City of Cedar Rapids

Development Committee Meeting Agenda
City Hall Training Room
Wednesday, September 20, 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 – August 16, 2017
- Recommendation Items
  1. Disposition of 5131 Council St NE  Caleb Mason  Community Development  10 Minutes
  2. Annual CDBG and HOME Priorities  Paula Mitchell  Community Development  10 Minutes
- Updates
  1. ReZone Cedar Rapids  Anne Russett  Community Development  10 Minutes
- Future Discussion Items
- Public Comment

Next Meeting: October 18, 2017
City of Cedar Rapids
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Cedar Rapids City Hall, Council Chambers
Wednesday, August 16, 2017
3:00 p.m.

The meeting was brought to order at 3:02 p.m.

Present: Council members Poe and Overland. Staff members present: Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Erika Kubly, Housing Redevelopment Analyst; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; Amanda Rabey, Housing Compliance Monitoring Specialist; Bill Micheel, Community Development Assistant Director; Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner; Rita Packingham, Community Development Administrative Assistant.

Council members Poe and Overland approved the minutes from June 21, 2017 with unanimous consent.

Recommendation Items:

1. Request for Proposals – City-Owned Property near 1800 Block 10th Street SE
Bill Micheel, Assistant Director of Community Development, stated the City of Cedar Rapids received a letter of request from SSC, INC on behalf of Verizon Wireless requesting the City to initiate the disposition process for the lease of the property commonly known as the RESCAR property located near the 1800 block of 10th Street SE for the purpose of siting a cellular communications tower.

Mr. Micheel noted that staff will look closely at compatibility with adjacent land uses and aesthetic considerations. Mr. Micheel also noted a cell tower is consistent with the adjacent transmission line poles and the Alliant Substation located directly east of the subject property. The mono-pole design contains the antennas inside the pole instead of outside the pole. The existing electrical transmission lines are metal and approximately 100 foot tall. This will look very similar to what is already there for the Alliant lines.

Staff recommends initiation of the disposition process and invites proposals that meet the following criteria for evaluation: 1. Proposal is in conformance with any relevant deed restrictions, easements, and other key site constraints; and 2. Aesthetics of the proposed communications tower design and compatibility of the design with surrounding property uses.

Mr. Micheel reviewed the proposed timeline as well.

Council member Overland liked the cellular communications tower design with the antennas located inside the pole. Council member Overland asked how close the pole would be to the Alliant Substation. Mr. Micheel stated drawings are included in the proposal and the pole is
directly adjacent to the West of the Alliant Substation. Council member Poe wanted to ensure that it didn’t stick out like a sore thumb or impede any future development or interfere with the flood control system in any way.

Council member Overland made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval of initiating the property disposition process for the 1800 block of 10th Street SE for the purpose of siting a cellular communications tower. Council member Poe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Request for City-Owned Property near 15th Street SE
Amanda Rabey, Housing Compliance Monitoring Specialist, stated the City has received a request for two (2) vacant City-owned parcels located off of 15th Street SE from Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity (CVHfH). The proposal is for CVHfH to use these lots, which are adjacent to other lots currently owned by CVHfH, to construct single family homes for owner-occupancy as part of the organization’s summer 2018 “Home Builder’s Blitz” building program. The two requested parcels are as follows:

- **Parcel #14272-02004-00000** – This vacant, City-owned parcel is 5,576 square feet. The lot was offered through the City’s ROOTs program, but was not requested by a builder prior to the program deadline.
- **Parcel #14272-04027-00000** – This vacant, City-owned parcel is 2,100 square feet and therefore does not meet the City’s current square footage requirement to be considered a buildable lot under the R-TN zoning designation, which is the City’s most flexible designation for single-family, residential housing. However, it is located adjacent to a parcel that was recently donated by Alliant Energy to Habitat for Humanity, and could be combined with that parcel to create a buildable lot.

Staff recommends initiating the request for proposal process to solicit competitive proposals for redevelopment of these lots. Recommended criteria for evaluation includes:

- Priority for single family, owner occupied housing;
- Developer experience;
- Developer investment;
- Design consistent with neighborhood character;
- Community benefit;
- Timeline for completion.

Ms. Rabey provided the timeline and next steps to the Council.

