

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Time and Place: The Economic Development Committee met on Thursday, May 23, 2013 at 3:30 PM in the Board Room at City Hall, 407 Grant Street, Wausau

ED Members Present: Jim Brezinski (Chair), Romey Wagner (Vice-chair), Lisa Rasmussen, David Oberbeck, and William Nagle

Others Present: Heather Wessling, Maryanne Groat, Brad Marquardt, Brad Lenz, Anne Jacobson, Mayor Tipple, Nan Giese, Dawn Follendorf, Kathi Groeschel, Carla VanWagner, Mark Kordus

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Stats., notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. Brezinski noted there was a quorum and called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 PM.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Brezinski welcomed the members and those present for attending the meeting.

APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (4/10/13, 4/16/13)

Nagle motioned to approve the Economic Development Committee minutes for April 10, 2013 and April 16, 2013. Wagner seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION OF FOOD VENDOR ORDINANCE 5.62 SELLING ON PUBLIC STREETS

A draft of the ordinance and resolution was passed out the committee members. Groat said that the process is based on other communities and a task force was appointed which included 2 downtown business owners, director of Main Street, director of Wausau Events, 1 citizen member, 2 council members, and 2 mobile vendors. The different components were discussed. Staff allowed downtown and was changed to throughout the city to give flexibility. It would allow for 20 vendors. The 20 vendor's number was decided as the task force looked at supply and demand to make the right decision. There wasn't enough time to implement a jury process and wouldn't limit the amount vendors. Groat added that the committee worked well together and there was a lot of great thoughts and conversation.

Rasmussen said that the committee process was an exercise in consensus building in order to strike a great balance. The 2 models were 1 being a fixed location and 1 being a mobile location to add protection for brick and mortar businesses. There will be a 75 foot buffer area when the business is open. If the businesses will work together the buffer could be eliminated, with written approval. There was some give and take and this is a hybrid version of the two plans. Groat said there is a \$100 fee for 1 year license or \$75 fee for a 6 month license. Groat said that the annual license may be prorated. Rasmussen said that at this point, with the low number of vendors expressing interest at this time, there wouldn't be the need for the jury process at this time.

Brezinski thanked the committee for the assistance. Nagle added to keep it downtown would be great and that could be changed at a later time.

Karla VanWagner was that she has an issue with the 75 foot buffer as it seems excessive and there are a lot of spots that are not competitive. VanWagner suggested that a 50 foot buffer would be more reasonable. Rasmussen said that a GIS map was taken from the downtown area and does demark a large area, but can accept the buffer since the mobile vendors can get permission from restaurants and the buffer is only in effect when the restaurants are open.

Wagner asked Tyler Vogt what he thought about the buffer and Vogt answered that a 50 foot buffer would not keep a vendor from setting up across the street where a 75 foot buffer does. On the 400 Block, 8-10

carts will be able to be used. Wagner asked about the entrance to the mall. Vogt answered that the 75 foot buffer would apply and vendors would not be located in front of the mall when it is open.

VanWagner asked about the legality of protecting one business from and another citing an El Paso lawsuit. Jacobson said she hadn't researched that particular lawsuit. Groat said that there was the threat of a lawsuit because the buffer was 1,000 feet, which was reduced to a buffer of 100 feet. Rasmussen said the city does have the authority to manage the public right-of-way, but not private property.

Nagle motioned to approve the food vendor ordinance 5.62 Selling on Public Streets. Wagner seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

RECOMMEND AND TAKE ACTION ON AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE 5.63 SIDEWALK CAFES AND OTHER OBSTRUCTIONS WITHIN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

Jacobson said that the documents that were passed around do not reflect any recent changes. Rasmussen said the Public Health and Safety will hold a special session for this item, but the ordinance was given to the members. This would allow businesses hold a Class B liquor license to apply for a premise amendment to include their outdoor tables, but the applicant would need to have complete control of the premises and single-serving glass only would be allowed. On the 2nd to last page under revocation, it states that the Director of Public Works can suspend to obstruction permit when necessary and Rasmussen suggested that it should be changed to the Police Department being in charge of the enforcement and public health and safety deal with revocations, etc.

