

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
July 14, 2015
Waverly City Hall – Civic Center
7:00 a.m.

A. Call to Order

1. Voting Members Present: Deb Schroeder
Patsy Reed
Jim Willis
Steve Egli
Tammy McKenzie (*Arrived A.4*)
Gene Lieb
Heidi Abben
- Voting Members Absent: Mark Hanawalt
David Takes
- Non-Voting Partners Present: Darrel Wenzel, Waverly Light & Power (*Arrived B.1*)
Jim Atty, Waverly Health Center
Dan McKenzie, City Council Liaison
- Staff Present: Phil Jones, City Administrator
Bill Werger, Economic Development Director
Connie Tolan, Economic Development Specialist
Paige Robertson, Economic Development Office Mgr.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Motion By: Willis

Seconded By: Egli

Move that the agenda be approved as printed.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 3

3. Approval of Previous Minutes:

Motion By: Egli

Seconded By: Reed

Move that the minutes of the May 12, 2015 Economic Development Commission Meeting be approved.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 3

4. Communication Items:

- Meeting Notes June 9, 2015 meeting where there was no quorum
- Updated Commission Member List

B. Regular Business

1. Update and Next Steps on Urban Revitalization Plan

Werger mentioned that multi-residential plan was discussed at City Council's Study Session. A good debate took place regarding if there was more of a need or desire for the multi-residential plan. We have had discussions outside of Council about including commercial and single family properties. We wanted to wait until closer to the completion of the Dry Run Project for the single family properties. Once the Dry Run is completed, we have to file a LOMR with FEMA. It could be another 6 months before FEMA gets the maps updated, but we hope they will move quickly once we complete the project. The cement contractors for the Dry Run Project have been working very fast. They are working South of Bremer Avenue, but will be North of Bremer Ave this fall. It will still be another year and a half before the homes come out of the flood plain designation.

Single family home revitalization is limited to tax abatement on the first \$75,000 increase in value unless it is designated as slum and blight. May be able to get the slum and blight designation in the central core since it has been in the flood zone. If a property is in a historical district, it can use the money to restore the homes. We are still working on finalizing multi-residential and single family revitalization plans. We plan to present the plan to Council next year for the central core once the homes are out of the flood zone.

We are working with people in Congress on a FEMA amendment to take some property back for development that was bought through FEMA and is currently undevelopable. We may be allowed to trade 2 for 1 for a lot that is no longer in the flood zone. The lots that we would trade would be lots that we wouldn't develop on in the future, so the restrictions would be fine to be put on those lots. Lieb asked if we would have enough land for the 2 for 1 trade. Werger stated that we have parks along the riverbanks. They would put restrictions on the ones that we give. We would need to identify which lots we would have to offer that are not developable/buildable. We may start with only taking a small number of lots out.

The Urban Revitalization Plan could be used for a combination of things. Some examples where we would like to see it used would be the Bremer Avenue corridor and North of Strotman Lumber. The plan is an opportunity to see old warehouses turn into something productive. The plan would give an incentive to start improving their properties. We would like to put together a subcommittee consisting of a couple of commission members from Economic Development Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission. This committee would identify properties that would be a good fit for the Urban Revitalization Plans. We want input from community members. We would like 3 volunteers to meet a couple times to determine which areas need to be in the category. We would look at starting this fall. This should not be a long term commitment. If you are interested, please contact Bill Werger privately. This is a good plan by giving incentives through tax abatement. We want to keep moving forward. Schroeder

asked if the goal was to have it completed by year end. Werger stated doesn't have to, and probably won't be. People are split on the Urban Revitalization Plan for multi-residential. We need to keep discussing the topic and determine if this is something we need and want. People have concerns over whom or what is covered under this program. Creating a map to help people visualize would be helpful. We would invite others to take advantage of the program if we didn't originally put their property in the designation.

Dan McKenzie asked if we would be able to view or discuss the abatement schedule. Werger stated that he does have spreadsheets that show different schedules. The sooner you give abatement to the multi-residential lots, the better the benefit will be because of the yearly decrease in tax rates.

