

City of Merrill
Redevelopment Authority (RDA)

Tuesday, August 2nd, 2016 at 8:00 A.M.
City Hall Common Council Chambers

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

RDA Absent: None

Others: Alderperson Paul Russell, City Administrator Dave Johnson,
Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Public
Works Director Rod Akey, Mary Rajek and Mike Morrissey from
Redevelopment Resources, Ken Maule from Lincoln County
Economic Development Corp. (LCEDC), Dave Sukow, Mike Fick
from Fick Bricks LLC, and Pat Karabowski from Whispering Pines

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

Public Comment: None.

Consider approval of meeting minutes:

Motion (Laufenberg/Smith) to approve the RDA meeting minutes from July 5th, 2016. Carried.

Update on meeting compensation for Redevelopment Authority Commissioners:

The Common Council on July 12th standardized compensation at \$15.00 per meeting for citizen members serving on City commissions, committees, or boards. Previously some members were receiving no compensation (such as RDA), some \$7.50 per meeting, and others \$15.00 per meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer staff will provide paperwork to RDA Commissioners whom are not receiving compensation from serving on other City commissions, committees, or boards. Unertl advised that individuals may decline to be paid.

Consider Change Order No. 1 – Additional investigation and groundwater monitoring services – former Modern Cleaners (806 N. Center Ave. – TID No. 7):

Dean Fenske from AECOM has advised that the on-going efforts to close out the environmental work will take an additional \$7,000 over the 2014 contract which was for \$40,395. Unertl advised that another closure request had been submitted to Wisconsin DNR in February 2016.

Consider Change Order No. 1 – former Modern Cleaners (Continued):

Karow asked how much City funding had gone into the environmental work. Unertl estimated that the total will be under \$25,000. Eventually, there should be State reimbursement from the Dry Cleaners Remediation Fund (DERF) for the current monitoring and closeout efforts.

Hayden and Unertl recalled this project starting in about 2004 for hazardous materials testing and building demolition/disposal through a Site Assessment Grant (SAG), after Lincoln County delinquent tax foreclosure. Then, there was Wisconsin for Reuse Grant funding for excavation under the former building, contaminated soil disposal, and installation/ analysis of monitoring wells. Then, there was expanded grant funding for vapor intrusion investigation which determined no public health vapor issues.

Motion (Schwartzman/Karow) to authorize Change Order No. 1 for up to \$7,000 (TID No. 7 – North Center Ave.). Carried.

Consider request for potential TIF assistance to rehab 2410 State Rd. 107 (former Rockies Bar) which would require creation of new Tax Increment District:

Unertl reported that there has been verbal request from Mike Fick through Ken Maule from Lincoln County Economic Development Corp. for potential TIF grant assistance.

The property is currently not in a Tax Increment District. Unertl emphasized that it would not be possible to either expand TID No. 5 nor TID No. 11 to include this property due to several properties that in the Town of Merrill, as well as State TID acreage limitations for Mixed-Use TIDs. It could be possible to create a new “blighted” area TID for this property; however, that would be a multi-month process.

Mike Fick commented that he is seeking possible TIF assistance for architectural services and plans on rehabilitation of the existing building. This is a 2.7 acre site that Fick Bricks LLC purchased in mid-July. Karow asked “but for TIF” what would Fick do? Fick responded that rehab would be slower process.

Schwartzman suggested requesting potential façade loan from the Community Development Committee which would be at 2% - 3% interest.

There was no action taken by the Redevelopment Authority.

Status update on 2016 capital projects and developments:

Unertl added the following information to her written update that was distributed with the RDA meeting agenda:

TID No. 3 – City now owns the vacant lot at 2606 E. Main St. and will be closing by mid-August on the tan house at 2604 E. Main St. Due to pending potential manufacturing developments, Mayor Bialecki has requested deferring any further action on Whispering Pines potential mobile home relocations and property acquisitions.

Status update on 2016 capital projects and developments (Continued):

TID No. 6 – Merrill FotoNews will be highlighting the Merrill Area Housing Authority's plans for the former fire station area.

TID No. 8 – Akey reported that REI is conducting additional soil borings on the proposed Nelson Power House new development site.

In response to question about timing from Karow, Johnson advised that the former Lincoln Community Bank bubble building should be demolished in late September. Once the City owns the vacant property, Bialecki added that it is the City's intent to lease the property to the Merrill Area Housing Authority for construction staging and parking during the Park Place redevelopment project.

TID No. 9 – Besides more advantageous construction prices for larger-scale infrastructure projects and spring bidding timeframe, Unertl reported that there is pending City Stewardship grant application to Wisconsin DNR for the River Bend Trail expansion. If construction is started, the project would be ineligible for potential DNR grant funding.

Next RDA meeting: Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 6th at 8:00 a.m.

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 acquisition to facilitate redevelopment opportunities in Tax Increment District No. 8 (West Side Area)

Motion (Schwartzman/Laufenberg) to move to closed session. Motion carried 7-0 on roll call vote at 8:30 a.m.

There was discussion on above item.

Adjournment: Motion (Schwartzman/Karow) to adjourn at 8:38 a.m. Carried.

Minutes prepared by RDA Secretary Kathy Unertl