Groat said that because of the timing, all of the liquor licenses have already been approved, and asked to waive the \$150 fee for this year because the way it was introduced. Wagner said that either the fee should be paid or they should wait until next year. Rasmussen said she agrees it is not fair to have it amended for free.

Rasmussen motioned to amend Ordinance 5.63 Sidewalk Cafes and Other Obstructions within the Central Business District public right-of-way and to remove the Director of Public Works from the enforcement in lieu of public health and safety and the Wausau police department. Nagle seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

PROJECT UPDATE ON RIVERFRONT PROPERTY

Werth said that staff has been working Stantec and have received a \$200,000 EPA Grant. Recently the city has received 2 more grants and will be announced soon. A creek is currently in a culvert that is falling apart. Lenz showed some visuals of what Stantec had come up with. When the culvert is eliminated, 1 ½ acre of the floodplain area will also be removed and will be part of the site. There will be access to the road. A continuous waterfall will be in the stream.

Wagner asked if the water will be pumped. Mark Kordus from Stantec, answered it would be pumped because of the contaminated site to clean up going beyond 1st Street costs end up as a wash. The shallow stream will have nice aesthetics. There are two different options for the contaminated soil, it could remain onsite or move to a special landfill at a fairly high cost. By keeping the dirt, it will save \$500,000. Kordus said that future developers could always take it off site. Brezinski asked how that waterfall will be managed. Kordus answered that 6" of top soil will be seeded and mulched for features on the north end. Werth added that 1 or 2 buildable sites may be used for businesses and parking lots can be used to service the buildings. Marquardt said that the sanitary sewer mains will be extended through the area will be part of the project.

Nagle asked what the cost of the project is. Werth answered \$1.2 million. Groat said the Hammerblow is not included. Mark said that \$200,000 is covered in the grant with a possible planning grant. Mark said the research and studies will be 100% funded.

Werth said this is a major and exciting process and went over the timeline. Groat added that the timing is not perfect for the bond schedule. There is no obligation with Holtz-Krause for the maintenance fund. Since it is another environmental project the fund could be used either long-term or short-term. TID #3

district could also be used to offset the costs. The capacity of TID #3 could be increased or another TID district could be created. Nagle added that the Holtz-Krause money should be used. Rasmussen asked about the cost to maintain the soccer field. Groat said there will be \$400,000 left in the fund for the future monitoring and in the future the fund will be replenished. Rasmussen said it would be nice to have the cushion just in case something unexpected happens at the soccer site. Brezinski asked about the ATC money from the county. Lenz answered that they are looking at that right now for the River Edge Trail, in addition to an assessment grant. Kordus said the WEDC has a grant for eliminating blight if a development commits to the site.

Nagle motioned to advise staff to move forward, seek funding, and to use the Holtz-Krause fund. Wagner seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

RECOMMEND PROPOSAL FOR CITY WIDE URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

Lenz said the proposal was included in the packets. The RFP was sent and 10 firms answered to develop design standards for the city. All the proposals were good and 3 companies were selected. 1 was from Milwaukee and 2 were from the Minneapolis area and staff agreed that Graef was best. Graef had the lowest cost and highest quality. Wessling added that they worked with other developers and developments. Nagle asked what they would be specifically be doing. Lenz said that the site and building procedures will be reviewed for the city of Wausau. The landscaping guidelines regarding the strictness and requirements will be reviewed. Groat said that one Walgreens from the next can be so different with the type of amenities. Oberbeck said that this is where we should be moving to set the bar.

Nagle said he is very impressed with the proposal and this is what we need in the city to be unique and to be a magnet.

Oberbeck motioned to recommend the proposal for City Wide Urban Design Standards. Nagle seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

RECOMMEND AND TAKE ACTION TO RETIRE “WELCOME HOME WAUSAU” AND ADOPT THE CITYSCAPE LOGO AS THE OFFICIAL LOGO FOR THE CITY OF WAUSAU

Groeschel said the resolution lays out the timeline that led up to this point. A year ago the Community Development Department had asked for a preliminary design to enhance their efforts. A task force was designed to create and utilize the colors for the cityscape logo. The logo has been subtly introduced on mugs, signs in the business park, and other items and staff have received favorable remarks and comments. The current logo was adopted by the council in 1993. Wessling said that the logo sells the city and we need a strong message. The logo will be accepted and protected. Groeschel said we have received many positive comments. Groeschel said that Mayor Tipple had suggested that the increase to 4 newsletters be implemented in addition to the new logo for a fresh, clean look. Wausau is a small community, but is positioned for some very big things. Rasmussen said she loves the logo and it gives Wausau an identity and is very powerful.

