The meeting was brought to order at 8:00 a.m.

Present: Councilmember Hoeger; Councilmember Poe; Councilmember Vanorny; Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Caleb Mason, Economic Development Analyst; Anne Russett, Community Development Planner; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; Iván Gonzalez, Community Development Planner; Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager; Lauren Freeman, Community Development Program Coordinator; Hunter Gillaspie, Community Development Planner Intern; Jillane Shultz, Community Development Administrative Assistant;

1. Approval of Minutes
Councilmember Hoeger motioned to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2018 and April 17, 2018 meetings. Councilmember Vanorny seconded the motion with unanimous consent.

2. Updates
   a. Casino Site
Caleb Mason, Economic Development Analyst, shared a presentation to initiate conversation about the former Casino site on 1st Avenue NW/SW. This property in the core of Cedar Rapids is a key remaining City property that has significant potential to be transformative and build on the momentum of recent projects in the area. Mr. Mason exhibited the parcels on a map which, in total, cover approximately eight acres. The property does not include a small, corner piece of property on the northeasterly corner of 3rd Street SW and 2nd Avenue SW which is privately owned. A slide was shared from the Downtown Vision Plan to stimulate thought about how the site can be developed. Mr. Mason stated that the image from the Downtown Vision Plan was not intended to portray the final design, but rather shown to inspire ideas for development of the site. Mr. Mason shared that the City initiating the request for proposal process for the Paramount property first to prevent overlap with the Casino Property RFP. The City is anticipating developer interest in both RFPs and wished to yield the opportunity for them to respond to both as this is a prominent and visible location. Mr. Mason shared that a Community Visioning Initiative will be part of the Casino Property RFP due to the amount of land available. The Community
Visioning Initiative will aid in adequate planning on the front-end of the project. Mr. Mason shared an upcoming timeline for the project:

- June 19, 2018 – Proposed plan for a Community Visioning Initiative
- July 2018 – City Council consideration for a Community Visioning Initiative
- Aug/Sept 2018 – Kick-off of the Community Visioning Initiative

Councilmember Hoeger asked if the private corner property owner is a willing seller. Mr. Mason stated that the Casino development group had the property under site control, however, the City has not had discussions with the property owner.

b. APA Overview

Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner, shared a presentation that provided a high level overview of the 2018 APA National Planning Conference in New Orleans, LA. Staff from Community Development, Public Works, Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Development Services attended the conference April 21-24, 2018. Mr. Gunnerson presented information from each session and how the content was applicable to current and future projects in Cedar Rapids.

The first session, “Austin Sidewalks: Planning Assessment and Execution”, educated staff about Geographic Information Systems and online mapping tools that can be applied to the Public Works Pedestrian Master Plan.

The second session, “Planning for the Other Half”, educated staff about the importance of taking the needs of women into account. The information can be applied to the Update to Regional Transportation Plan.

The third session, “Reindustrialization and Redefining Mixed-Use”, educated staff about returning industry to previously industrial sites. This session provided insight on planning for industry to work within a mix of zones. The information from this session can be applied to ReZone Cedar Rapids.

The fourth session, “Should Zoning Be Simple?”, examined survey trends in Zoning Ordinances, techniques for simplification, and principals for reform. The information from this session can be applied to ReZone Cedar Rapids.

The fifth session, “Flummoxed by FLUMs”, educated staff by examining how various cities implement and use their Future Land Use Maps. Mr. Gunnerson feels that The City of Cedar Rapids is currently following the best practice with intensity based, rather than use based. The information from this session can be applied to ReZone Cedar Rapids, as well as EnvisionCR.

The sixth session, “Zoning Code Implementation”, educated staff about city-wide form based zoning codes in Raleigh, Denver, and Miami. The information from this session will aid EnvisionCR updates and ReZone. The City is preparing to enter the adoption phase of a new code and questions will be posed relating to
intent and meaning. Therefore, emphasizing the importance of new regulations being fully applied to be easily understood. The session suggested embracing change by viewing as enhancements. Zoning codes should be fluid at adoption for continual process improvement. Mr. Gunnerson shared that the need to update language increases as standards are continually applied.

Councilmember Poe asked how reindustrialization and redefining mixed-use would work with Brownfield redevelopment. Mr. Gunnerson stated that older, more intense industrial is no longer present as the sites have been remediated and other businesses have established themselves. Mr. Gunnerson stated that more flexible, mixed-use districts could be considered with the City’s zoning codes. Mixed-use districts that include lower intensity, commercial, and residential zones can all exist together to avoid continual rezoning as businesses move in and out of the district.

Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director, stated that larger industrial sites that require remediation, traditional Brownfield sites, are not an optimal opportunity to reindustrialize due to extensive cleanup costs.

c. **Gateway Sign**

Iván Gonzalez, Community Development Planner, shared an update on new entrance signage. Mr. Gonzalez shared that the main objective of the effective use of urban space is to welcome travelers and residents to enter, explore, and enjoy Cedar Rapids. This idea is a component of the Right of Way Planning and Specifications Manual (ROW Specs) to ensure existing entrance signage is consistent with the development of new signage. Mr. Gonzalez shared that the existing signage was created from public input. The City currently has two entrance gateways located off I-380. Community Development Interns conducted a study on missing signage in 2017 and began identifying possible locations along Highway 30. These locations were identified as the major east/west corridor. Mr. Gonzalez stated there is a parcel deeded to the City as part of the development process for a subdivision to College Farms, which was intended for public open space and storm water management. This parcel was deeded to the City in August 2017. Mr. Gonzalez stated that visibility from highway will be very clear. A map was shown to highlight where the new signage will be constructed near the College Farms Development in relation to existing signage. Mr. Gonzalez shared that the next steps will include previous installation research, contracting process, and construction in fall 2018.

Councilmember Hoeger asked if the City is also considering adding Gateway Signage from the west to compliment the new Hwy 100 extension.

Ms. Pratt stated that timing will be key after the completion of the Hwy 100 extension to ensure the best location.
Councilmember Poe asked if the design will be the same as the other Gateway signage. Mr. Gonzalez stated that the design will be the same. Ms. Pratt stated that the City is taking sizing and proximity into account to ensure consistency.

Councilmember Vanorny asked if the proposed location on Hwy 30 is the City’s outer limit. Mr. Gonzalez stated that it is very close as the City’s outer limit is when Honey Grove Road is reached.

d. ReZone Open House
Anne Russett, Community Development Planner, shared an update on ReZone. City staff is working with the consultant team to prepare a public review draft of the zoning code. In addition to preparing the public review draft, staff is working on developing materials to correspond with the draft release to help aid members of the public in the review of the draft. Specifically, staff is preparing a “how-to” review the draft guide, an online zoning tool, and updates to the ReZone website. Ms. Russet shared an example of a step by step process that the City of Des Moines utilizes on specific sections of their code. This step by step process allows the public to view a zoning map and understand what uses are permitted. The online zoning viewer will display current and proposed zoning information. In addition, to coincide with the release of the public review draft, staff will also host a public open house. The open house will provide members of the public an opportunity to learn more about the draft, ask questions of staff, and provide input. The open house will highlight major changes the City is proposing and which districts these are allowed in. The City’s website will be updated to include all materials. Ms. Russett shared the next steps:

- Complete draft provided to city staff
- Preparations for meetings and public open house
- Meetings with internal and external stakeholders
- Release of public review draft
- Public open house.

Councilmember Hoeger asked if a link on the City’s website could be added for Future Land Use Maps. Ms. Russett stated that this can be added to the website.

Ms. Pratt shared that at the early June open house the City will be asking for input on the Right of Way Specs in addition to ReZone. The Right of Ways Specs are applicable to ReZone because they interact with future development. Ms. Pratt stated that the Understate, which are Interstate 380 under passes, will be included in the subject matter and the City is looking forward to input from members of the public on this topic.
e. Neighborhood Finance Corporation

Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager, shared an update as well as an overview of the Neighborhood Finance Corporation. The NFC is a non-profit, self-sustaining administration that provides traditional mortgages through a local lender pool. A forgivable mortgage up to $10,000 is available for renovations funded by the City’s commitment. Ms. Buck shared the success NFC Des Moines has a proven over 26 years, serving over 5,500 households. NFC Des Moines has generated over $300 million in lending to date. Current milestones of NFC Cedar Rapids LLC include $7M in the local lending pool, $1M per year City Commitment over 5 years, and $600K raised in startup costs. Ms. Buck shared current updates which include:

- March 22, 2018 – NFC Board of Directors approved NFC Cedar Rapids LLC
- April 24, 2018 – Resolution of appointment two non-voting members to NFC Board of Directors, Jeff Pomeranz and Scott Overland
- April 25, 2018 – 1st Advisory Committee Meeting lenders, city staff, neighborhood reps, non-profits overview, looked at lending area

Ms. Buck presented a map exhibiting the proposed lending areas in the low-to-moderate income census tracts and focus neighborhoods (transitional areas). The objective of NFC Cedar Rapids LLC is to provide enough area for loans to sustain themselves in three to four years, see reinvestment, and maintain desire for families to remain in these neighborhoods. The lending areas were chosen after examination of the percentage of homeownership and age of housing stock.

