City of Cedar Rapids

Development Committee Meeting Agenda
City Hall Council Chambers
Wednesday, May 17, 2017
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Purpose of Development Committee:
To enable the City Council to discuss and evaluate in greater detail these specific issues that directly impact the physical, social, and economic vibrancy of the City of Cedar Rapids.

City Council Committee Members:
Council member Ann Poe, Chair
Council member Pat Shey
Council member Scott Overland
Mayor Ron Corbett is an ex-officio member of all Council Committees per City Charter Section 2.06.

Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes – March 20, 2017

- Recommendation Items
  1. Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan  
     Bill Micheel/Seth Gunnerson  
     Community Development  
     15 Minutes
  2. 1002 5th St SE/513 10 Ave SE & 1032 5th St SE Property Transfer  
     Bill Micheel  
     Community Development  
     10 Minutes

- Updates
  1. ReZone Cedar Rapids – Open House Recap  
     Anne Russett  
     Community Development  
     10 Minutes

- Public Comment

Next Meeting: June 21, 2017

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a City program, service, or activity, should contact the Community Development Department at (319) 286-5041 or email communitydevelopment@cedar-rapids.org as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the event.
The meeting was brought to order at 4:05 p.m.

Present: Council members Poe (Chair), Shey, and Overland. Staff members present: Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager; Caleb Mason, Economic Development Analyst; Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner; Doug Wilson, Paving for Progress Program Manager; Anne Kroll, Community Development Administrative Assistant.

Council member Shey made a motion to approve the minutes from February 15, 2017. Council member Overland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Recommendation Items:

1. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program – Administrative Plan Amendments
Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager, shared information about the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, the PHA five (5) year and annual goals, and the 2016 accomplishments. Ms. Buck described the proposed changes and provided key dates with July 1, 2017 proposed to be the effective date of the approved changes.

Council member Overland asked what the trends are and if the demand continues to outpace the supply by a wider margin. Ms. Buck stated that the trend is consistent with the last couple of years, but the demand has always outweighed the supply. Council member Overland asked what is driving the need. Ms. Buck stated that it is hard to say, but there seems to be more people who are homeless.

2. Ambroz RFP
Caleb Mason, Economic Development Analyst, stated that the City recently relocated Park and Recreation services from the Ambroz Recreation building (formerly Buchanan School) to the Northwest Recreation Center. With the relocation of Parks staff and programming, the City has evaluated the long term use of Ambroz, determining that it is no longer needed for City operations. Additionally, the building and site require significant upgrades to be compliant with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Mr. Mason reviewed the proposed timeline for the RFP process.

Council member Overland asked if there will be a sale price on this property. Mr. Mason stated that this is different than the properties that have been acquired with federal dollars, so the City
Council member Poe asked if a Historic Preservation Commissioner will be on the task force. Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director, stated that there is always a Commissioner on the task force for historic buildings.

Council member Shey made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval of the criteria and timeline for the 2000 Mount Vernon Road SE RFP. Council member Overland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Ellis Boulevard/O Avenue NW RFP**

Mr. Mason stated that the City has received a request to initiate the disposition of nine (9) contiguous City-owned properties located on Ellis Boulevard NW. The properties are located within the Ellis Boulevard NW Viable Business Corridor. The properties were acquired through the voluntary property acquisition program and therefore subject to meeting certain requirements as part of the disposition and redevelopment: Land is to be sold at its fair market value as determined by an appraisal, sale proceeds are returned to the acquisition program, and any new development must include flood mitigation measures. Mr. Mason reviewed the proposed timeline for the RFP process.

Council member Poe is pleased that there is interest in this area and stated that rooftops help drive commercial. Council member Poe is looking forward to seeing what comes forward with this RFP.

Council member Shey made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval of the criteria and timeline for the 1600 block of Ellis Boulevard NW RFP. Council member Overland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **1st Street & 5th Avenue SW RFP**

Mr. Mason stated that the City has received a request to initiate the disposition of four (4) contiguous City-owned properties located on the southwesterly corner of 1st Street and 5th Avenue SW. The properties are located within the Kingston Village District. The properties were acquired through the voluntary property acquisition program and therefore subject to meeting certain requirements as part of the disposition and redevelopment: Land is to be sold at its fair market value as determined by an appraisal, sale proceeds are returned to the acquisition program, and any new development must include flood mitigation measures. Mr. Mason reviewed the proposed timeline for the RFP process.

Council member Shey made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval of the criteria and timeline for the 1st Street & 5th Avenue SW RFP. Council member Overland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Updates:**

1. **College District Area Action Plan**

Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner, shared a map of the district boundaries, the plan focus, the advisory group and their activities, and the timeline. The goal is to have the Plan finished and approved by City Council in September 2018.
Council member Poe asked about the trail that goes through the College District. Doug Wilson, Paving for Progress Program Manager, stated that there is a trail, but it has a gap in it that is currently being worked on as part of the CeMar Trail. Council member Poe added that the Knights of Columbus are in this district and should be made aware of the open houses.

