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MINUTES CITY OF DUBUQUE LONG RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR SESSION

5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 17, 2018
City Council Chamber, Historic Federal Building

Commissioners Present: Chairperson John Pregler; Commissioners Ron Collins, Alan Vincent, Charlie Winterwood, and Michael Wright.

Commissioners Excused: None.

Commissioners Unexcused: None.

Staff Members Present: Guy Hemenway, Charles Miller and Teresa Bassler.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Pregler 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 Vincent, seconded by Winterwood, to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2017, Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye –Collins, Vincent, Winterwood, Wright and Pregler; Nay – None.

ACTION ITEMS: Alta Vista and Radford Road Urban Revitalization Plans

Staff Member Hemenway introduced Assistant Housing Supervisor Teresa Bassler. He said he would provide a brief overview of both urban revitalization plans in general and then discuss each individually. He noted that the Commission, in the past, had reviewed and approved similar urban revitalization plans for affordable residential development. He said that the two plans meet the Land Use Goals of the Comprehensive Plan. He said that both will occupy infill sites that limit sprawl and allow more efficient provision of services. He said that streets, sewers, water, lighting and fiber were in place for both projects. He said that compact and contiguous infill development is a more efficient use of public services such as transit and trash collection. He said the developments will be located outside of the areas of concentrated poverty which will help the City meet the goals stated in the Voluntary Consent Agreement with the Department of Justice. He said that IFA grants award

points when the projects are located in urban revitalization districts and when they are endorsed by the jurisdiction in which they are located.

Staff Member Hemenway then reviewed the details of each proposed affordable housing development separately.

Alta Vista Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Hemenway noted that the Horizon Development/Alta Vista Project consisted of 60 units of affordable senior housing located along Nevada Street on the former Nativity School site on the one-half acre lot. He said that the building would be three-stories and would be set back 20-feet from the Nevada Street frontage. He said that the project will provide 60 underground parking spaces. He said that the proposed development meets all City standards. He said that the project represented a good transition between commercial and multi-family development along University Avenue, the church and school along Alta Vista, and single and two-family residential housing along Nevada Street.

Radford Road Urban Revitalization Plan: Staff Member Hemenway noted that the Landover Corp/Radford Road development consisted of 52 units of affordable housing in a three-story building with 85 off-street parking spaces on an approximately two-acre vacant parcel. He said the proposed development was compliant with the Unified Development Code regulations.

Chairperson Pregler expressed concerns about both projects. He said that neither developer has provided specific figures regarding the number of affordable units and how HUD's three levels of poverty, based on annual median income, would be served. He said neither developer had stated categorically that they would be willing to accept housing choice vouchers. He said he felt the request represented corporate welfare.

Chairperson Pregler further stated he felt the request did not meet the spirit of Chapter 6 of the Comprehensive Plan or the source of income goals and did not affirmatively further fair housing. He said that he felt the Commission needed much more detailed information and a contractual commitment from the developers to ensure that low income, and extremely low income, housing needs are being met. He said that nothing in the submittals was spelled out.

Commissioner Wright said that he felt the Radford Road development did not meet the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan due to its location. He said that the proposed location was not appropriate because it was surrounded by industrial and commercial development, that it was far from neighborhood-style retail and that there was very limited public transportation to the Radford Road area.

Commissioner Collins questioned the availability of jobs in the Radford Road area.

Chairperson Pregler noted that the Horizon's Alta Vista development stated that their apartments would be either \$900 or \$1,200 which he said was way too much for people living in poverty, and that they did not further affordable housing.

Commissioner Winterwood said that he shared many of the same concerns expressed by Commissioner Wright and Chairperson Pregler.

Chairperson Pregler said that he was interested in what the vacancy rates for rental units in the city are. He noted that this information was not provided. He said that the Radford Road development did not provide any income or rental rate information whatsoever.

Commissioner Winterwood said that he felt Dubuque's changing demographics will create an increased need for affordable housing.

Commissioner Collins asked if there was a demonstrable need for this style housing.

Chairperson Pregler stated that those with income below \$36,900 per year would not be able to apply or afford any of the housing options offered. He said that without clarification on the financial issues, he feels that the urban revitalization plans do not meet the spirit of Chapter 6 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Winterwood said that he was prone to not endorse the Radford Road project, but that he is in favor of the Horizon Development/Alta Vista Senior Housing project.

Chairperson Pregler questioned whether there was a need for affordable senior housing. He said that while there is a need for affordable housing in general, he felt that it only met the need or partially met the need of those who are living at 80% of the AMI. He said that he feels that the developers should work with City staff to address the needs of the poor in Dubuque.

Commissioner Vincent said that he feels that the Alta Vista project does help meet a need for senior housing in the community.

Commissioner Winterwood asked if Applewood IV had been awarded urban revitalization status. Staff Member Hemenway said that Applewood IV had been designated an urban revitalization area.

Chairperson Pregler said he felt the City Council should go back to the developers and negotiate harder for better terms.

Commissioners Winterwood and Chairperson Pregler said that they felt the developer should clearly state that the housing choice vouchers would be accepted for both projects.

Commissioner Wright said he did not feel that either project met the spirit of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Commissioners stated that the developers should commit to accept Section 8 Housing Vouchers.

After further discussion, Commissioners felt that it was appropriate that they table the request of both urban revitalization requests, and ask that more information be provided by the developers.

Alta Vista Urban Revitalization Plan: Motion by Collins, seconded by Vincent, to table the Alta Vista Urban Revitalization Plan request with a recommendation that the City Council direct City staff to work with the developer to secure a contractual commitment to provide affordable housing to all three tiers of HUD defined poverty, and to guarantee that Housing Choice Vouchers will be accepted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Wright, Collins and Pregler; Nay – Winterwood.

Radford Road Urban Revitalization Plan: Motion by Winterwood, seconded by Collins, to table the Radford Road Urban Revitalization Plan request with a recommendation that the City Council direct City staff to work with the developer to secure a contractual commitment to provide affordable housing to all three tiers of HUD defined poverty, and to guarantee that Housing Choice Vouchers will be accepted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Wright, Collins, Winterwood and Pregler; Nay – None.

ACTION ITEMS: None.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION: Chairperson Pregler said that he felt that the Commission should be briefed by City staff regarding the implementation strategy for the Imagine Dubuque Comprehensive Plan. He said he felt that the City should develop a policy guide that all departments would use when crafting policies and considering projects. He said that those goals that could be undertaken by the City should be implemented. He asked Commissioners how best to encourage the City to implement the Comprehensive Plan goals. He asked if the Commission could schedule a work session with the City Council.

Commissioners discussed the request and said they felt that implementation of the Comprehensive Plan was very important. Staff Member Hemenway noted that, although it had been a year since the plan was adopted, the City was committed to developing an implementation strategy that would not only involve the City, but that also required significant leadership and participation from other key stakeholders in the community.

Motion by Winterwood, seconded by Vincent, to direct City staff to request City Manager Mike Van Milligen, Planning Services Manager Laura Carstens and the newly hired Assistant Planner attend the next scheduled Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting and update the Commission on the status of the Imagine Dubuque Comprehensive Plan implementation strategy. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Wright, Collins, Winterwood and Pregler; Nay – None.

Election of Officers: John Pregler was elected unanimously as Commission Chair, and Alan Vincent was elected unanimously as Vice Chairperson. Commissioners understood that there would be another vote for election of officers in the first Commission meeting of 2019.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Winterwood, seconded by Collins, to adjourn the October 17, 2018 Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Vincent, Winterwood, Wright, Collins, and Pregler; Nay – None.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Guy Hemenway, Assistant Planner

Adopted