

MINUTES
CITY OF DUBUQUE LONG RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION

6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Chad Darter; Commissioners Alan Vincent, Jim Prochaska, John Pregler and Charles Winterwood.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioners Craig Beytien and Joshua Clements.

Staff Members Present: Laura Carstens, David Johnson, Erica Haugen, and Maurice Jones.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Darter at 6:30 p.m.

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE: Staff presented an Affidavit of Compliance verifying that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Iowa Open Meetings Law.

MINUTES: Motion by Prochaska, seconded by Pregler, to approve the minutes of February 18, 2015 as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Prochaska, Darter and Winterwood; Nay - None; Abstain – Vincent and Pregler.

ACTION ITEMS:

Amendment of the Dubuque Industrial Center Economic Development District Urban Renewal Plan: City of Dubuque Economic Development Director Maurice Jones presented the amendment of the Dubuque Industrial Center Economic Development District Urban Renewal Plan. He explained the proposed expansion and amendment of the plan would result in an additional 166 acres of land west known as the Graf Farm and referred to as the new Subarea F. He explained the development of the area is necessary and in the interest of the public welfare of the residents of the city of Dubuque. He explained after the land is graded, approximately 80 acres will be available for development. He recommended the amendment be approved to support economic development efforts in the city.

Commissioners discussed the location and purchase price of the land, the proposed land use, and land currently available in Dubuque's existing industrial parks. Staff Member Jones explained the land will be used as an extension of Dubuque Industrial Center West, and about 40% of industrial park land is available.

The Commission discussed concerns about proceeding at this time with TIF incentives, noting land costs, current available land, and economic conditions such as IBM's recent layoffs. Staff Member Jones explained TIF is used as a rebate in Dubuque, not a bonded debt.

Commissioners discussed local examples of TIF projects. Staff Member Jones discussed claw backs with IBM, which protects the City in the event IBM or other corporations fall short of projected development.

The Commission questioned why the City needs this land at this time. Staff Member Jones noted the timing is perfect. He noted it is extremely rare to be able to purchase that size of land for the agreed upon price, noting the land is a bargain. He explained grading will likely begin shortly after a management plan for the property is in place.

The Commission questioned if GDDC or the City has any potential businesses in mind for the property. Staff Member Jones noted every day GDDC and the City are pursuing opportunities.

Motion by Winterwood, seconded by Vincent, to recommend approving the amendment of the Dubuque Industrial Center Economic Development District Urban Renewal Plan, noting the amendment is consistent with the City of Dubuque's Comprehensive Plan. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Prochaska, Pregler, Darter, and Winterwood; Nay – None.

Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development FY 2016-2020: City of Dubuque Community Development Specialist Erica Haugen presented the Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development for FY 2016-2020. She explained the purpose and frequency of the plan. She stated the plan is designed to engage the community about housing issues. She explained the plan is the result of numerous public meetings over the last eight months, and the Community Development Advisory Commission is charged with planning and implementation of the plan and community programs. She reviewed priorities of the plan and the analysis of impediments. She noted the plan has been updated with guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Staff Member Haugen reviewed the surveys sent to the public as well as the results. She noted the surveys identified a need for homeless facilities as well as parks and recreation and youth services.

Staff Member Haugen reviewed public services which are funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program. She reviewed infrastructure needs that can be funded through the CDBG Program, noting street lighting. She reviewed specific County needs, including decent housing, businesses and jobs, and she reviewed high and medium needs for the community.

Staff Member Haugen explained Fair Housing and how it relates to the city of Dubuque. She stressed that in addition to the survey information, staff examines extensive data to develop low, medium, and high priorities for the city's needs. She noted what is apparent is Dubuque lacks enough homeless shelters. She approximated 120 people are homeless in the city of Dubuque and all shelters are full with waiting lists.

Staff Member Haugen reviewed why affordable housing is important, and what is considered affordable housing. She stated 48% of households are eligible for Community Development Block Grant Programs and 25% are eligible for voucher assistance. She reviewed housing data in Dubuque. She discussed cost burdens of housing, and the challenges when forced to spend too much income on housing. She noted housing cost burden is the biggest problem in Dubuque. She explained African Americans experience cost burdens at a much higher rate than other ethnic categories. She reviewed housing options for different income levels. She explained there is a severe housing shortage for Dubuque's lowest income residents. She explained these are oftentimes full time workers that work minimum wage jobs. She reiterated Dubuque's lowest income populations are disproportionately affected by cost burdens.

Staff Member Haugen reviewed the analysis of impediments. She explained the City and HUD are approaching impediments to housing based on two primary principles: 1) focus on solving affordability problems; and 2) focus on solving income problems. She reviewed how affordable housing rates compare to other cities. She noted Dubuque does not have a severe shortage. She stated Dubuque does not have severe ethnic poverty compared to other communities. She noted Dubuque isn't unique or disproportionate to other counties; however, there are a number of needs which much be improved on. In response to the Commission's question, Staff Member Haugen explained simply adding 200 more affordable units in Dubuque would be ideal in addressing affordability issues.

The Commission and staff discussed current and recent developments which incorporate a percentage of affordable housing. The Commission and staff discussed increased licensing and rental fees, and how that impacts affordability for tenants.

Staff Member Haugen reviewed the Annual Action Plan. She explained \$1.2 million dollars in CDBG funding is allocated for FY 2016. She reviewed Housing Development Programs and other non-profit and county development programs. She explained approximately \$258,000 is set aside for planning and administration of the CDBG Program. She noted all projects funded with CDBG money must be consistent with the Consolidated Plan.

The Commission noted they would like to see a larger percentage of development program funding be allocated to creating more affordable rental housing rather than owner-occupied housing.

Motion by Prochaska, seconded by Vincent, to recommend approval of the FY 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development with an additional recommendation to allocate a larger percentage of Development Program funding to create affordable rental housing rather than owner-occupied housing to better address known impediments. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Prochaska, Pregler, Darter, and Winterwood; Nay – None.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan Implementation: Commissioner Prochaska discussed how the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan is used in developing budgets and strategic planning efforts. The Commission stated the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of community values and should be used on the front end of projects rather than justify them. The Commission discussed urging the City Administration to look to the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan for guidance in developing and prioritizing projects.

City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan Update: The Commission asked Planning Services staff the status of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Staff Member Carstens explained there is currently no funding for community engagement. She stated Planning Services staff has concluded most of the stakeholder interviews and data collection; however, funding was not approved for FY 2016 as a result of the budget concerns. She explained funding will be requested again in the future.

ITEMS FROM STAFF: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

Adopted