Council member Overland was a board member for CVHfH and felt that this development would give the neighborhood a boost. Council member Poe asked if there was an alley access from the rear of 15th Street. Ms. Rabey stated that she believes it is and that it is kind of hidden by the trees. Ms. Rabey noted that one of the neighboring parcels does have a front facing garage. A couple of the other neighboring lots do not look like they have garages. At this time we do not have CVHfH plans so we’re not sure what the exact design will be but our understanding is that it would be consistent with the neighborhood character. Council member Poe asked Ms. Pratt if the justification of the house will be closer to the street with the garages closer to the back. Ms. Pratt noted the setback on 15th is consistent and the garage is oriented to the alley. Ms. Pratt noted CVHFH will be coming back to provide their plans.
Council member Overland made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval for initiating the request to solicit competitive proposals for redevelopment of Parcel #14272-2004-00000 and Parcel #1472-04027-00000. Council member Poe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Request for lease of City-Owned Property near 1600 Block 2nd Street SE
Jennifer Pratt, Director of Community Development, stated the City received a request from Craig and Brett McCormick to initiate the process for a two (2) year lease of six (6) City-owned properties in the 1600 block of 2nd Street SE. Brett McCormick owns property contiguous to the City-owned property. Mr. McCormick is requesting a two (2) year lease to provide short-term, temporary use of the properties in conjunction with outdoor events associated with the outdoor pavilion located on his property.

Previously, the City granted use of the City-owned properties to Mr. McCormick under the City’s Special Event permitting process for an event in the fall of 2016. The City’s Special Event permitting process is intended for specified events with known dates and certain activities and is less tailored to accommodating ongoing, ad hoc activities or events. As such, Mr. McCormick is requesting the two (2) year lease which will provide dates certain of use of the property. The long-term plan for disposition of the subject properties will not be finalized until the Flood Control System is constructed. Therefore, staff finds that the short-term use of the properties is appropriate at this time.

Staff recommends initiating a two (2) year lease with Mr. McCormick for short-term lease of the properties with the following key terms:

1. Lessee is responsible for maintenance costs and liability on the properties; and
2. Lessee’s use of the property shall be in conformance with deed restrictions, easements, and other key site considerations
3. No permanent structures are to be constructed on the premises

Ms. Pratt provided the next steps to the Council.

Council member Poe said short term leases are not uncommon for recreational activity with an extended intent of bigger plans for that property especially as it relates to flood control systems and pumps. Council member Poe asked if there is anything else that should be considered. Ms. Pratt noted this process has been complicated and she has appreciated the McCormick’s being patient.

Council member Overland made a motion to recommend City Council’s approval for initiating the two (2) year lease with Mr. McCormick for short-term lease of six (6) City-owned properties in the 1600 block of 2nd Street SE. Council member Poe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates:

1. College District Area Action Plan Workshop
Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner, reviewed the Area Action Plan (AAP) with focus on the College District. The AAP examines the following elements for improvements:
   - Connectivity
     - Vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit
- Land Use
  - Density and intensity, appropriate mix and integration of types, proper utilization
- Streetscapes
  - Landscaping, lighting, amenities
- Character
  - Building placement, location, height, historical nature
- Placemaking
  - Gateways, signage

Mr. Lindenlaub noted a workshop was held on July 18th, 2017 with over 100 people in attendance. The workshop was broken out into two parts. The first part was a present/future exercise where participants were asked to give one to three words to describe the area today followed up by one to three words they would like to or hope to describe the area in the future. Next, a conditions analysis exercise was conducted to look at Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges. This was a structured workshop so the work that staff was doing was just scribing using the feedback from the citizens.

There will be two (2) open houses that will be non-structured at a set period of time where people can come and go as they like. The fall of 2017 Open House will entail sharing goals and action steps and ask for feedback from the participants. The Spring/Summer, 2018 Open House will present the final draft of the goals and action steps and give citizens another opportunity to provide feedback.

Council member Overland asked if the City will end up with a similar scenario as encountered with the Mt Vernon Road exercise last year (as far as concrete things that the City can do to improve infrastructure working with the private sector as well as the Colleges? Council member Overland noted this is an area that has a tremendous amount of potential and has had lots of difficulties. Mr. Lindenlaub replied that each element will have very specific actions, will note who will take the lead in performing the action, and provide a timeline.

2. Sleeping Giant Bridge
Steve Sovern, representative of Connect CR, noted the Sleeping Giant Bridge name came from “the beast in the river that we have all seen for so long”. Mr. Sovern shared the elements that were especially important in development of a new bridge including height, illumination, and historic references like having a two (2) deck bridge that acknowledges the two purposes of the original bridge which was to provide a walkway for workers to the plant as well as a railroad. This is a symbol for the history which marries the agriculture in Cedar Rapids and industry. The new walking bridge would include a smoke stack in the center that mimics the original Sinclair smoke stack (the History Center provided the original 1909 drawing). The smoke stack would be 190 foot concrete column with a crown. The octagonal base of the smoke stack would contain historic panels and a “selfie plaza” where people can be in the center of the bridge and take a selfie. This bridge will connect Czech Village and New Bohemia. Potentially, the bridge can be illuminated and project various verbiage such as “Sinclair” or “Wilson” to commemorate Cedar Rapids history. Mr. Sovern presented historic pictures of the Sinclair smoke stack that was removed and potentially what the new bridge and smoke stack would look like.

