

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 5:15 p.m., Council Chambers

Committee Members Present: Tom Neal (c), Lisa Rasmussen, Sarah Watson, Becky McElhaney and Tom Kilian

Others Present: MaryAnne Groat, Anne Jacobson, Brad Lenz, Katie Rosenberg, Sean Fitzgerald, Deb Ryan, Lou Larson and Michelle 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 5:15 p.m.

Agenda Item #1 Approval of the Minutes from 08/04/2020

Motion by Watson, second by Kilian to approve the minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

Agenda Item #2 Discussion and Possible Action on the proposal from Aedifix Holdings for four residential buildings and a multi-tenant commercial building on the East Thomas Street remnant parcels between Cleveland Avenue and McCleary Street.

Public comments against the proposal from Aedifix Holdings were received during the meeting by the following:

Lou Larson, 904 S 21st Place
Larry Dassow, 117 River Street
Debra Ryan 702 Elm Street
Mary Kloth 314 Porter Street
Bruce Canes 118 River Street
Terri Kilian 133 East Thomas Street
Gary Gisselman 319 Park Avenue
Vichay Gillette 1008 South Thomas Street
Vicky Harness 1240 South 9th Avenue

Reasons for opposition during public comment include the proposed sale price of the land to Aedifix, the density of the project, increased traffic and concern about having renters in the area.

Rasmussen noted that much of the public feedback received opposed selling the land to Aedifix for \$1 and that considering how well the other rental properties are doing and the demand for them it seemed difficult to incentivize the project. The other concern regarding density and the traffic coming and going from the rentals should be noted as well. Rasmussen had a conversation with Ann Werth, former ED director, about single family homes on those lots instead of multi-unit rentals. Since the City already owns the land an option could be for Community Development to put up single family homes.

Neal agrees that there is less risk involved with this second phase of development and that selling the land for a \$1 might not be appropriate.

Kilian reflected on the public input meeting held two weeks prior. The takeaway from that meeting seemed to be that many residents wished to see affordable single family homes on those lots.

Rasmussen reviewed what she thought our options for this meeting were. Those options were: move forward with the current RFP, re-RFP the site or use Community Development programs to place single family homes on the site and reject the current proposals.

McElhaney supports development on this site in order to return tax base to the City but is not set on any specific proposal. She questioned if the economic development department has looked in to if there are any developers that would build single family homes on the site.

The Mayor asked that the committee think about the direction they'd like to go with this and instead of voting the proposal up or down, give staff instruction on what to bring back at future meetings.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by McElhaney to reject both proposals and instruct Community Development staff to bring back a plan for 5-6 single family homes using Community Development programs and funding. Motion passed 5-0.

Updates-given by Fitzgerald

- **Wausau Center Mall Planning - Joint Meeting with FINANCE on 09/22/2020**

WOZ will be at the 9/22/20 Finance Committee meeting to give an updated presentation on the project. This will be a joint Finance and Economic Development Committee meeting.

- **Move November 3, 2020 meeting date due to conflict with elections**

The City Clerk has asked that the November Economic Development Committee meeting be moved from Election Day because they will need the space in the Council Chambers for election activities. An email will go out to the committee to determine a time to reschedule.

- **Cherry Tree Dental**

Information will be presented at the next meeting regarding this project.

- **Aedifix Builds proposals for Riverlife and 2nd & 3rd streets**

Information will be presented at the next meeting regarding this project.

- **Update on Wausau Cares loan and grant program for small businesses**

21 grants have been awarded for a total of \$31,500, 21 applications are in process with 7 grants still available.

6 loans have been awarded for a total of \$66,414.

- **Update on Diversified Companies expansion**

Diversified is considering their options to make a new offer on a parcel they had previously proposed to purchase for a \$1.

- **Update on 1300 Cleveland Ave. (former Incubator site) Phase 2 environmental testing**

September 10th is the deadline to respond to the RFP. It is anticipated that testing will occur in October with results coming in mid to late November and a report to the City in December. If this timeline proceeds as expected this item would be presented at the January Economic Development Committee meeting.

Adjournment

Motion by Watson, second by Kilian to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment Time: 6:27 p.m.