Presentations:

1. 6th Street to Ellis Boulevard Extension – Project Status Update  
Mr. Wilson shared a concept drawing of the 6th Street SW and Ellis Boulevard NW Extension. The plans have changed to an at-grade rail crossing instead of a bridge and plans include complete streets and sidewalk improvements on 1st Avenue. For this extension, the MidAmerican Energy Building needs to be vacated and torn down. MidAmerican Energy, with the help of the City, is currently trying to find a place to relocate to. The City is working with the railroad to close the I Avenue crossing in order to add a crossing at 6th Street and Mr. Wilson shared a map of those locations.

Council member Overland asked what the estimated cost is with the at-grade crossing added. Mr. Wilson stated that the project cost went down considerably to $4 million. The Development Committee expressed their excitement at the prospect of moving forward with this project.

Council member Shey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council member Overland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II  
Community Development
To: City Council Development Committee
From: Seth Gunnerson and Bill Micheel through Jennifer Pratt, Director of Community Development & Planning
Subject: Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation of Approval
Date: May 17th, 2017

Background:
EnvisionCR identified the need for focused, neighborhood-level planning to occur within the community. Specifically, the City’s comprehensive plan calls for the development of ‘Neighborhood Action Plans’, which evaluate current needs and plan for future development in recognized neighborhoods in Cedar Rapids. Priority for Neighborhood Action Plans (NAP’s) goes to Neighborhood Associations certified through the City’s Neighborhood Service Delivery Initiative program.

As called for by EnvisionCR, NAP’s focus on evaluating neighborhoods in five subject areas:

- Placemaking
- Connectivity
- Land Use
- Character
- Streetscapes

The Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan was developed by Community Development staff with input from other departments and is based on public input and review of other adopted plans. Work on the plan began in May of 2016 with. Based on staff evaluation and public feedback, the five topic areas above were condensed into four Elements, or chapters within the plan. These are:

1. Neighborhood Character and Placemaking
2. Land Use
3. Connectivity
4. Streetscapes

Public input for the plan’s development consisted of three public open houses, described below, in addition to focus group meetings and discussion at monthly Northwest Neighbor’s Neighborhood Association meetings. The public open houses for the plan were:

- March 29, 2016 Visioning Workshop
  - Gather information about issues and concerns
June 20, 2016 Open House  
  o  Share feedback from the Visioning Workshop  
  o  Share draft goals and action items for addressing issues related the four elements  
  o  Vote for most important action items  

February 1, 2017 Open House  
  o  Share feedback from previous open house  
  o  Provide more detail on the action items that received the most votes at the previous open house  
  o  Share the Land Use Plan for the Northwest Neighborhood, which shows more specific recommendations for future development and growth of the neighborhood based on the Action Steps.

The plan led to the development of 26 Action Steps that the City can take to address needs in four elements. The Action Steps are provided on a table attached to this document. These Action Steps will be reviewed annually as part of the EnvisionCR Initiatives Evaluation and Review process to ensure their completion. Five of the Action Steps specifically refer to actions that can be completed through the City’s rewrite of the zoning ordinance, ReZone Cedar Rapids.

Staff will take the plan document to the City Planning Commission for a recommendation of approval and inclusion in EnvisionCR by City Council at their June 8th, 2017 meeting.

**Recommendations:**  
Staff recommends the Development Committee recommend approval of the plan by City Council and for its inclusion in EnvisionCR.

**Timeline and Next Steps:**  
Approval of the plan and inclusion in EnvisionCR is scheduled for the June 13th, 2017 City Council meeting.
Action Steps

The tables on the following pages summarize the Action Steps identified in each of the four plan elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify gaps in neighborhood activities and create additional programs to fill gaps</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>NWNNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate and explore ways to enhance the implementation of SAFE-CR to address code violations and nuisances within the neighborhood</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review locations identified in the Visual Arts Commission Gap Analysis as possible locations for future public art. Encourage artwork from local artists.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote home repair and other housing-related classes for homeowners, landlords, and renters</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>NWNNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install a memorial to recognize the impact of the 2008 Flood on the Time Check Neighborhood</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>NWNNA, Private Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a historic walking tour of the neighborhood with kiosks highlighting points of interest</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>Community Development, Information Technology, NWNNA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work on a branding effort for the neighborhood to be used for gateways, signage, and marking.</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>Community Development, Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and install wayfinding signage at strategic locations throughout the neighborhood, including streets and trails as part of communitywide efforts</td>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>Community Development, Public Works, NWNNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify options for Gateways at select points along the neighborhood boundary</td>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Flood Control System gates as signature entrances into the neighborhood</td>
<td>More than 5 years</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
</tr>
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</table>

