



Approved

MINUTES
CITY OF DUBUQUE LONG RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION

5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 17, 2016

City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Chad Darter; Commissioners Jim Prochaska, Mark Dolson, and John Pregler.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioners Joshua Clements, Alan Vincent and Charles Winterwood.

Commissioners Unexcused: None.

Staff Members Present: Laura Carstens, David Johnson, Mary Rose Corrigan, and Erica Haugen.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Darter at 5:30 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 Dolson, to approve the minutes of December 16, 2015, as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay – None.

ACTION ITEMS:

Lange Estate Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Haugen presented the Urban Revitalization Plan. She explained the property is located at 3275 Pennsylvania Avenue and the request will provide a tax exemption for affordable senior housing. She explained this will be the fourth phase of the Applewood Development as well as the need for senior housing in the community.

Staff member Haugen stated the value of the property and single family home is \$180,230. She stated the City Assessor estimates after improvements the assessed value for taxation will be approximately \$2.1 million. The annual property tax increase over existing is estimated to be \$71,681. The abatement of \$71,681 will be in effect for 10 years. The total estimated exempted taxes are \$55,002. After the abatement period

expires the property will be taxed based on the assessed value for taxation as determined by the assessor.

The Commission reviewed the request. The Commission reviewed the need for the City of Dubuque to provide tax exemption to the development, noting the developer will likely follow through with the project regardless. The Commission stated the current number of vacancies in Applewood Development also raises the issue as to whether there is an immediate need for senior housing in that particular area.

Staff Member Haugen explained the Lange Estate Urban Revitalization Plan, as well as all the plans on the agenda, are for senior housing from developers that will be requesting senior housing tax credits. She explained the City of Dubuque has not received a senior housing tax credit in some time, making Dubuque highly competitive and the reason for the four urban revitalization plan requests before the Commission. She explained local community support provides points to the developers' tax credit applications. She explained the City of Dubuque cannot provide cash support but they can offer the tax exemption as qualifying local support.

The Commission asked whether the development will provide senior housing that is affordable. Staff Member Haugen stated the senior housing tax credits require a percentage of the development to provide affordable units for a period of 20 years.

The Commission questioned whether the tax exemption takes away potential revenue. Staff Member Carstens explained the baseline is established by the current land and improvements upon it. She explained if incentives are not used, the project will not happen and therefore there is no potential revenue to be gained or lost. The Commission questioned how the city knows a project will not proceed without a tax abatement. Staff explained if a project does not get the tax credits, the project will not cash flow and therefore will not happen. Staff stated developers need the local support in order to compete for the state and federal tax credits. Staff Member Haugen reiterated after 10 years, the property is fully assessed and taxed, creating an economic benefit in the long run. The Commission again questioned whether the City would lose \$55,000 in tax revenue should the development be completed over the next 10 years. Staff clarified without the incentives, the development will not occur. Therefore, there will be no loss in revenue and no long-term benefits.

The Commission questioned how housing needs are defined by the City of Dubuque. Staff Member Haugen explained the City looks at concentrations of poverty and available affordable housing. She stated the goal is to de-concentrate poverty. Staff Member Haugen explained tax credit applications are scored by proximity to amenities and resources that residents will use. She stated some will score better or worse depending on where they are located. Staff member Carstens reiterated the State of Iowa gives points to projects outside areas of poverty to de-concentrate poverty, which this project does due to its location.

The Commission again stated the project will likely go forward regardless of local or state incentives, and it is not located in an area of concentrated poverty.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Dolson that the Lange Estate Urban Revitalization Plan is not entirely in compliance with the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan, in particular, City Fiscal Element goals 1.4, 4.0, 4.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.4, and 7.2. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye - Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay – Prochaska; Abstain – None.

Marquette Hall Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Haugen stated the request is to create an urban revitalization plan and tax exemption at the former Sacred Heart School for affordable senior housing. She stated the site is currently vacant and tax exempt. She stated the estimated annual tax revenue with improvements is projected at \$17,983.

The Commission discussed the request and felt it was a good reuse of the site.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Dolson, that the Marquette Hall Urban Revitalization Plan is in compliance with the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan and will satisfy many of the fiscal needs of the City of Dubuque down the road. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye - Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay –None; Abstain – None.

Paragon Square Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Haugen explained the plan is for the former Holy Ghost site at 2887 and 2901 Central Avenue. She stated this request is again to develop affordable senior housing which will benefit from local tax incentives as well as senior housing and historic tax credits.

The Commission discussed the request and asked about historic significance. Staff noted the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and will use preservation tax credits.

Motion by Prochaska, seconded by Dolson, that the Paragon Square Urban Revitalization Plan is consistent with the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan and recommend City Council accept it. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye - Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay –None; Abstain – None.

University Lofts Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Haugen explained this plan will provide for a 56 unit senior housing facility located at the former Nativity site at Alta Vista and University. She stated the property is currently owned by the Church of the Nativity and is tax exempt. She explained the site is currently open space.

