



APPROVED

**MINUTES
CITY OF DUBUQUE LONG RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION**

5:30 p.m.
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
Virtual Meeting

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and mandates for social distancing, this meeting was conducted virtually.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson John Pregler; Commissioners Ron Collins, Alan Vincent, Tyler Stoffel and John Krayer.

Commissioners Excused: None.

Commissioners Unexcused: None.

Staff Members Present: Planning Services Manager Wally Wernimont, Assistant Planner Chris Happ Olson and Planning Technician Jason Duba; Economic Development Director Jill Connors, Housing & Community Development Director Alexis Steger; and City Attorney Crenna Brumwell.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Pregler at 5:31 p.m.

MINUTES: Motion by Vincent, seconded by Stoffel, to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2020 Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting as submitted. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye –Collins, Krayer, Stoffel, Vincent, and Pregler; Nay – None.

Work Session

- Urban Renewal Plan

Chairperson Pregler stated that he did not feel the commission's message was fully understood by the city council. This prompted him to write a letter to the council, which he did not intend to be construed as coming from the commission.

Planning Services Manager Wally Wernimont apologized for doing double-duty at the last meeting and felt the commission needed more information about urban renewal plans, so this meeting was scheduled and prepared. The meeting will be recorded for the orientation of new commissioners in the future.

Economic Development Director Jill Connors explained how Tax Increment Financing (TIF) operates. She presented and referred to a diagram from Attachment A of the meeting packet illustrating the mechanism. She explained how this tax rebate in the first 10 years will provide increased tax revenue following that period. She also explained that Iowa law dictates that the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission reviews the urban renewal plans for compliance with the comprehensive plan.

Pregler stated that the commission had two main points:

1. The urban renewal plan did not include an explicit objective of increasing affordable housing.
2. Can the development agreements require a certain number of low-income housing units?

Connors stated that the urban renewal plans that the commission reviews are broad and don't get into that detail. Pregler asked if the city can require that detail in the development agreement. Connors explained that developers get into that detail with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program from the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA), which has a competitive point system for awarding credits.

Wernimont explained how the LIHTC selection process works and illustrated with materials from IFA, including maps of Iowa Opportunity Index Census Tracts. Projects get points based on serving lowest income residents, including market rate units, including households with children (3- or 4-bedroom units), Iowa Opportunity Index Census tracts, and historical significance. Each year, IFA reviews needs and can revise their point system. Wernimont showed a list of properties in Dubuque that have received LIHTC.

Housing & Community Development Director Alexis Steger stated that the City needs to get creative to increase incentives for low-income units. The urban renewal plans need to be malleable enough to encourage development, and shouldn't make it so restrictive it doesn't allow for development.

City Attorney Crenna Bruwmell explained that some developments that have received IFA awards have not gone forward because they weren't able to get enough financing.

A conversation ensued about whether the city can require low-income units. The LIHTC provided by IFA do require monitoring of units, and failure to comply can lead to IRS action and revocation of the tax credits. The city's TIF program does not have the same requirements, so the city relies on IFA to do this monitoring work.

Commissioner Tyler Stoffel asked about the map of Iowa Opportunity Index Census Tracts and whether the city could establish an urban renewal area elsewhere. Staff noted that the city can create an urban renewal area anywhere in the city in order to provide TIF funding. The opportunity areas are established by IFA to incentivize development in good areas for low-income families.

This part of the meeting closed, and Pregler thanked Brumwell, Connors, and Steger.

ITEMS FROM PUBLIC: None.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSION: None.

ITEMS FROM STAFF:

- Proposed change to the By-Laws

Assistant Planner Chris Happ Olson explained that changing the by-laws to align member terms with officer terms would only require changing the current January election of officers to a July election. Members discussed this and were in favor of it.

Motion by Collins, seconded by Krayer, to change the January election to a July election in the by-laws. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Collins, Krayer, Stoffel, Vincent, and Pregler; Nay – None.

- Thank you to Michael Peroski.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Stoffel, seconded by Vincent, to adjourn the October 21, 2020 Long Range Planning Advisory Commission meeting. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye – Collins, Krayer, Stoffel, Vincent, and Pregler; Nay – None. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Wally Wernimont, Planning Services Manager

January 20, 2021

Adopted