

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Time and Place: The Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, June 18, 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 (arrived at 3:40 p.m.)

Others Present: Heather Wessling, Ann Werth, Owen Jones, Gwen Paul, Tracey Peterson

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 (5/23/13)

Rasmussen said that Paragraph 2 of needed to be corrected and other areas and Wessling said she would take care of that. Wagner motioned to approve the Economic Development Committee minutes for May 23, 2013 with the condition that the corrections are made. Rasmussen seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

APPROVE COMMERCIAL REHAB PROJECT USING CDBG FUNDING CONSIDERATION FOR 325 JEFFERSON STREET

Wessling showed the photographs of the current building and with the proposed façade renovations.

Jones said that the building will be part of a real estate office and the remaining space will be leased out. Jones said they wanted to stay with a façade that is historically accurate, but also something that helps balance the awkward nature of the building. Jones showed a current image of the building and said the doors do not balance. All of the windows will be replaced. Costs are anticipated to be approximately \$50,000-\$60,000, which includes energy efficient items and a potential roof. When the commercial inspection was done, the inspector said the attic is not adequate for today's standards.

Wessling said the Historic Preservation Commission approved the architectural façade. This is on the agenda today to determine if it is a suitable project or not. Rasmussen said she is excited about this project.

Rasmussen motioned to approve the commercial rehab project using CDBG funding consideration for 325 Jefferson Street. Wagner seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Nagle arrived at 3:40 p.m.

APPROVE COMMERCIAL REHAB PROJECT USING CDBG FUNDING CONSIDERATION FOR 530 GRANT STREET

Wessling introduced the Peterson and said that Peterson recently bought 530 Grant Street and plans to renovate it. Some of the bushes have been cut down and said this is mainly a restoration project.

Peterson said that this building was purchased for her Compass Counseling business and she plans on opening at this location at the end of September. The building will go through a complete interior and exterior renovation including landscaping.

Werth said this is a contributing property located at the corner of 6th Street and Grant. She said that she is excited about this new business and new life this will bring to the neighborhood. This is a very good candidate for the commercial rehab project.

Wagner asked if there will be sufficient parking for the business. Peterson said that a parking lot will be rented from the church and there are 6 spots on the property for parking.

Nagle commended Peterson for what she is doing. Brezinski said the inside of the building is lovely. Peterson said that \$35,000 in order to complete all the work on the property. The total investment, with City funds, is approximately \$150,000.

Rasmussen motioned to approve the commercial rehab project using CDBG funding consideration for 530 Grant Street. Nagle seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

STRATEGY TO PLACE ARTWORK IN GATEWAY ENTRANCES IN THE CITY

Brezinski said that he has been in contact with Dr. Prehn, who has lined up some potential funding from various foundations for artwork in the gateway entrances of the city. Brezinski said he would like to make arrangements for Dr. Prehn to speak to the committee. Rasmussen said artwork is key. Brezinski said that the idea came from Sioux Falls, SD. Nagle said that the lumberjack heritage could be included in the artwork.

DISCUSSION ON ED MEETING SCHEDULED WITH THE COUNTY TO SUPPORT WAYFINDING AND WAUSAU ED GOALS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 24TH AT 4:30 PM

Wessling said the Economic Development Commission members are invited to attend a meeting at the county for a presentation of the wayfinding project. Marathon County is expected to put \$25,000 towards the study. It is suitable to be present to start the process and to align goals. Brezinski said it is all part of a bigger idea of coordinating the efforts.

Werth said that there have been talks with manufacturing companies about expansions. There is no one taking advantage of the Commercial Rehab program. The Jones building is the last vacant downtown building after 4 years. Oberbeck said there is the perception that Eau Claire, Milwaukee, and Madison are moving forward, but Wausau is not. Groat added those are college towns. Nagle said Wausau doesn't have a voice. Wagner said that Wausau is a crossroads of Wisconsin, but people still going past us. Wagner asked where are the 40-60 jobs going and suggested that nobody is talking with each other. Marathon County and the City seem to work against each other and not as a combined force. Werth added that when staff takes someone to a site, they are taken to sites within the county, not just Wausau. Wagner said the outlying area is an 80,000 people metropolis. Werth said it needs to be marketed as such. Oberbeck said there needs to be collaboration. Rasmussen said trade shows were discussed during the last meeting and said that there is so much land mass in Marathon County. There is a very qualified staff to market Wausau. Wagner said that the city does not budget any money to market Wausau. Rasmussen said there is a large tax base in the community that needs to be put back to work. Wagner said that money should be budgeted for Community Development. We need to take a clear look at how much money is needed to attract the businesses. Werth said Groat has been working to fund Wessling's position through TIF.

Brezinski said he hopes that everyone will be able to attend the meeting. Oberbeck said there is not a clear definition of what the committee wants to do and this committee needs to focus on development, what the expectations are, and put a budget and strategy together to present to the county. Oberbeck said the walking path in the industrial park needs to be discussed. Groat said it is the plan for 2014 to spend money for the walking path. Oberbeck said there needs to be a return on investment. Groat said that the walking path will be an additional amenity and is always being requested.

Wagner asked why Crystal Finishing chose Mosinee. Werth suggested that Weather Shield owned the property and offered an acceptable price. Wagner said there isn't any money in the budget for Economic Development. Brezinski said there is a history of antagonistic behavior between the city and the county and the committee discussed this.

Werth said that one of the most valuable pieces of property in the industrial park is owned by the county and a potential buyer was told they could not afford to buy the property. Werth said that we need to work together to bring in the tax base. Nagle said that is why the county should not be running Economic Development and the committee discussed this.

Brezinski said that the committee needs to bring specific examples for discussion. Oberbeck said the committee needs to talk about the future, the goals, how to increase value, and what is the best way to assist Wausau and the metro areas. Brezinski added that the committee needs to be clear with the goals.

Wessling said that the wayfinding initiative started with the city. It is proven that there is a return on investment for wayfinding. Over half of the attractions are in Wausau. Rasmussen asked if \$25,000 would be for the study. Groat asked why \$25,000 is the amount. Wessling said that is all they are willing to contribute. Greenheck is being asked to assist with \$50,000 for the study, but that has not been finalized yet. Rasmussen asked if the \$300,000 is for the signs themselves. Wessling said that is the cost for the signs and the study. The money is ready to go. Brezinski said the committee needs a game plan and hopes that everyone will be able to attend.

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

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

The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. It was clarified that any new agenda items can be sent to Sara in Community Development.

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

There weren't any updates.

ADJOURN

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

Respectfully Submitted,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson
Jim Brezinski