



City of Five Seasons®

City of Cedar Rapids

Development Committee Meeting Agenda

City Hall Training Room

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Purpose of Development Committee:

To enable the City Council to discuss and evaluate in greater detail these specific issues that directly impact the physical, social, and economic vibrancy of the City of Cedar Rapids.

City Council Committee Members:

Council member Monica Vernon, Chair

Council member Pat Shey

Council member Susie Weinacht

- Mayor Ron Corbett is an ex-officio member of all Council Committees per City Charter Section 2.06.

Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes – October 15, 2014

- Presentations:

1. City Planning Commission Work Plan
Scott Overland, Chair
Seth Gunnerson
Community Development
2. Visual Arts Commission Work Plan
Bill Stamats, Chair
Seth Gunnerson
Community Development
3. Historic Preservation Commission Work Plan
Amanda McKnight-Grafton, Chair
Anne Russett
Community Development

- Recommendation Items:

1. Communication Tower
Jeff Hintz
Community Development
2. Administrative Plan
Sara Buck
Community Development Housing

- Informational Items:

1. Low Income Housing Tax Credits
Paula Mitchel
Community Development

- Public Comment



**City of Cedar Rapids
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
City Hall Training Room
Wednesday, October 15, 2014
4:00PM**

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

Present: Council members Vernon (Chair), Weinacht, and Shey. Staff members present: Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Paula Mitchel, Community Development Grant Programs Manager; Caleb Mason, Community Development Housing Redevelopment Analyst; Jeff Hintz, Community Development Planner; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; Lynda Bolin, interim Community Development Administrative Assistant.

Council Chair Vernon called for a motion to approve the minutes from September 24, 2014. Council member Weinacht made a motion to approve the minutes and Council member Shey seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

Presentations:

1. Greene Square Renovations

Daniel Gibbins, Parks and Recreation, gave opening remarks as to the historic value of the Greene Square area. Greene Square was plotted in 1843 for the use as a park/plaza for the City of Cedar Rapids. Two years ago the stakeholders group was formed, looking at Greene Square for its historical value to the City. With this in mind, the stakeholders investigated and looked at ideas to renovate Greene Square to make it “the core of downtown to the residential neighborhood”. Stakeholders meet every two weeks.

Bradd Brown, OPN Architects, presented the design and what Greene Square means to the community with input by the city, stakeholders, and public.

The integrity of the park will be maintained incorporating in the design the old trees that have been there, some over 100 years. There are five areas of outreach, 1) water feature, 2) flowers and trees, 3) seating areas, 4) interactive and playful, and 5) to make this a vibrant and useful area by the community.

Areas of concern that are being address are the need for better lighting, more seating, year around usage, open areas for activities, and keeping the historical value.

Mr. Brown presented slides of the Holiday Tree and how the water features could be covered for the winter using decorative balls that can be colored and lit by using the LED lights that would also light and color the water features. This would have two folds, 1) it would have an appealing look to the park and 2) this would also provide more light within the park offering the ability for more evening use. New seating areas in and around the park will offer gathering areas or a quiet area to relax and an open space to have group activities. Greene Square is also a connecting point bringing together the core of downtown to the residential neighborhood by keeping the historical diagonal walkway. It is also the center point for the library and museum.

This is a public/private funded project of \$1.95 million budget. To date there is \$1.75million with fundraisers to continue. Linn County is interested in sponsoring the sculptures for Greene Square. This shows the wonderful support of the community and the city government.

City Manager, Jeff Pomeranz arrived at 4:28 p.m.

Council was pleased with the design understanding this is phase one. Mr. Brown will contact contractors to get bids for spring construction.

Ms. Pratt stated the City is working on an Iowa Great Places Grant, she will keep council updated

Council member Weinacht made a motion to move forward. Council member Shey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

Recommendation Items:

1. Interim Zoning Amendments

Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner, stated there are three areas that would work with the existing zoning ordinance more into alignment with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. They are, 1) Eliminate front yard setbacks in commercial districts, 2) expand core area parking standards, and 3) set site design expectations to guide development prior to full update of the zoning code.

- Recommendations are to eliminate the 25' front yard building setback requirement in all Commercial Districts and to recommend allowing buildings which provide a public entrance to the sidewalk to encroach into required front yard landscaping. Developer feedback is positive.
- Expand Core Area Parking standards by establishing parking maximums and allowing for reduction of minimum parking by 1) expand establishing parking maximums, 2) allowing reductions in minimum parking requirements, and 3) allow approval of tandem parking for existing one and two-family homes. Developer feedback is positive.
- Site Design Expectations would be to adopt a language which would emphasize the desire of the community for new development to be oriented towards the street with

pedestrian access and which minimizes the visual appearance of parking. Developer feedback is positive.

