The meeting was brought to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmember Vanorny; Councilmember Poe; Councilmember Hoeger; Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Bill Micheel, Community Development Assistant Director; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; Eric Pate, Community Development Planner; Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner; Lauren Freeman, Community Development Program Coordinator; Sylvia Bochner, Community Development Planner; Jillane Gilmour, Community Development Administrative Assistant;

1. Approval of Minutes
Councilmember Hoeger motioned to approve the minutes from the April 17, 2019 meeting. Councilmember Vanorny seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Presentations
a. Planning Trends
Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director, shared a presentation on planning trends presented at the American Planning Conference in San Francisco. Thousands of planners from across the country attended the conference from both public and private sectors, which provided a valuable opportunity for three Community Development staff members to network with counterparts. Ms. Pratt shared that a major takeaway from the conference was that the City of Cedar Rapids is in line with other communities of a similar size in regards to initiatives and goals.

Community Vision
- Adopted in 2015
- City Council goals align with each element
- Focus on the goals, not project driven

Clarity of Mission
- City Council Annual Goal Setting → EnvisionCR Initiatives
- Projects and policy changes to achieve goals
Keep in Alignment
• Public Interests
  o Action plans
  o Neighborhood Associations
• Private Investment
  o Loftus Lumber/Banjo Block
  o ConnectCR
• Current Market Conditions
  o Housing needs
  o Workforce gaps
• Emerging Technologies and Issues
  o Professional training

Areas of Focus
• Electric and Automated Vehicle Readiness
  o Charging stations
  o Right-of-way changes
• Stormwater Management
  o Integrated designs
• Placemaking
  o Accessible and inclusive
• Single-family housing developments
  o Pet-friendly/Park/Trail facilities
  o Housing options/Neighborhood commercial

Keys to Continued Success
• Committed to the goals
• Open to improvement
• Keep forward focus

Councilmember Vanorny shared that she appreciates the focus on electric vehicle charging stations, and asked if installation throughout the City should be considered to help Cedar Rapids attain the status of a 5-Star Community.

Ms. Pratt shared that these are items to keep up on, as the City does not want to be behind the curve and miss out on being part of that network.

Councilmember Poe asked Ms. Pratt to provide stormwater examples.

Ms. Pratt shared that City staff have seen urban, park-like settings that incorporate stormwater features along with an educational component. These settings serve as a gathering, urban green space while effectively managing stormwater.

Councilmember Poe stated that the City has a wonderful park structure, and it provides a great opportunity to collaborate with Northwest Neighbors and locate businesses to put amenities in place.

Ms. Pratt shared that City staff have meetings scheduled to discuss those opportunities.

Councilmember Poe asked for clarification on whether single-family housing development is referring to a HUD community to include critical services.
Ms. Pratt stated while there is currently a broad spectrum, the City would love to get to the point of being HUD walkable where all critical services are close.

**b. Comprehensive Housing Needs Update**

Ms. Pratt shared a presentation on the Comprehensive Housing Needs Update.

**Purpose of the Report**
- City funding of housing initiatives are aligned with housing needs
- Forecast emerging trends
- Inform discussions with developers and service providers

**Scope of the Report**
- Analyze demographic and economic characteristics of the City
- Review existing housing stock
- Review building permit trends
- Analyze market conditions for rental and for-sale housing products
- Assess the need for housing product by type

**Demographics**
- 2018 Estimates:
  - Population: 136,511
  - Households: 57,239
- Population Growth 2010-2025:
  - 8.4% in the Downtown Core Area
  - 8.7% in the City
- Household Projections:
  - 3,781 new households by 2025

**Residential New Construction**
- 4,725 housing units since 2010
- 1,012 housing units in Central Core
- By Quadrant:
  - NW: 918
  - SW: 1,985
  - NE: 1,429
  - SE: 401
Rental Housing
- Overall vacancy rate of 2.1%
- Market Rate
  - Rents increased by 2-3% over the year
- Shallow Subsidy
  - Vacancy rate of 1.8%
  - Existing properties are mostly full or have wait lists
- Deep Subsidy
  - Typically lengthy waiting lists
  - Demand for larger unit types
- Cost Burden
  - 19% of renters spend 50% or more of their income on rent

For Sale Housing
- Market activity indicators are all trending in a positive direction
  o Number of homes sold
    ▪ 3,333 in 2017
    ▪ 3,128 in 2018 (Nov)
  o Average resale price
    ▪ $163,820 in 2017
    ▪ $164,820 in 2018
  o Time on the market
    ▪ 56 days in 2017
    ▪ 43 days in 2018
- Construction costs continue to rise
• Home inventory is down  
  o Decreased resales  
  o New construction has not kept pace with demand  
• Rising prices increases competitiveness  
  o Pushes some buyers out of the market  
• Down payment assistance and grant funding could help move buyers into the market  
  o Product must be available

General-Occupancy Housing Demand

![General-Occupancy Demand by Type](image1.png)

Senior Housing Demand

![Senior Housing Demand by Type](image2.png)

