ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Date and Time:	Tuesday, October 6, 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, Dawn Herbst, Ann Werth, Tony Gibart 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 09/01/2020

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

Agenda Item #2 Discussion and Possible Action on the proposal received by Cherry Tree Dental for a development in the Riverlife area.

Fitzgerald reviewed the Cherry Tree Dental project as presented in the packet. Cherry Tree Dental President Jack Young spoke about the proposal and indicated his team incorporated much of the feedback the committee provided in previous meetings, including changes to building design, land purchase price and their request for city participation.

Young introduced Dr. Wen Sun, one of the clinic's dental partners, who spoke about her family's positive transition to the Wausau area as well as the importance of maintaining its clinic in the downtown. Dr. Frederick Prehn, another partner from the dental clinic, highlighted the proposed clinic's role in proving complementary medical services to those offered by Eye Clinic of Wisconsin and the proposed Aspirus clinic under construction.

Rasmussen complimented the modifications to the proposed design and indicated that her previous concerns about the project had all been addressed. Kilian indicated he feels the project serves a public purpose for this neighborhood. Mayor Rosenberg thanked the team from Cherry Tree Dental for its efforts to modify its original proposal into a project more consistent with the committee's guidance.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Kilian to approve the proposal received by Cherry Tree Dental. Motion passed 5-0.

Agenda Item #3 Discussion and Possible Action on the proposal received by Aedifix Holdings for development of multi-family housing in the Near North neighborhood along North 2nd and 3rd streets.

Fitzgerald reviewed the Aedifix Holdings residential development project as presented in the packet, but noted the two parcels on North 3rd Avenue located above the Stinchfield Creek culvert would not be included in the project because it's being used as a public space. The developer also modified its proposal to offer $5,000 for each parcel rather than $1 for the seven parcels.

Rasmussen lauded the design aesthetic of the proposal and appreciated the developer amending its offer to purchase each parcel for $5,000 rather than the initial offer of $1. Rasmussen did cite concerns about the developer's request for city assistance given its apparent successes leasing and selling properties on Thomas Street and on North Third Street.

Neal indicated the project is located within his district and acknowledged it's a neighborhood in need of significant investment and upgrade.

McElhaney asked about the developer's request for the city to reconstruct North Second Street. Rasmussen explained that the Capital Investment & Street Maintenance committee has held off on reconstructing the street due to the recurring development in the neighborhood and a desire to wait until those development projects are further along.

Kilian asked Neal if there had been any concerns voiced by neighbors and other constituents. Neal acknowledged there had been none.

Neal recommended the city's negotiating position be taken up in closed session.

Agenda Item #4 Discussion and Possible Action on the request for tax incremental finance support by Westside Warehousing for a $6.5 million expansion at 835 South 66th Avenue.

Fitzgerald reviewed the Westside Warehousing industrial development expansion project as presented in the packet.

Jim Peter, co-owner of Westside Warehousing, explained the company's role in the product delivery supply chain for local manufacturers and outlined the company's need for an expanded facility in the industrial park.

Rasmussen indicated it's always been the city's goal to grow local industry. She felt the appreciation in property value provided a quick return on investment to justify the city's participation.

Kilian asked for clarification on Westside Warehousing's wages and benefits. Peter explained that forklift drivers are provided a living wage and continued training.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Watson to approve the proposed tax incremental financing plan for Westside Warehousing. Motion passed 5-0.

Agenda Item #5 Discussion and Possible Action on the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Thomas Street Phase 2 Remnant Parcels.

Fitzgerald reviewed the staff recommendation for this project as outlined in the packet. He noted the proposed plan seeks development proposals to construct five or six single-family homes that would be sold to owner occupants on six residential parcels along East Thomas Street.

Neal asked for clarification on whether the alley to the north would become a street or serve as a private drive for the residential development. Werth indicated it will remain an alley, but it's undetermined whether the city would provide snow removal or if that would be the responsibility of the homeowners.

Rasmussen emphasized the RFP should stipulate that the houses should be constructed as slab-on-grade foundations without any basement excavation that would otherwise disturb the soil. Kilian agreed that slab-on-grade foundations would be appropriate for the neighborhood, and indicated the entire process to solicit neighbor input on this project is a step forward in the relationship between the city government and residents on the southwest side.

Motion by Kilian, second by Rasmussen to direct community development staff to write and issue a request for proposal seeking developers for a single-family residential project on East Thomas Street. Motion passed 5-0.

Agenda Item #6 Discussion and possible action on creation and implementation of Wausau Poet Laureate Program.

Mayor Rosenberg presented the resolution for creating and implementing a Poet Laureate program in Wausau. This program was modeled off a similar program in Tacoma, WA and will allow a panel created by the Wausau Arts Commission to accept applications and select a Poet Laureate to serve a two year term. The Poet Laureate will be paid $200 a year for sharing four poems per year with the community.

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

Agenda Item #7 Approving city's Waiver of First Right of Refusal to Repurchase property at 5801 Packer Drive from Ideal Properties of Central Wisconsin, LLC, f/k/a T & L Properties of Wausau, LLC to Gore Enterprises LLC

Fitzgerald explained that the current owner of this property is in the process of selling it and during the title work it came up that because the City previously owned the property, the City has first right of refusal on the property. This City is not interested in owning the property and supports the private sale. Rasmussen explained that this was common practice with property in the Business Campus in an effort to give the City a chance to acquire properties back if needed for further development of the campus.

Motion by Watson, second by Kilian to approve the first right of refusal. Motion passed 5-0.

Agenda Item #8 Presentation and discussion of Environmental Justice.

Kilian introduced Tony Wilkin Gibart, executive director of Midwest Environmental Advocates, who offered a presentation by Webex on environmental justice.

Agenda Item #9 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:

- **Proposal received for Aedifix Holdings in the Near North area of North 2nd and 3rd streets.**

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Watson to go into closed session at 7:02 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE – Neal, Watson, McElhaney, Rasmussen and Kilian
Others Present: Fitzgerald, Lenz, Jacobson, Rosenberg, Werth, Groat and Herbst

Agenda Item #10 RECONVENE into Open Session to Take Action on Closed Session Items, If Necessary

Motion by Watson, second by Rasmussen to reconvene into open session at 7:23pm. Motion passed 5-0.

Action on Closed Session Items: No action was taken on this item. The committee directed staff to continue negotiations with Aedifix Holdings on its proposal.

Updates-given by Fitzgerald

- **Wausau Center Mall Planning**

Fitzgerald indicated WOZ is holding its own public information meeting on October 8, 2020. The city is holding an official public hearing on October 13 at 5 p.m.

- **Aedifix Builds proposal for the Riverlife area.**

Fitzgerald said the developer asked that his proposal be delayed to the next economic development committee meeting.

- **Wausau Cares Loan and Grant Program for Small Businesses**

Fitzgerald reported 24 grants have been awarded for a total of $36,000, while six (6) loans have been awarded for a total of $66,414.

- **November 4 date schedule for regular ED Committee meeting**

This meeting date required a change due to a conflict with the counting of the ballots on election day.

Adjournment

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

Adjournment Time: 7:27 p.m.