

City of Merrill
Redevelopment Authority (RDA)

Tuesday, May 5th, 2015 at 8:00 A.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

RDA Present: Bill Bialecki, Ryan Schwartzman, Karen Karow, Wally Smith,
Jill Laufenberg, and Amanda Kostman

RDA Absent: None – David Hayes has resigned

Others: Tony Kusserow whose appointment as RDA Commissioner is pending,
Alderpersons Dave Sukow and Tim Meehan, City Administrator Dave
Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Finance Director Kathy Unertl,
Ken Maule from Lincoln County Economic Development Corp., Mike
Morrissey and Mary Rajek from Redevelopment Resources, City Building
Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, Tonia Speener from Clark Dietz,
Dean Fenske from AECOM, Linda Berlin and Tom Curran

Call to Order: Chair Bialecki called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Public Comment: None.

Approval of meeting minutes from March 31st and April 21st, 2015:

Motion (Schwartzman/Smith) to approve the meeting minutes. Carried.

Update on pending Wisconsin Legislation related to TIF Study Committee:

Unertl advised that there are various TIF-related bills pending. Proposed adjustments of Merrill TID boundaries and TID Plans will be pursued after State legislature acts. Laufenberg asked about timing. Unertl reported that if before 9/30/2015, the January 1st, 2015 assessed valuations are used. After 9/30/2015, the 2016 assessed valuations are used.

Status Update on Idle Sites grant activities (TID No. 9):

City is still waiting for signed grant agreement from Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. (WEDC). Unertl and Johnson highlighted recent purchase by the River Bend Foundation/City of Merrill of former Wisconsin Public Service property just east of the North Center Avenue bridge (including metal building). Karow asked if this is going to be Rotary Park. Johnson confirmed that there will be recommendation from River Bend Foundation to name this trailhead off South Park Street. The other street improvement and trailhead will be off South Kyes Street. Clark Dietz has been hired by River Bend Foundation for designing/engineering services.

Follow-up on Downton Vision Plan potential implementation:

Chamber/Downtown Business Group List -

A list of items supported by Chamber/Downtown business group was reviewed. The items include implementation of angle parking on East Main Street; City purchase of former Guy's Shop and development as "pocket park"; removing poles and overhead electrical lines behind East Main Street businesses and in alleys between East Main Street and East 1st Street; and repaving the City public parking lot west of Trophy Bar.

Kostman strongly recommended the angle parking for more spots and to slow people down. Laufenberg asked about safety in backing up. Mike Morrissey reported that City of Stevens Point Police noted fewer accidents after angle parking implemented. Schwartzman noted that UPS and Federal Express currently double park which will no longer be possible. Smith asked about plowing snow to the middle. Johnson advised that snow will be pushed to the sides.

Motion (Smith/Karow) to recommend to the Board of Public works that angle parking be implemented on three blocks of East Main Street (i.e. from Courtside Furniture to Cosmo Theatre/public parking lot). Carried.

Board of Public Works potential curb/paving project -

Mayor Bialecki advised that the Board of Public Works on April 29th supported obtaining bids for repaving of City parking lot #3 and Scott and Cleveland Streets between East Main St. and East 1st St. Johnson highlighted proposed landscaping and new curbing for the parking lot west of Trophy Bar.

Motion (Schwartzman/Karow) to recommend obtaining concrete and paving project bids for parking lot #3 and one-block sections of Scott and Cleveland streets (i.e. between E. Main St. and E. 1st St.). Carried.

Potential implementation feasibility and costs for downtown wireless (requested by RDA Commissioner Laufenberg) -

RDA Commissioners reviewed proposed wireless equipment, licensing, and systems engineering cost estimate of about \$25,000 that had been provided by City Information Technology Manager Ron Turner. Turner will be requested to attend the next RDA meeting to provide more information and answer questions (such as lifespan, annual operating costs, coverage range, and relationship to potential fiber infrastructure).

Discussion of additional potential implementation steps -

Schwartzman and Johnson advised that Scott Voigt is now supporting City purchase of the former Guy's Shop parcel and development of "pocket park". Kostman emphasized

Discussion of additional potential implementation steps (Continued) -

that this vacant lot is really not a feasible new building site due to the drop off. Unertl suggested that this could be a potential site for small water feature instead of Streeter Square as proposed in the Downtown Vision Plan. RDA Commissioners noted that individuals would have different appreciation levels for the view of the WPS dam and Wisconsin River. Johnson advised that the River Bend Foundation would be installing signage along the trail related to the history of hydro-power generation.

Smith asked how long before the City would improve the property. Mayor Bialecki recommended obtaining more detailed cost estimates for the “pocket park” and including in 2016 TID No. 6 budget request.

The next RDA meeting will include formal agenda item considering purchase of the former Guy’s Shop parcel from Lincoln Community Bank.

Next RDA meeting: Tuesday, June 2nd at 8:00 a.m. Unertl reported that there could be two development agreements for RDA consideration.

Closed Session: Bialecki read the following notice:

The RDA may convene in closed session per Wis. Stats. Sec.19.85(1)(e) - deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session to consider: Potential property acquisitions to facilitate redevelopment opportunities in TID No. 6 (Downtown) and Tax Increment District No. 9 (Wisconsin River area)

Motion (Schwartzman/Smith) to move into closed session. Carried on roll call vote at 8:40 a.m. There was no discussion related to properties in TID No. 9.

Extensive discussion of delinquent tax parcels located in TID No. 6. There is lease revenue going to the current property owner/business owner; however, the 2007 through 2014 property taxes are delinquent and Lincoln County has not foreclosed. City is unable to disconnect utility service under Wisconsin Public Service Commission regulations. For 2014, almost \$2,000 in delinquent utilities was placed as special charges on tax roll.

City representatives will request meeting with Lincoln County Forestry Committee who has policy oversight related to delinquent tax properties.

Adjournment: Motion (Smith/Schwartzman) to adjourn. Carried at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes prepared by RDA Secretary Kathy Unertl