Affordable Housing - Recommendations

• Standard Urban Housing Economic Development Incentives (10-year, 100%)
• Promote new housing products allowed in the updated Zoning Code  
  o Accessory Dwelling Units  
  o Mixed-use Districts allow 2nd story housing  
• Market opportunities for new subdivisions
- Partner with the Neighborhood Finance Corporation
- Support downpayment assistance program and non-profit housing providers (CDBG/HOME)
- Encourage Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects
- Development Action Plan with Affordable Housing Commission

Strategies not recommended at this time:
- Inclusionary zoning (ex: 10% of new units must be affordable to households below 50% or 80% of Area Median Income)
  - Over 50% of households can afford new rental units
  - 19% of renters are severely cost-burdened
- Restricting Urban Housing Economic Development Incentives

Timeline
- January  Affordable Housing Commission
- May 15    Downtown Housing Committee
  Development Committee
- May 28    City Council Presentation

Councilmember Hoeger shared that Cedar Rapids is on the map with certain developers in the country, and may be helpful to take this to the homebuilders group to demonstrate single-family housing needs.

Councilmember Vanorny asked what the desired average price point is, and for clarification on “marketing opportunities”.

Ms. Pratt shared that marketing opportunities refers to the land that is currently being served by infrastructure and utilities. For most subdivision development, the City already has what is required without subsidy. City staff will preview with the Development Committee to ensure that key talking points are understood.

Councilmember Vanorny asked how the City is marketing and explaining housing vouchers.

Ms. Pratt shared that the Family Self-Sufficiency Program aids in this process.

Councilmember Poe asked when an action plan might be available.

Ms. Pratt shared that the approximate target is by the end of the year.

Councilmember Poe asked how often the percentages for affordable housing are reviewed.

Ms. Pratt shared that this is completed annually as part of the Maxwell study.

3. Recommendation Items
   a. Property Disposition for property near 4th Ave & 2nd St SW

Lauren Freeman, Community Development Program Coordinator, shared a presentation on the property disposition for property near 4th Ave & 2nd St SW.

Background
- City staff received a request to initiate the standard competitive disposition process for 400 2nd Street SW and 207 & 217 4th Avenue SW
- 12,050 square feet of vacant City-owned property (3 parcels)
Under Chapter 32 - Zoning, this property is zoned as Urban Neighborhood General, which requires:
- Building height up to 6 stories high
- Parking setbacks
- Building location up to sidewalk

Development Objectives
- Financially viable redevelopment based on current market conditions
- Multi-story design of at least 2-stories
- Urban design that enhances the character of the neighborhood
- Coordination of parking needs with area property owners

Evaluation Criteria
1. Developer Capacity and Project Feasibility
   - Capacity, experience, and capability of the Developer
   - Market feasibility
   - Financial feasibility
   - Timeline for redevelopment and build-out

2. Community Benefit
   - Quality of architecture
   - Innovative sustainability features building design
   - Inclusion of housing options

3. Economic impact
   - Overall project investment
   - Jobs created or retained
   - Amenities or services provided
**Recommendation & Next Steps**

Staff recommends initiating the standard competitive disposition process:

- **May 28**: Resolution setting public hearing
- **June 11**: Public hearing and resolution inviting proposals
- **July 12**: 11:00 a.m. – Proposal Deadline
- **July 23**: City Council consideration of recommended proposal

Councilmember Vanorny asked if it is all single-family housing surrounding the property.

Ms. Freeman stated that it is zoned as Urban Neighborhood General.

Councilmember Vanorny encouraged a 360 design that utilizes roof space and utilizes land as efficiently as possible. Two-stories may not be enough, but six-stories seems high, as we do not want to overshadow homes in the area.

Councilmember Hoeger stated that depending on design, some of the homes might be under contract with the developer. If a two-story sits up higher and fits in nicely with the space, it would be the preference.

### 4. Updates

#### a. Projection Art Project

Eric Pate, Community Development Planner, shared a presentation on the projection art project. Projection art is gaining interest as a unique opportunity, and the Visual Arts Commission and Economic Alliance have discussed how to incorporate in Cedar Rapids. Market After Dark was identified as a great, high-visibility opportunity. The scale of the project is up for discussion, and could be as small to display in alleyways. Another suggestion is to install a permanent projector downtown for more frequent displays.

Councilmember Hoeger asked what the project budget is, and how it will be funded.

Mr. Pate shared that projection art costs can have multiple scales incorporated. The bottom range would be to obtain a commercially available projector, and artists’ fee could be approximately $2,000 for a larger scale version of projection art.

Councilmember Vanorny shared that she hopes to see more examples of placemaking, such as unique projection art, around the City that are unique and attract people.

Councilmember Poe asked if the Downtown SSMID would be assisting in funding the project, and for an update on a light canopy.

Mr. Pate shared that the Downtown SSMID has expressed interest and the permanent installation was their suggestion. The desired location discussed was the Guaranty Bank building.

Ms. Pratt shared that in regards to a light canopy, City staff are looking into what the requirements would be.
b. Czech Village/NewBo Area Action Plan

Adam Lindenlaub, Community Development Planner, shared a presentation on the Czech Village/NewBo Area Action Plan.