Phil asked where the Chamber is at with the downtown redevelopment planning. Werger said he discussed this a little bit at the Business Development Meeting. He would like to get serious about the façade and upper story program. We should discuss using TIF dollars to give people actual money rather than tax rebatement. People may see more incentive to start a project when they receive actual money. ISU has a good program where students design cost effective new building fronts that would fit with the community style. We need to come up with a visualization of what we would like the downtown to look like so we can get design assistance. Streetscape was discussed at the Council level. We need Council direction of how to get the public input. Unsure of where we would put the limit if we have a limit. We need to discuss this with the Chamber.

2. Updates from Participants

Wenzel with Waverly Light and Power stated they have crews in town putting conduit down. They have a map laid out of which zones they will be working when. They have started with the toughest terrain. The project should be completed in 2-3 years.

Werger asked Tammy McKenzie how the real estate has been. Tammy stated it has been an excellent summer. The real estate business has been going very well. Dan McKenzie asked Tammy if traditional rentals were put on the market due to the new rental code. Tammy stated there have not been enough put on the market to notice. Werger stated that Ben, Community Development Specialist, is working on mapping the rentals in town. It is interesting to see where the rentals are located. Maybe next month we may have something to bring to the commission to show where the rentals are located. We have not had too much pushback on the new rental ordinance. We have had a couple parking issues. The rental program includes an ordinance on having enough off-street parking. We can enforce this, but some tenants are choosing to park on the street even though they have sufficient off-street parking. We have mentioned some complaints to landlords, and it has helped in some cases.

Lieb stated it is remarkable how much development is happening on the Southeast side of Waverly. Many projects are in the works such as the Dog Park, rail trail and Cedar River Parkway where others are finished such as a new church and golf course.

Dan McKenzie asked what the numbers of new single family homes were and if there was an update on Highway 3 reconstruction. Phil, Atty and Werger mentioned there were new homes built in various developments. We do not have an exact number, but will get numbers to you next meeting. Phil stated they have asked the DOT to push the project back until 2017, so the City can do capital funding for it. We are still looking at various layouts. DOT has recommended layouts that they believe would be best. We are looking at a recommendation for a 3 lane with the middle lane a turning lane only. The DOT would restripe the year before to see if it would actually work. It is nice to be able to have a trial run first. Dan asked if public would be able to have input. Phil said yes it would be nice to have feedback. We would like to have an open house, but need to figure out logistics first. Willis asked about angle parking. Phil stated we are not able to unless we go down to 2 lanes. Egli stated that Des Moines is always talking about roadways and making changes. We need to be part of the discussion of roadways in Waverly and make sure we help make the changes. Phil mentions we need to remember to always look at the bigger picture and think about what we would want the town to look like in 20 years.

Lieb asked what is happening with the gas station on 4th St SW. Werger stated that something will happen. There are a couple of different options, but they need to finalize everything.

C. Mayor's Roundtable Discussion

1. Discussion of Vision Statement for the Waverly Economic Development Commission, led by Mayor Chuck Infelt.

Schroeder asked about the vision statement that was written up. Do we need one? What are others impression of the concept of the vision statement? Lieb asked how the statement was drafted. Werger stated the Mayor drafted it with ideas from members from previous meetings. Schroeder asked if each commission had a vision statement. Werger stated not necessarily. Willis didn't think it would be a bad idea to have, but thinks that the Council should agree to it. It would be an overall guide to our community vision. Lieb stated that a community vision was created awhile back, we can't have multiple visions. Phil stated he would get the documents together of the previous vision so we can review it. Schroeder thinks we should have a vision at the City level, but have a short document/description for the Economic Development Commission level of what we do/what our role is.

Werger would like to have the commission discuss this fall where and how to buy land. Bill Menner, the Director of USDA for the state was in town for a discussion.

USDA staff told the group that loans are given out for infrastructure needs. Werger believes we have done a good job keeping our infrastructure updated but discussed the possibility of using the USDA loans for Economic Development to buy land which would be long term debt and low interest. We need to look at ways to buy land without tapping in to the general fund or bonding. We still need to find the land to buy. Each property has their own ups and down. Werger would like this commission to help determine which land to buy, and would like to really get the conversation going this fall.

D. Old Business

None

E. New Business

None

F. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be August 11, 2015.

G. Adjournment

Motion By: Egli

Seconded By: McKenzie

That the Economic Development Commission meeting be adjourned.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 2