Mayor Tipple said it has been a long road and request to phase in the new logo. This will give the city marketing advantages and many people are impressed with the cutting edge look. Staff did a great job. Groeschel added that there will be a logo policy to keep its integrity. Nagle said the logo is very versatile.

Rasmussen motion to retire “Welcome Home Wausau” and adopt the cityscape logo as the official logo for the City of Wausau. Nagle seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

RECOMMEND PROPOSAL FOR A CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN FOR THE THOMAS STREET CORRIDOR

Marquardt said that it has been previously discussed to get a proposal to look at the transportation and economic development and the cost was just under \$60,000. There will be no additional cost to the project. ACOM was not able to come to the meeting for a presentation due to a family incident. Marquardt said he is comfortable with the proposal. When ACOM was hired in 2006, there were hired to for a 5-lane section. With this RVP, they would reevaluate different sections for 4 or 5 lanes. Oberbeck said it is not what he

expected and wants more of an Urban Development Plan like was discussed earlier. Oberbeck said it should be made to be livable and a walkable environment. Rasmussen said she is a fan of having a firm plan, but is not a fan of spending 6 figures. Rasmussen said she is happy with what Marquardt has brought to the committee and wants to do the planning in house. Nagle said a traffic study is not necessary. The goal should not be to move traffic, but to create a great neighborhood. Nagle agreed with Oberbeck that he wants a plan like was discussed earlier. Nagle said that a redevelopment plan is necessary. Rasmussen said it is taking too long and the property owners need answers. Rasmussen said we don't have the luxury of time because we have already spent 10 years. Wagner said the people are blaming us, not the past council. The bridge is too small for the traffic. Wagner said he cannot picture this as a 4 or 5-lane road and said the decision needs to be based on what the right decision for the neighborhood is.

Wessling said the economic data portion of the project should be done. There is a lot untapped buying power in this area. Wessling informed the committee of studies done in St. Louis and how it has impacted the community socially. The drill down method is so much better because it shows what is needed. Thomas Street has the diversity for more neighborhood stores. There needs to be a more developed plan for Thomas Street to indicate what the best use for the area is. Oberbeck said we need to have a vision, especially when gas prices keep climbing and is changing the way people operate. This neighborhood could be a central place in Wausau by creating unique spots with an urban plan. Brezinski said that we need a plan in a timely and cost effective manner. Council ranks have different opinions and need more discussion to see what is needed to move forward. Groat added that the city would be going in the right direction by have the study done. Brezinski asked if it is worth spending the money.

Oberbeck said that 17th Avenue is a 4-lane highway that's divided and we need to help out businesses by having an urban plan. Businesses need to be nearby for the neighbors. Rasmussen said since the committee and council is split on this issue, she doesn't see how a Committee of the Whole meeting could be beneficial. Rasmussen said the committee should vote for the drill down study. Mayor Tipple said the staff should come up with an economic development plan. The project has been on hold since 2004. Brezinski said the division of the committee needs to be eliminated and get rid of the road blocks. We need some sort of plan in place.

Groat said that the master plan is needed to proceed with a drill down. Rasmussen said if the costs that exceed the budget it needs to be sent back to council. Brezinski asked if the master plan is cost effective. Oberbeck asked how Thomas Street affects the businesses and what is needed for the residents and asked to create a model neighborhood to include public input. Jacobson recommended that the issue gets tabled until she reviews the legal information.

Oberbeck motioned to table the issue. Nagle seconded that the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Rasmussen advised that it should move faster than the next meeting.

NEXT AGENDA ITEMS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TIF GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The next meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. on June 18.

UPDATE(S) ON APPROVED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Werth said that there will be some great opportunities in the near future for Wausau.

ADJOURN

Wagner motioned adjourn. Nagle seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Jim Brezinski