

MINUTES

Economic Development Committee Meeting

Date / Time: Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at 5:30 P.M. | **Meeting called to order by** Lukens at 5:30 P.M.

In Attendance

Members Present: Carol Lukens, Chad Henke, Gary Gisselman, Victoria Tierney

Member Excused: Terry Kilian

Others Present: Randy Fifrick, Shannon Graff, Andy Lynch, Atty. Jacobson, Matt Aschenbrenner (Infused), Randy O'Brien (Olson Solar Energy), Mayor Diny

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

Agenda Item 1 – Public Comment

No community members presented for public comment.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes from January 7, 2025, Meeting

*Gisselman motioned to approve, seconded by Tierny. **Motion passed 4-0.***

Agenda Item 3 – Discussion and Possible Action Approving Request to Install Photovoltaic Equipment on Property Ground Leased by City of Wausau to Van Smiling Eyes, LLC at 1300 N. River Drive (Wausau on Water)

Fifrick stated that Wausau on Water is applying for a grant for a solar project and requires city approval due to its development agreement and ground lease with the city.

Randy O'Brien from Olson Solar Energy confirmed the system would be roof-mounted with no ground impact. When asked about liability, O'Brien assured that the company is fully bonded and insured, with no liability on the city. Atty. Jacobson added that verification of the contractor's coverage would be sufficient.

*Henke motioned to approve, seconded by Tierny. **Motion passed 4-0.***

Agenda Item 4 – Discussion and Possible Action on Exterior Façade Improvements for Asch Properties, LLC for 180 E Wausau Ave (Infused)

Matthew Aschenbrenner shared that he collaborated with Revi to develop a landscaping and façade improvement plan for Infused, providing a visual with measurements. The plan includes 22 planters of various sizes, creating two outdoor spaces on the north and west sides of the building. The planters will be placed on pallets for easy relocation during Woodchucks games and large events. Updated signage is also part of the improvements.

Henke noted that the improvements align with the committee's vision and look well-executed.

Lukens inquired about outdoor seating, to which Aschenbrenner confirmed the intent, though the amount may vary. He added that the façade updates help break up the parking lot and define the space. Lukens also asked about their operating hours, and Aschenbrenner explained that Infused is currently open by appointment only due to staffing constraints. Appointments can be scheduled via their website. While they aim for regular hours in the future, they are prioritizing financial recovery and staff readiness to ensure a sustainable transition to full-time operations.

*Tierny motioned to approve, seconded by Henke. **Motion passed 4-0.***

Agenda Item 5 – Update on Thomas Street Infill and WAM Grant (Fifrick)

Fifrick informed the committee that city staff and Alder Kilian recently met with a DNR representative to discuss the next steps following the completion of Phase I in December. He hopes Phase II testing will be completed soon but does not expect results before early summer. If minimal or no cleanup is required, the parcels could be prepared for housing.

If cleanup is needed, staff may request transferring the sites to the CDA within 180 days to take advantage of grant funding or low/no-interest loans, providing significant cost savings for the city. Otherwise, cleanup funding would come from the city budget.

Gisselman asked for clarification on the timeline. Fifrick stated it is uncertain but estimated that if results come back clean by early summer, housing options could be determined, with potential development starting as early as spring 2026.

Gisselman further questioned whether there is a plan as far as developing the sites with housing. Fifrick noted it is the intention to continue to prioritize single-family homes for the Thomas Street segment. He explained some new options that have been determined will be presented at the March meeting.

Tierny emphasized the need for single-family homes as promised to the community. Fifrick agreed, stating that while there is no legal requirement, the intent for Thomas Street remains single-family housing. He noted that, unlike the Bridge Street project, density options like duplexes may be considered for other infill lots.

Gisselman stressed that the Bridge Street project should not impact the plan for single-family homes on Thomas Street. He asked if transferring parcels to the CDA would affect this goal. Fifrick clarified that the transfer would only help secure funding for environmental cleanup and would not change the housing plan. The council will decide on the transfer, but keeping the parcels may result in higher cleanup costs for the city.

Henke stated he's on the CDA board stated he has only heard plans for single-family homes on Thomas Street and will only support that direction.

Agenda Item – Adjourn

*Alder Henke motioned to adjourn, seconded by Gisselman. **Motion passed 4-0***

Meeting Adjourned at 18:56 PM

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ALL City of Wausau Meetings can be viewed at:

- <https://www.youtube.com/@CityofWausauMeetings>

The ED meeting from 02/04/25 can be viewed at:

- https://www.youtube.com/live/q1HGtEkTdQ?si=Y8uRo9QQWCoiM_3c