed.

Attorney Sirinek explained what the Commission must do. He stated that the Commission could approve the developer's request to go beyond the December 31, 2025 date and enter into a new agreement with them. If they make a motion to do that, then they will get back to work with the developer to negotiate a new agreement for a phased project implementation and bring it back to the Commission for consideration. He pointed out that it was written in the last two agreements that the Commission and developer can walk away with no further obligation on either side. He advised that if the Commission does not agree with that, then nobody is going to make a motion to extend it beyond. If some members of the Commission feel it should be extended, then someone needs to make a motion and second and it needs to be voted upon. If there is no motion, then there is no agreement to extend it.

Commissioner Matias commented, stating on behalf of her colleagues that they have all discussed this at nauseam and what they are terming "SoLa fatigue." She said she is proud of the leadership of the City team, the Redevelopment Commissioners, the Planning Department, Redevelopment Director and staff because they have spent a lot of time and staff resources on what she thinks as being good partners. She said this has been going on for five years, although she has only been on the Commission for two years. She has witnessed people on our team trying hard to do the right thing for the community. She said there comes a time when you have to just say, "I give." From a business perspective, Commissioner Matias stated that the City/Redevelopment Commission would be smart in allowing the dust to settle and let the agreement expire. If the developers do have hotel financing like they have said, then this would give them an opportunity to develop an agreement with our team that would be good for the community and our citizens. She said there is only one opportunity to redo our lakefront, because once it is gone, it is gone. She talked about one of her favorite projects back in the early 2000's, being the Smith Brothers property. There was a big factory on that property and over time it had crumbled and degraded. The City was able to purchase it for \$3, and now it is a beautiful community space for fishing and families to be entertained.

She said there are few opportunities like that remaining on our lakefront, so we need to be smart, strategic and focus on healthy growth for our community. Commissioner Matias said she believes we should be smart and protect the assets of this community and the assets that all the taxpayers support but also be a welcoming community; by saying no more people here is not a way for us to grow in a smart way, but we also need to protect our assets and protect the people that have invested their families and lives in building this community up.

President Matias opened the meeting to public comments.

Scott Meland, 200 Kenwood Place, Michigan City, Indiana, said it was sad because people in this room were excited by the potential \$300 million development. He said recently there have been a lot of questions about the foundation of this property with a lot of it being the basic value that the City placed on that parcel. He said he understands \$1 other good and valuable consideration and a \$450,000 donation to housing initiatives here, but said those numbers were decided six years ago. Since then, he said we now have double tracking and momentum in this town, so the value of that parcel is considerably more than it was in the past. He questioned if it is time to put out a new RFP since either side can walk away after December 31<sup>st</sup>. He said all the tools have been put in place that makes the parcel even more valuable for possibly a higher and better use. Mr. Meland said he respects the developers and the time and money they have put into it but also questioned when enough is enough. He stated that given the fact that the values and circumstances have changed with this parcel, it might be in the best interest for the City to start over with a new developer.

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio Street, Michigan City, Indiana, felt that the SoLa development was too much for Michigan City and that the common person could never afford it. He said the Founders Square development in Portage would be a more feasible type of development and more fitting for Michigan City.

There were no further public comments.

The chair entertained a motion to extend the deadline from December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Hearing no motion, the chair indicated there was nothing to vote on.

Attorney Sirinek advised that pursuant to the terms of the agreement, the Commission must give the developer notice that they are walking away and terminating the agreement. He suggested the motion for the second vote would be to give the Executive Director, Skyler York, the authority to conclude that closing is the right way and that we walk away and they walk away and this agreement then is concluded.

The chair entertained a motion.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Latchford and seconded by Commissioner Hulse to give the Executive Director, Skyler York, the authority to terminate the agreement between the Michigan City Redevelopment Commission and YAB Development Partners, LLC (SoLa) on December 31, 2025 and to notify the developers of the decision. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

Attorney Sirinek commented that the SoLa developers (originally the YAB developers) had an exclusive right to that property for six years now. That has been a significant contribution by the City to the developer by leaving it off the market. He agreed with Mr. Meland that this property is more valuable today than it was six years ago because the Commission kept the property exclusive to the developers'.

Commissioner Matias agreed that the property has improved in value and that the City is being smart with their assets.

#### **11<sup>TH</sup> STREET STATION GARAGE AND RESIDENTIAL TOWER UPDATE**

Mr. York reported that he and Mr. Hulse met with David Flaherty and the group in Indianapolis. They have had over 100 inquiries into the tower (the one on top). Out of all the projects they have built, this is one of the top ones they have had inquiries about. He announced that if anyone is interested, they have a website <https://thefranklinmc.com>, put your information in and they have a team that will respond. The move-in date as of right now would be August 1, 2025, with renting starting 60-90 days prior to that.