Council member Shey stated he would like to see more use of bus subsidizing for employees vs. creating more parking. Council member Vernon asked about a code requiring trees when a parking lot was of a certain size or if you do some building or rebuilding you would have to insert trees into the parking area. Ms. Pratt will look into the code and the requirements.

Council member Shey made a motion for recommendation. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

Informational Items:

1. Review of LIHTC Project

Paula Mitchell, Community Development Housing and Redevelopment Manager, stated there were initially three applications for Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Projects asking for financial assistance from the City. However, two of those requests were subsequently withdrawn due to financing and site control issues. Therefore, there is only one applicant moving forward this year.

Ms. Mitchell stated the remaining proposed project is requesting a resolution of support and City financial participation for “Sonoma Square Senior Living” located on land owned by the City at Ellis Boulevard and J Avenue NW. The project proposes new construction of a 50-unit multi-family senior housing development in the Ellis Boulevard Viable Business Corridor. Units will be primarily one and two-bedroom, with a small number of four-bedroom units. Rents range from \$520 to \$925 for affordable units. The total project costs are \$7.8 million and the developer is seeking City-owned land and financial participation of \$453,500. This project did receive City support in the previous year’s LIHTC round, but was not allocated tax credits by the Iowa Finance Authority.

Ms. Mitchell stated the potential sources of funding may be available include City land, Workforce Housing Credits, Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption, Tax Increment Financing, and low interest loans. The staff will make recommendations for the financial request at the November 19, 2014, meeting.

Council member Vernon expressed interest to ensure that the design of the building meets the City’s Overlay District standards and is requesting they look at a design that would best enhance the neighborhood. Ms. Pratt suggested talking with the Developer and the Neighborhood Association asking for their input on the design of the building as well. Ms. Mitchell noted that this is a preview of the project and that staff will return with specific recommendations in November, after working with the Developer and neighborhood stakeholders.

2. Indian Creek Nature Center

Caleb Mason, Community Development Redevelopment Analyst, stated the City has received a request for the Indian Creek Nature Center (ICNC) to purchase approximately 78 acres of City property that they are currently leasing located north of Otis Road SE and west of Bertram Road SE. The Nature Center has managed the property since their establishment in 1973. In 2001, the City and the Nature Center renewed a lease agreement for an additional 50 year term at \$1.00 yearly rent. The lease can be terminated by material breach of the terms of the lease or intention to terminate four (4) years after written notice.

Mr. Mason stated the Nature Center can only use the property for environmental education, non-obtrusive recreation, preservation, restoration, protection and enhancement of the land in its natural scenic, historical, agricultural, and/or open space condition. Habitat manipulations such as: prescribed burns, managing walking/hiking trails, energy and resource conservation demonstrations. The City is to approve any plans for the construction of any facilities on the site. ICNC is to maintain the property.

Mr. Mason stated the Nature Center began discussion in summer 2014 regarding plans to expand operations through the construction of facilities and improvements through a project known as "Amazing Space". The \$5.9 million project involves the construction of a 12,000 square foot facility. To-date they have raised in excess of \$5 million of the project through a capital campaign and intend to break ground on the project in the spring of 2015.

Mr. Mason stated there were still several variables that needed to be looked into such as the circumstances surrounding the City's acquisition of the property and potential limitations on the reuse of the property. ICNC wants to purchase this land not only to build on but to protect their investment. This presentation is preliminary so the committee can start thinking about the sale and usage of this property to ICNC.

The committee would be interested in further discussion; the Nature Center has been a really good partner with the City for many years.

Committee members questioned where the current barn is located and where the new building(s) will be built. Committee member Vernon is requesting a site plan to help the committee better visualize where the buildings, parking lots, and trails would be located. Also request is a breakdown of what the city has put into that piece of land and what ICNC has put in as far as investment to make this proposal fair for everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Bolin, Interim Administrative Assistant II
Community Development



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City Hall
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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Seth Gunnerson, Community Development
Vern Zakostelecky, Development Services
Subject: 2015 City Planning Commission Work Plan
Date: November 19, 2014

This memo is to provide a summary of the City Planning Commission's 2015 Work Plan (attached). Following review by the Development Committee it will be reviewed by City Council.

The City Planning Commission (CPC) is a body required by State statute to review and make recommendations to the City Council on matters related to the zoning ordinance. This includes land development applications, such as rezoning and preliminary plats, along with amendments to the zoning ordinance.

The Development Services Department works with the CPC on reviewing and presenting Land Development cases, while the Community Development Department continues to work with the CPC on code and policy updates.

In 2015, adoption of EnvisionCR, the City's Comprehensive Plan is anticipated. Staff and the CPC will work together to ensure review of new development is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Charge:

The City Planning Commission (CPC) is a nine member commission appointed by the Mayor of the City of Cedar Rapids. The Commission was established by City Code to review and make recommendations to the City Council on various land development issues including proposed City comprehensive plans, zoning regulations, requests for the rezoning of land, site development plans, conditional use requests, and subdivision of land.