Ms. Pratt stated that the City keyed in on the Des Moines NFC model with the understanding if homes are in the low-to-moderate census tract citizens will always be eligible for a loan. Areas surrounding the low-to-moderate income census tracts are monitored and may experience intensive investment over a period of two to three years. At an appropriate time, the lending area may shift to another neighborhood. Ms. Pratt stated by tracking investment, it determines the most appropriate approach. Ms. Pratt shared a benefit of not having Federal funds involved is the ability to expand beyond the low to moderate census tracts. It is truly a neighborhood program that tracks investment and will make adjustments in future years. The local Advisory Board is critical to Cedar Rapids NFC, LLC and the City is appreciative to NFC Des Moines for being sensitive to the fact that decisions made at the local level will be most effective.

Ms. Buck stated that NFC is not intended to serve low-to-moderate income families. The NFC’s objective is reinvestment in older housing stock in these identified neighborhoods.

Councilmember Hoeger asked if these homes are single family. Ms. Pratt stated they are single family and owner occupied.
Ms. Buck shared a timeline for the next steps:

- May 22, 2018 – City Council consideration of 28E Agreements with NFC
- May 22, 2018 – City Council consideration of proposed NFC lending areas
- Aug/Sept 2018 – NFC Cedar Rapids LLC – accept first application

**f. Affordable Housing Commission**

Ms. Buck shared background on the Affordable Housing Commission. The City of Cedar Rapids created an Affordable Housing Commission on July 31, 1991, that was last active in the late 1990’s. The roll of the Commission was to review the housing needs of the low-to-moderate income citizens and make recommendations on strategies to meet these needs. The Mayor has requested that The Affordable Housing Commission be reactivated. Ms. Buck shared a timeline for the next steps:

- May 22, 2018 City Council consideration of Commission representation
- June 28, 2018 City Council appointment of members
- July 1, 2018 Beginning of AHC term

Ms. Buck stated that there is currently no list of representatives for the Commission. Mayor Hart and City Staff would like to see proper representation from social service agencies who work closely with housing providers, shelters, developers, and landlords to gain different perspectives.

Ms. Pratt shared that the current ordinance allows for up to 21 members. The goal is to maximize the Commission at 21 members to gain a full, comprehensive view. In addition to the professional categories and service agencies, the City is proposing to add a representative from each quadrant of the community. Ms. Pratt shared these representatives would be visible advocates and champions for the community.

Ms. Buck shared a list of the service agencies, and that the City would be reaching out to these agencies after the May 22nd, 2018 City Council Meeting to arrange for representation from each. The general community applications will also be opened for the remaining four seats. Mayor Hart will review and approve the applications prior to being brought forth to Council.

Councilmember Poe asked how long the terms would be for each representative.

Ms. Pratt stated the terms are three years, however, some will be staggered to avoid all terms expiring at once.

Councilmember Hoeger suggested that the Neighborhood Finance Corporation should bring forth a representative in the event an agency declines. Councilmember Hoeger shared that a dual role could be fulfilled by a Neighborhood Development Board member.
Councilmember Vanorny asked why the Affordable Housing Commission was ever inactivated.

Ms. Pratt stated that this group was originally called together to coordinate the local match for the HOME Program, which ended up not being an issue. In the past, this Commission was not broad based, but rather more specific and targeted toward the housing industry. The City believes that a larger representation will be well received going forward.

Councilmember Vanorny asked how the City can expect to fill 21 seats while there are currently open positions on other Committees.

Ms. Pratt stated that many of the positions are from a service agency that will appoint a representative as they are very anxious to get to the table and help. Ms. Pratt shared that the professional services categories tend to readily commit to this type of activity. The general community has expressed interest in Affordable Housing and the four seats should be filled easily since it is a small number.

Ms. Buck shared that many representatives under with service agencies are already meeting with other Affordable Housing groups and could easily transition to the Affordable Housing Commission as they attend many of the same meetings.

Councilmember Vanorny asked that the Affordable Housing Commission review discretionary policies regarding refusal or exception with felony status up to five years.

Councilmember Poe asked how Community Development envisions this Commission working with the current efforts of the City staff.

Ms. Pratt stated that this is not viewed as a duplication, but rather utilizing current relationships in a larger forum with those who are passionate about this topic to further the efforts of The Affordable Housing Commission.

**Future Discussion Items:**

There was no discussion on future items.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

Councilmembers Hoeger and Vanorny adjourned the meeting at 8:51 a.m. with unanimous consent.
Respectfully submitted,

Jillane Shultz, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development