Commissioner Hulse stated that it was a great meeting with the team. The exact number is 114 on this inquiry. At least 40% are local Michigan City. He said they are working with the team to figure out what will be the best fit/mix on the first floor with 6,000 square feet of commercial space. There will be an announcement most likely late spring about walkthroughs, marketing, etc. They will have 2 to 3 units fully finished by April. There will all be different price ranges.

Commissioner Wilson announced that on Monday the Historic Preservation Commission approved their signage, which she said was quite beautiful. June 1<sup>st</sup> is the target install date.

#### **REPORT BY LEGAL COUNSEL**

Attorney Sirinek reported that there was an executive session beforehand. No items were discussed other than what is permitted by the Open Door Law and no decisions were made. He said the purpose of that meeting was to take information from the developers' request and give the Commission some time to decide how they wanted to respond to that request.

**REPORT BY DIRECTOR**

Mr. York recalled at the beginning of the year the Commission hired Baker Engineering Group who have helped with a lot of different things including some of our planning and development in the city. He said they have been great to work with, although their contract is expiring on 12/31/2025. The Commission approved \$60,000 but they still have about \$15,000 remaining in their contract. Mr. York asked the Commission to extend the contract until January 12, 2026, so they can bill the Commission for their remaining work. At that time, Mr. York said he would like to request keeping them engaged to continue working with him on various projects.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Latchford to extend the Baker Engineering Group current contract until January 12, 2026 for invoicing purposes and at which time they will come back to the Commission with a request for a new proposal to continuing working with staff.***

Attorney Sirinek wanted it to be clear for the record that the current contract is only being extended for the purpose of invoicing the remaining \$15,000. There is no additional money other than what was originally approved.

***The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

Mr. York recalled that the Commission previously approved the Tailwind project term sheet. Since then, an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) has been drafted which will be presented to the Commission for consideration at their January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. He described the Tailwind project which is a commercial business park located to the south of the AMC Theater and behind Lowe's and Menards. It is approximately 35 acres of land. It will have 11 new construction pads on it, one of them will have a containment area for runoff, etc. Once the EDA is approved and their incentives are in place, then the process of entitlements (subdivision, zoning, etc.) will start. The goal is that the Commission would provide the incentives for the actual construction of the infrastructure (the roads, pipes, pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalks).

Commissioner Hulse commented that this is a great project. He stated that a lot of people are working out of storage facilities so this will allow them to actually move into a building. It will be a mini-business park to either buy or lease property. It is over 140,000 square feet with over 200 jobs projected once it is built out.

Commissioner Wilson added that these developers have been around for a while and have had other good successes in the Crown Point area. They have spurred the growth at 109<sup>th</sup> to the level seen today. She said they are a good development team, and she is excited to work with them.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Hulse commented that EDCMC has completed their market profile for 2025 to give to prospective clients and people to educate them about Michigan City's numbers. It is also electronically available and can be downloaded off the Economic Development Corporation website. He said it talks about who we are, where we are located, as well as our great attributes to attract business and why they want to move here and spend their dollars here. It gets updated every three years.

Commissioner Hulse announced their fourth annual Power Breakfast to be held on March 25, 2026, at Blue Chip. Speakers will be Mayor Tom McDermott and Mayor Angie Nelson Deuitch. The funding from this event will be used to help offset the cost for schools for trips and trade shows.

Commissioner Hulse talked about other projects in the pipeline for next year including working with NICTD to rename the train station. He said the "11<sup>th</sup> Street Station" is not exciting so they want to change it to a jazzier user-friendly word. A committee will be put together with City staff and NICTD representatives. This will come back to the Commission at some point and will go before the City Council for formal approval.

Commissioner Matias asked how citizens could share their ideas.

Commissioner Hulse said they can send their ideas to him or the mayor's office. They are working to gather this information. They have a meeting set up for next month with people that have some history of what business will happen within the train station and the area.

Commissioner Hulse announced that over the next six to eight months EDCMC will be working with a group to update their videos about the city which includes quality of life, tourism, and economic development. The last video was from seven years ago and is outdated. People from all over the world look at the website so the video will be in different languages. There will be one for the City, one for development, one for tourism.

From a development standpoint, Commissioner Hulse said it was a great year. Over 700,000 square feet was either built or repurposed in Michigan City. A lot of older buildings are being repurposed. Over 750 new jobs were projected. There was \$1.3 billion in capital investment. This is the first to hit the \$1 billion mark in Michigan City in one year. The data center is a big part of that, along with 12 new restaurants, commercial, and two new industrial buildings.

On behalf of the Commission, President Matias wished everyone happy holidays.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next regular meeting date is scheduled for January 12, 2026.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With all matters of business addressed, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:45 p.m.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shil Satchell", is written over a horizontal line. Below the line, the word "Secretary" is printed in a small, sans-serif font.