Council member Overland agreed replicating the historic smoke stack will make it unique, it would tie in with Cedar Rapids history, and it would make it easier for fundraising. Council member Overland also felt the illumination adds an exciting element to the bridge and is an attention getter. Council member Poe loved the idea of the kiosk with history of the area in the center. Council Member Poe loves the synergy, history element, and placemaking.
Comment:

No public comment.

Council member Poe commented that Council member Overland and she liked and appreciated, at the last council meeting, seeing the 360 vision of building development. Going forward, they would like to encourage Community Development to work with developers so they start thinking about all sides of a building to avoid an ugly side. Council member Poe asked Community Development to encourage developers to present, either to this committee or to council, the 360 vision. Ms. Pratt said this should not be a problem. Community Development will tell developers that that is the expectation of City Council.

Council members Poe and Overland adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m. with unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Packingham, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development
To: City Council Development Committee  
From: Caleb Mason, Community Development & Planning  
Subject: Request for Proposal - 5131 Council Street NE  
Date: September 20, 2017

Background  
The City received a request from Pat McGrath of McGrath Automotive Group, requesting the City initiate the process to invite development proposals for City-owned property at 5131 Council St NE. The property is shown on the map below:

The City acquired the property, formerly Pei’s restaurant, in 2004 to accommodate the re-alignment of 51st St NE using tax increment revenues from the Council Street Urban Renewal Area. The 51st St realignment project is underway and expected to be completed by mid-October 2017. There is approximately 1 acre that would be available for redevelopment upon the completion of 51st St NE realignment.

Staff Recommendation  
Staff recommends initiating a request for competitive redevelopment proposals for the site based upon the following criteria:

a. Developer experience;
b. Developer investment;
c. Community benefit;
d. Timeline for completion.
The following is the proposed next steps:

Sept. 20    Development Committee
Sept. 26    Public Hearing and invitation of proposals
Oct. 30     Proposal Deadline
Nov. 14     City Council consideration of proposal
To:       City Council Development Committee
From:     Paula Mitchell through Jennifer Pratt, Community Development and Planning Director
Subject:  Fiscal Year 2018 CDBG and HOME Priorities
Date:     September 11, 2017

Background:

In an effort to better target the City’s declining Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME entitlement resources an annual prioritization process was established in September 2012 to target funds towards highest priority community needs. These needs were determined using City Council’s strategic goals and priorities, as well as the City’s 5-year Consolidated Plan and other City planning efforts. Additionally, there is a federal requirement to assist with funding of projects carried out by Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), and the City typically sets aside a portion of its HOME funding allocation, through the annual prioritization process, to address the CHDO requirement.

Because specific entitlement grant allocations are subject to congressional appropriations and typically not released by HUD until closer to the start of the City’s entitlement program year in July, the previous year’s allocation is used as the basis for budget projections and prioritization of funds, in order to meet required deadlines for the submittal of the City’s Annual Action Plan.

Recommendations:

Recommended dollar amounts are based off of FY2017 funding levels of $966,876 for CDBG and $266,364 for HOME. Recommendations are shown on the table following this memo. In general, the recommendations focus on activities that improve housing stock and promote neighborhood quality of life through provision of services in core neighborhoods.

Consistent with the previous year’s recommendation, it is further recommended that up to $50,000 be prioritized for qualifying activities carried out by certified neighborhoods participating in the City’s Neighborhood Certification Program. This is not shown in the table because the activities could fall under multiple categories, but most neighborhood activities qualify as a public service. Any funds not applied for or utilized by such neighborhoods can be de-obligated and made available for other qualifying activities when the Grants and Programs Committee undertakes its annual budget recommendation process.

It is also recommended that $75,000 of the budgeted $266,364 for HOME program funds be prioritized for CHDO applicants, consistent with past practice.
Preliminary timeline and Next Steps:

1. October 10, 2017 – City Council consideration of proposed priorities for the FY2018 CDBG and HOME program year.
2. October 25, 2017 – Pre-application workshop for CDBG and HOME applicants and distribution of funding applications.
3. December 4, 2017 – Applications for funding are due to the City.
6. April/May 2018 – City Council adoption of final Annual Action Plan and budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed FY18 CDBG Priority Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>City Council Goal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Create Current and Future Financial Strength</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bold moves in Economic Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic/Intentional Community Planning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Allocations in this category limited by federal statute.
** Up to $50,000 to be set aside for eligible activities to be carried out by CDBG-eligible Certified Neighborhood Associations, to be allocated between Public Services as Other Eligible Activities as determined eligible by staff review.