APPENDIX: ACTION STEP TABLES
**LAND USE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Maintain the primarily single-family residential character of the neighborhood west of Ellis Boulevard NW.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Incorporate existing overlay district standards which ensure high quality infill development into ReZone Cedar Rapids.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consider implementing a Form Based Code to ensure appropriate construction in redevelopment areas of the neighborhood.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Encourage the development of diverse housing options to provide opportunities for residents of all incomes and ages.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Encourage a mix of higher density housing, retail, and commercial uses along and east of Ellis Boulevard NW at identified Activity Nodes and near downtown.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONNECTIVITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Study street alignment options to maximize connections to the Downtown and I-380 to encourage future development and improve connectivity.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Complete the Ellis Boulevard NW connection to 6th Street SW.</td>
<td>4 to 5 years</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through the neighborhood.</td>
<td>4 to 5 years</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ensure that connections are made to existing pedestrian networks as the Flood Control System and Greenway are constructed.</td>
<td>More than 5 years</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**STREETSCAPES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Update standards for streetscapes and public spaces to encourage pedestrian activity.</td>
<td>Within 1 year</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Develop a plan to make Ellis Boulevard NW a signature street with signage and landscaping. Include cost estimates and a funding source.</td>
<td>2 to 3 years</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify key corridors and complete a streetscape plan.</td>
<td>More than 5 years</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
</tr>
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**GOAL 1: THROUGH THE REZONE CEDAR RAPIDS PROCESS, ALLOW FOR A MIX OF DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS IN THE NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD**

**GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE QUALITY INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

**GOAL 3: DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF COMPLETE STREETS WHICH ARE SAFE FOR PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, AND DRIVERS**

**GOAL 1: PROVIDE STREETS CAPING, LIGHTING, AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD**
To: City Council Development Committee  
From: Bill Micheel, Asst. Director of Community Development & Planning  
Subject: Initiation of Property Disposition Process– 5th St SE and 10 Ave SE  
Date: May 17, 2017

Background:  
The City has received a request to initiate the disposition of City-owned property located at 1002 5th Street SE and 513 10th Ave SE, totaling .19 acres (8400 sq. ft.), to Linn County. As a part of the property exchange agreement, the City of Cedar Rapids would take possession of property currently owned by Linn County addressed 1032 5th St SE, totaling .13 acres (5600 sq. ft.).

Linn County has indicated that the City-owned lots are needed to accommodate the parking needs of the new Linn County Public Health facility being constructed on the adjacent 1000 block between 6th Street SE and 7th Street SE. Linn County has demonstrated support for the Linn County Public Health project and the associated proposed parking lot through a letter of support from the Oakhill Jackson Neighborhood Association. During discussions with Linn County, they have agreed to incorporate a high standard of design for landscaping on the site and to implement stormwater management best practices. In addition, Linn County has agreed to allow the parking lot to be utilized for public use on weekend evenings and weekends for the NewBo area.

The properties are located within the Riverside/Oakhill Urban Renewal Area. 1002 5th Street SE was acquired through the Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) program in 2008. 513 10th Ave SE was acquired by the City using the voluntary property acquisition program (CDBG). The combination of the use of voluntary property acquisition program funds and a property transfer between two local government entities creates the following requirements for the disposition and redevelopment process:

- A competitive process is not required, however a public notice/public hearing is required;  
- Land use must either meet a CDBG National Objective or Fair Market Value (FMV) must be remitted to the Federal Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD);  
- Land exchange of parcels of at least equivalent value is acceptable to meet the FMV requirement;  
- FMV is determined by an appraisal for commercial property and residential parcels can use assessed value; and  
- Any new development must include flood mitigation measures.

Recommendation  
Staff recommends initiating the property disposition process based on the schedule outlined below. The following are the key objectives for the redevelopment of the properties:
1. High quality standard of design including landscaping and stormwater management best practices.
2. Overall design that enhances the character of the neighborhood.
3. Agreement from Linn County to allow the surface parking lot to be utilized for public parking for the NewBo area during hours in which the Public Health facility is closed including weekday evenings and weekends.

The following is the recommended process schedule:

- **May 17, 2017**  City Council Development Committee
- **May 23, 2017**  Motion Setting a Public Hearing (consent agenda)
- **June 13, 2017**  Public Hearing & Resolution to authorize staff to negotiate a Property Exchange Agreement
- **June 14, 2017**  Begin negotiation of Transfer of Real Estate Agreement
- **August 22, 2017**  City Council consider resolution to authorize staff to execute the Property Exchange Agreement

*Bold items denote City Council action*