Goals and Objectives for 2015:

- Assist in Developing a Sustainable Development Measurement Tool
- Increase knowledge of CPC by attending training opportunities
- Participate and contribute to the development of the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Increase interaction and communication with City Council



City of Cedar Rapids City Planning Commission Work Plan for 2014-2015 (Final Draft)

General Information

CHARTER

The City Planning Commission is a nine member commission appointed by the Mayor of the City of Cedar Rapids. The Commission was established by City Code to review and make recommendations to the City Council on various land development issues including proposed City comprehensive plans, zoning regulations, requests for the rezoning of land, site development plans, conditional use requests, and subdivision of land.

MEETINGS

The City Planning Commission meets every three weeks on Thursday at 3:00 p.m. unless otherwise published. Meetings are held at City of Cedar Rapids City Hall Council Chambers.

COMMISSIONERS and CONTACTS

Commissioners

Scott Overland, *Chair*
Jim Halverson, *Vice-Chair*
Samantha Dahlby
Carletta Knox-Seymour
Richard Pankey
Bill Hunse
Dominique Blank
Virginia Wilts
Kim King

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Staff Liaisons

Vern Zakostelecky
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This work plan serves as a guide to action and may be adapted or revised as new events and opportunities arise.

Process

On September 11, 2014 the City Planning Commission met to discuss updating the work plan for the 2014-2015 year. The Commission engaged in an action planning process that involved the following steps:

- **Current Reality:** Assessment of the Commission's strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments and challenges.
- **Commitments and Vision:** Selection of goals that the Commission agreed upon and believed were achievable over the course of a year. Development of a vision statement to describe the intended outcome of achieving the work plan.
- **Key Actions:** Identification of action steps to accomplish Commitments and to address weaknesses and challenges listed in the Current Reality phase of the process. Similar Key Actions were grouped into key task groups.
- **Calendar Timeline:** Ranking of Key Actions from easiest to most difficult and arrangement of Key Actions throughout a year-long timeline.
- **Coordination:** Designation of a leader for each task group and determination of a tracking process to report updates.

This work plan contains the work/action items the Commission plans on being involved in for the years 2014-2015 and any changes that may arise during finalization of the plan.

Work Plan

VISION

To improve the standard of planning and development activities in the City of Cedar Rapids while being use and user friendly in fulfilling City needs for housing, commercial and industrial development.

GOAL 1

Develop a Sustainable Development Measurement Tool

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Review best practices used by other communities for parking standards, storm water, and other key areas.	Full Commission	Ongoing

GOAL 2

Increase knowledge of CPC by attending training opportunities

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Staff will continue to provide updates on training opportunities.	Full Commission/Staff	Ongoing
-CPC will proactively look for training opportunities they are interested in.	Full Commission/Staff	Ongoing
-Staff will provide updates and training on new adopted codes and regulations such as, but not limited to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance amendments, overlay district, etc.	Full Commission/Staff	

GOAL 3

Participate and contribute to the development of the City's Comprehensive Plan

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Review and provide input on draft and final plans such as, but not limited to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Area Plans, etc.	Full Commission	TBD

GOAL 4

Increase interaction and communication with City Council as necessary

TASKS	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Continue to ensure CPC attendance at City Council and Development Committee meetings as needed.	Chair	Ongoing



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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Seth Gunnerson and Kirsty Sanchez through Jennifer Pratt, Community Development and Planning Director
Subject: 2015 Visual Arts Commission Work Plan
Date: November 19, 2014

This memo is to provide a summary of the Visual Arts Commission's 2015 Work Plan (attached). Following review by the Development Committee it will be reviewed by City Council.

As part of ongoing organizational development, the Community Development Department facilitates a discussion with boards and commissions to establish a work plan for the upcoming year. The work plans allow the boards and commissions to address the City Council's priorities, communicate their own priorities, and serves to measure the accomplishments of the board or commission.

Charge:

The Visual Arts Commission (VAC) is a nine member commission appointed by the Mayor of Cedar Rapids. The Commission was established as the recommending body to City Council regarding public visual art within the City.

The Commission's charter goals are:

- To improve the appearance and cultural climate of the city, so as to enhance quality of life and community prestige.
- Involve the public in the selection and dedication of public art.
- Use eligible funds wisely to incorporate public art in our city.
- To use art as an aid in economic development.
- To encourage local artists by supporting their works and efforts.
- To incorporate visual arts in the design process of qualifying projects.

Accomplishments in 2014:

- Reframing and installation of three Ann Royer paintings in the Blairs Ferry Conference Room at City Hall.
- Creation of three committees: Artwork Review, Collections Management, and Outreach.
- Updates to the Visual Arts Commission website.
- Began the process of creating a brochure highlighting artwork throughout the City.
- Initiated the process to create a Collections Manager position.