The Commission questioned whether Miller/Valentine Group has any other developments in the city of Dubuque. Staff stated not to their knowledge. The Commission discussed the site as well as off-street parking for the project. The

Commission stated the developer could have developed the site without the local or state incentives, but did acknowledge a need for affordable housing in this area.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Dolson, that the University Lofts Urban Revitalization Plan is in compliance with the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan, and recommend the City Council accept the plan. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye: Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay –None; Abstain – None.

Resiliency Commission: Staff Member Corrigan presented information on the Resiliency Commission. She noted last August, the City Council made establishing a Resiliency Commission a priority. She explained City staff are in the process of soliciting community input on what the Resiliency Commission could be and do. She stated staff will be meeting with many groups in the community and the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission is one of them. She stated staff is seeking input on the concept of resiliency.

Staff Member Corrigan reviewed the history of sustainability in Dubuque, and noted resiliency is sustainability at maturity. She explained the concept of resiliency is becoming more important throughout the nation. In response to a question from the Commission, Staff Member Corrigan stated the new Resiliency Commission would be called the Resiliency Community Advisory Commission. Staff Member Corrigan reviewed how boards and commissions are developed and staffed. She asked the Commission what resiliency means to them. Commissioners noted the ability to bounce back from adversity, strength against unexpected adversity, flexibility, economic resilience, change management, proactive change initiation, and adaptation.

Staff Member Corrigan questioned what responsibilities the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission would anticipate for the Resiliency Commission. The Commission noted it is odd that a Commission would be created and then try to find it a purpose. The Commission noted it would be more logical to have a need and then create a commission to address it.

The Commission stated a key responsibility of the Commission would likely be linked to disaster preparedness. The Commission noted an additional responsibility should involve forecasting economic issues as well as investigating issues beyond what is presented to them by City staff. The Commission identified a number of elements of resiliency that a Resiliency Commission might focus on, including economic, environmental, disaster preparedness, health and food environment, and housing resiliency. The Commission noted the Resiliency Commission could identify issues and opportunities and research whether existing plans exist to address them. The Commission noted the Resiliency Commission would be a larger Commission that would oversee process and delegate and coordinate with other Commissions and area agencies on issues and implementation. The Commission noted resiliency would lie within the equitable triangle of the Sustainable Dubuque Model.

The Commission noted big companies, such as IBM and John Deere, are significant contributors to our local economy. The Commission discussed what would happen should one of these companies close its doors or more. The Commission asked whether there is anyone in the community that develops plans in response to these potential job losses and business closures. Staff Member Corrigan noted those responsibilities primarily lie with the City of Dubuque Economic Development Department and the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation. The Commission stated it would be very important for the City of Dubuque Economic Development Department and Greater Dubuque Development Corporation to be closely involved in the Commission. The Commission stated the Resiliency Commission might function best as a larger Commission with other City Commission representatives serving on it as well as staff and community stakeholders. The Commission stated those that serve on the Resiliency Commission should have expertise in relevant matters.

Staff Member Corrigan asked the Commission how they imagine the Resiliency Commission would be involved. The Commission stated they feel the Resiliency Commission would focus on research and community engagement issues as well as analysis and coordination. The Commission reiterated the Resiliency Commissioners should have knowledge and insight into principle elements of resiliency and have experience and expertise. The Commission stated that City staff with expertise in the principle elements of resiliency should be vocal, appointed participants on the Commission. Staff explained City staff are not allowed to serve on local commissions. The Commission reiterated their point and suggested that be reconsidered, noting it would be beneficial to have experts, such as Fire Chief, Police Chief, Economic Development professionals doing more than facilitating a process. The Commission stated the Resiliency Commission should be on the forefront of issues and not be in a position to respond to issues.

Staff Member Corrigan thanked the Commission for their time and input.

FY2017–FY2021 Recommended Capital Improvement Program: Staff Member Carstens welcomed any questions regarding the budget. The Commission asked whether the recommended capital improvement program is finalized. Staff Member Carstens explained the capital improvement program is the City Manager's recommendation, and is always subject to change before City Council approves it.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Prochaska, that the FY2017-FY2021 Recommended Capital Improvement Program is in general conformance with the 2012 City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye: Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay –None.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION:

Election of Officers: Staff Member Johnson stated Commissioner Darter is serving his first term as Chairperson and Commissioner Vincent is serving his second term as

Vice- Chairperson; therefore, all Commissioners are eligible to serve as Chairperson and all commissioners except Commissioner Vincent is eligible to serve as Vice-Chairperson.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Dolson to nominate Commissioner Darter as Chairperson of the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye: Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay –None.

Motion by Pregler, seconded by Prochaska, to nominate Commissioner Dolson as Vice-Chairperson of the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye: Prochaska, Pregler, and Darter; Nay – Dolson.

Comprehensive Plan Update: The Commission asked Planning staff the status of the City of Dubuque Comprehensive Plan Update. Staff Member Carstens noted a Capital Improvement Program for \$323,300 was submitted to City Council for their consideration as part of the FY2017 budget. She stated the project is programmed out over three years.

ITEMS FROM STAFF: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Prochaska, seconded by Dolson, to adjourn the February 17, 2016 Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye –Prochaska, Dolson, Pregler, and Darter; Nay – None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Carstens, Planning Services Manager

Adopted