

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 5:15 p.m., Council Chambers

Members Present: Neal, Gisselman, Peckham, Rasmussen and Martens

Others Present: Schock, Jacobson, Lenz, Marquardt, Mielke, Nutting and Van Krey

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner.

The Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order by Neal at 5:16 p.m.

1# Approval of the Minutes from 12/17/2019

Tabled until next meeting as minutes were not available to the committee until shortly before the meeting.

#2 Discussion and Possible Action on the issuance of an RFP for Thomas Street Phase 2 remnant parcels

Schock explained that Phase 2 of the Thomas Street project has been mostly finished and remnant parcels have been identified. Most of the parcels are sized that they could accommodate housing. Rasmussen commented on the hope that because the parcels are more uniformly shaped than those from Phase 1 development of these parcels should be easier. Schock asked for input on a due date for the proposals. Rasmussen suggested before the March Economic Development Meeting so they could be discussed at that time and still give developers enough time to start a project in the early spring. Gisselman would like the proposers to be made aware of the environmental concerns and history of the area. Peckham agreed asking for language to be added to the RFP indicating environmental concerns.

Tom Kilian commented that he agrees with Gisselman. He also is concerned about the feedback from the Thomas Street neighborhood and suggested that a community engagement session be scheduled before the issuance of an RFP. The development of similar parcels in Phase 1 have caused headaches for the neighborhood and he doesn't want to see that happen again with Phase 2. His suggestion for the parcels is to see if they could be used for the offsite pumping and treatment system that may be required according to an August letter from the DNR to the City.

Rasmussen responded that she would like to see the RFP released first to see what sort of interest comes back and then have engagement with the neighborhood when it is known what the proposals are. Neal agrees with Rasmussen. Gisselman encouraged the committee to tread carefully and be sensitive to the wishes of the neighborhood.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Peckham to move forward with issuing the RFP with a due date of February 28, 2020.

Motion passed 5-0.

#3 Discussion and Possible Action on the issuance of an RFP for planning and engineering services for the implementation of the updated River's Edge Trail segments

Schock explained that in the 2020 budget the city contemplated advancing certain segments of the River's Edge Trail plan. The River's Edge Trail final plan will be presented next month to the Plan Commission and Council. This RFP would be for engineered plans for the identified key recommended segments which include connecting to Wausau's Southeast Side, the West side behind Marathon Box and to Gilbert Park. Rasmussen would like to move forward as soon as possible with the engineered plans so that a better understanding can be had of how much of an easement will be needed for the trail segments and what challenges might possibly arise.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Martens to move forward.

Motion passed 5-0.

#4 Discussion and Possible Action on the extension of the Merge Development Planning Option for 120

Scott Street and associated parcels

Schock shared that conversations have been continuing with Merge and stakeholders of which Merge has requested a 120 day extension on the planning option for 120 Scott Street. Schock sees this as an appropriate request to allow them to finish up and put together a proposal. Neal asked if during their engagement with stakeholders if they have made sure to include all stakeholders of that area. He knows there is concern about the amount of parking which will need to be addressed. Rasmussen agreed that engaging stakeholders in a conversation in regards to parking is important. Gisselman would like to make sure that the need to construct a pedestrian bridge to the Dudley Tower is not forgotten during this process. Schock ensured that Merge has been engaging stakeholders in conversations including parking and that they are aware of the pedestrian bridge.

Motion by Peckham, second by Rasmussen to extend the planning option for 120 days.

Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action for the proposal received for L&S and Westside Battery properties- 415 South 1st Avenue

Schock indicated that the conversation has continued with the proposers and that they are amenable to amending their proposal to include a transfer of the property and working to secure financing without additional city support. Rasmussen is supportive of the amendment since it removes the city from the role as financier and could allow the project to move ahead more quickly.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Martens to approve the proposal as stated.

Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and Possible Action on the term sheet for Riverlife Villages Phase 2 proposed residential development

The proposal for Riverlife Villages Phase 2 was accepted at the last Economic Development Committee meeting. The developer has hopes to start on construction this year if the term sheet is approved and the City will work on extending Fulton Street. The project will consist of a residential multifamily building and a performance amphitheater facility to be developed with input from the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Rasmussen commented on the unique design on the building which allows all units to have a view of the river. She appreciates that the developer has taken what the City has asked for and included those items in the plan.

Lou Larson, 904 S 21st Place, shared concern from his district regarding the amount of TIF money that is being poured into the downtown area and not into neighborhoods, specifically his on the west side. He would like to see a 5 year moratorium on TIF spending and more of that money to be invested back into neighborhoods, police department and other city services.

Peckham raised question about the funding for the performance amphitheater facility as the term sheet states that the developer shall fund and/or fundraise for this portion of the plan. He was under the impression that the developer was going to fund the project and wanted clarification.

Schock clarified that nothing had changed and that language was used to provide flexibility if it was needed if the Parks and Recreation Committee had specific requirements or desires with the facility that weren't accounted for.

Rasmussen recognized that this plan includes a reverse TID which demands results first and payment once those results are met. The developer fronts the cost and receives payment once the requirements have been met. She clarified that TID money can only be used in the district it is intended for and cannot be used in another district or for operational expenses.

Judith Miller, 903 Kickbusch St, asked for clarification on the comment that TID money could not be used

in another district since it had been discussed in the past. Rasmussen clarified that money from a TID district could be used in that district and within half a mile of that district's boundaries.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Martens to accept plan and move forward.

Motion passed 5-0.

#5 CLOSED SESSION pursuant to 19.85(1)(e) of the Wisconsin Statutes for deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session:

Closed Session was not required and no action was taken.

#6 Reconvene into Open Session, if necessary

Closed Session was not required and no action was taken

#7 Updates on Current Projects

- North Riverfront Unifying Site Plan

Moving forward to work with all proposers to create a cohesive site plan. The plan is to put in a request to Finance for a sole source request to hire a firm to develop a site plan within the next few months.

- Wausau Center Mall

There are ongoing discussions and negotiations between the current owner and WOZ. No development agreement has been signed at this time.

- AARP/Livable Wausau

We will be hosting the Orton Family Foundation on January 27th in partnership with AARP. This foundation will work with the steering committee to plan the community engagement process which is the first step in AARP's process for Livable Communities.

- South Riverfront and Towers Area Plans

The plans were presented at the last meeting on December 17, 2019. It is important to note that these plans are independent from any proposal from Merge and the adoption of the S Riverfront and Towers Plan does not mean an adoption of a Merge proposal. The plans will be presented to the whole council in February.

- 1300 Cleveland/Former Incubator

The committee recommended redoing the Phase 1 environmental so the city has contracted to do that which will be a TIF expense in that district. The proposed timeline is that the testing will be done by the end of February so the results can be discussed at the March committee meeting.

- Thomas Street Phase 2

Construction is wrapping up and the RFP for remnant parcels will go out this week. Work is being done on designing a gateway feature from Riverside Park to Thomas street that would include a connecting trail with some sort of entrance feature at Thomas St.

Special Instructions or Directives to Staff:

None

Motion by Peckham, second by Martens to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment Time: 6:26 p.m.