Project Timeline
- May 8th 2019 – Internal Kick-off with City Staff
- June 4th 2019 – Stakeholder Group Interviews
- June 5th 2019 – Visioning Workshop
- July 2019 – Design Workshop
- November/December 2019 – City Council Adoption

Internal Kick-off
- City staff met with consultant on May 8th to determine:
  - Existing conditions
    - Utilities
    - Streets and Right-of-way
    - Identify known and potential technical issues
  - Existing and planned development
  - Relevant local and national trends
  - Data Needs
Plan Focus
• Connectivity
  • Vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit
  • 8th Avenue Bridge
  • Smokestack Bridge
• Land Use
  • Density and intensity, City-owned property, greenway
• Streetscapes
  • Landscaping, lighting, amenities (i.e. 3rd Street)
  • Transition from NewBo to downtown
• Character
  • Building placement, location, height
• Placemaking
  • Gateways, archways, signage
  • Regional & national precedents

Visioning Workshop
• Stakeholder Interviews – June 4th
• 3-hour open house – June 5th
• Groups of 6 to 8
• SWOC Analysis

Design Workshop
• 3-Day Event
  • Consultant brings the design studio to Cedar Rapids
• Day 1
  • Morning Driving Tour
  • Concept Formulation
  • Public pin-up session
• Day 2
  • Refinement of concepts
  • Public pin-up session
• Day 3
  • Refinement of concepts
  • Public pin-up session

Advisory Group
• Role
  • Provide feedback
  • Preview public engagement activities
  • Encourage and advocate
• Member Entities
  • SSMID
  • NewBo Association
  • Oak Hill Jackson Neighborhood Association
  • Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street District
  • Czech Village Association
  • Southside Investment
Timeline

- May 8th 2019 – Internal Kick-off with City Staff
- June 4th 2019 – Stakeholder Group Interviews
- June 5th 2019 – Visioning Workshop
- July 2019 – Design Workshop
- November/December 2019 – City Council Adoption

Councilmember Vanorny shared that she would like to continue to see things to promote that Cedar Rapids is a college town and conceptualize unique events.

Councilmember Poe stated that in regards to building location, placement, and height, she would like to see historic elements included. Lighting up 3rd Street throughout downtown into NewBo would be an opportunity to highlight gateways and help them stand out.

c. City-Owned Infill Lots

Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner, shared a presentation on the City-owned infill lots.

Background

- Previous Update - January 2017
- Staff identified 82.9 acres of City Owned land for infill development
- Potential for between 500 and 3,000 housing units
- Approximately half of the land available for disposition today.

Since Last Update

Development

- Approximately 1 dozen property disposition processes initiated,
  - 180 units completed or currently under construction
  - Several other projects in negotiation or out for proposals.
- Increase in projects on private property

Planning

- Completion of the Northwest Neighborhood Plan
- Completion of ReZone Cedar Rapids
- Initiation of Czech NewBo Area Action Plan

Infrastructure

- FCS Construction, including Sinclair Levy and Czech Village Levy
- Acquisition and Planning for 6th St/Ellis Connection
- Paving for Progress
- Stormwater Master Plan

Background

- Available Land – Land that is located outside of the 100 year flood plain or located in a Viable Business Corridor
- Pending FCS Construction – Land available after construction of adjacent Flood Control System
- Pending FCS Completion – Deed restriction land not available until removed from flood plain after completion of Flood Control System
Councilmember Hoeger asked if a program similar to ROOTs could be considered or if they are unbuildable lots, looking at adjoining neighbors.

Ms. Pratt shared that the City is continuing to do that if it is deemed unbuildable. The reason a traditional, single family detached ROOTs approach does not work well in Ellis is because they are still in the 100-year flood plain. Row homes and some of the others have found a successful way alleviate that. Another possibility would be first floor retail that could be flood-proofed with housing on top. City staff are looking at other ways to promote and find ways to start programming green space.

Mr. Gunnerson shared that City Staff are interested in making smaller developers more aware of the range of projects and overcoming barriers.

Councilmember Hoeger shared that it will need to be a deeper incentive other than free land, and encouraged creativity.

Councilmember Vanorny shared that she would prefer to see more infill.

Ms. Pratt shared that there are some FEMA-required properties, and City staff will be going out to the public to refine greenway plans. FEMA dollars were used sparingly for approximately 100 properties.

Councilmember Poe asked for a status update on the 6th Street/Ellis construction.

Mr. Gunnerson shared the anticipated completion date will be in 2021 or 2022, and that the Public Works Department is actively working on the design.

Councilmember Poe asked if there is new interest in developing along Ellis.
Ms. Pratt shared that it is low hanging fruit and easier to build on. City staff will keep in contact with Council to make sure this is top of mind. The City will also continue to work with non-profits, cultivating smaller developers. At the end of the day, the question is how to offset the risk enough to make it attractive.

5. Public Comment

6. Future Discussion Items

Councilmembers Poe and Vanorny adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m. with unanimous consent. Respectfully submitted,

Jillane Gilmour, Administrative Assistant
Community Development