Goals and Objectives for 2015:

- Review Gift Art Applications and make recommendations to the City Council for inclusion into the collection.
- Review and make recommendations on mural applications.
- Serve as recommending body on other matters pertaining to public art.
- Assist groups interested in installing art in the community.
- Review and make recommendations on placement of pieces in the City art collection.
- Review and make recommendations on deaccessioning pieces of the City art collection.
- Promote newly acquired art in the community.
- Develop promotional materials to educate and celebrate public art collection.
- Represent the City at public events such as Downtown Farmer's Markets.
- Seek resident input on ideas to enhance Cedar Rapids.
- Identify opportunities to purchase new art through the 2% for Arts Policy.
- Survey existing art and identify maintenance and conservation needs for the public art collection by hiring a Collections Manager.
- Plan a public outreach event to promote art in Cedar Rapids.

Funding for Visual Arts in Cedar Rapids comes from remaining Hotel/Motel allocation from City Council, and from the 2% For Arts policy, which allows up to 2% of certain capital projects to be reserved for community visual enhancements. Staff is working with Public Works to identify projects that meet the 2% For Arts policy.

Visual Arts Commission 2015 Work Plan

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHARTER

The City of Cedar Rapids Visual Arts Commission is a nine member Commission appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. The Commission was established as the recommending body regarding public visual art within the City by Resolution No. 316-2-94 dated February 23, 1994.

CHARTER GOALS

1. To improve the appearance and cultural climate of the city, so as to enhance quality of life and community prestige.
2. Involve the public in the selection and dedication of public art.
3. Use eligible funds wisely to incorporate public art in our city.
4. To use art as an aid in economic development.
5. To encourage local artists by supporting their works and efforts.
6. To incorporate visual arts in the design process of qualifying projects.

MEETINGS

Scheduled meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month unless otherwise published, beginning at 3:00 pm at City Hall.

CONTACTS

Commissioners and Term

Bill Stamats, Chair	Term thru 2016
Ann Knierim, Vice Chair	Term thru 2015
Mel Andringa	Term thru 2015
Arbe Bareis	Term thru 2015
Marilee Fowler	Term thru 2015
Lynn Ocken	Term thru 2016
Barbara Green	Term thru 2017
Kim Vogel	Term thru 2017
Mary Ottoson	Term thru 2017

City Council Liaison

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Kirsty Sanchez
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Visual Arts Commission 2015 Work Plan

2014 Highlights

- Reframing and installation of three Ann Royer paintings in the Blairs Ferry Conference Room at City Hall
- Creation of three committees: Artwork Review, Collections Management, and Outreach
- Updates to the Visual Arts Commission website
- Began the process of creating a brochure highlighting artwork throughout the City
- Initiated the process to create a Collections Manager position

Advise City Council on Public Art Collection

Goals and Ongoing Tasks

- Review Gift Art Applications and make recommendations to the City Council for inclusion into the collection
- Review and make recommendations on mural applications
- Serve as recommending body on other matters pertaining to public art
- Assist groups interested in installing art in the community
- Develop annual Work Plan
- Review and make recommendations on placement of pieces in the City art collection
- Review and make recommendations on deaccessioning pieces of the City art collection

2015 Action Items

Item	Cost or resource	Timeline
Elect Chair and Vice Chair	VAC	January, 2015
Develop 2016 Work Plan	VAC and Staff	October, 2015
Present Work Plan to Development Committee	VAC and Staff	November, 2015
Present Work Plan to City Council	VAC and Staff	January, 2016

Public Outreach and Education

Ongoing Tasks

- Promote newly acquired art in the community
- Develop promotional materials to educate and celebrate public art collection
- Represent the City at public events such as Downtown Farmer's Markets
- Seek resident input on ideas to enhance Cedar Rapids

Visual Arts Commission 2015 Work Plan

2015 Action Items

Item	Cost or resource	Timeline
Print promotional material for art collection – either pamphlets or downtown tours	Up to \$10,000	Early 2015
Update photography and artwork inventory to include new and relocated pieces	Up to \$2,500	Mid 2015
Provide feedback on the sculpture donation for Greene Square	Staff and VAC	Mid 2015

Stewardship of Public Art Collection

Ongoing Tasks

- Identify opportunities to purchase new art through the 2% for Arts Policy
- Make Recommendations on Gift Art Applications
- Identify maintenance and conservation needs for Public Art Collection

2015 Action Items

Item	Cost	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete process of hiring of a Collections Manager to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survey existing art ○ Maintain Records, including appraisal of art ○ Develop Conservation Plan and schedule 	Up to \$10,000	Early 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install or deaccess public art currently in storage 	Staff and VAC Subcommittee	Early 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to purchase art as part of the 2% for art policy for FY2016 	As available in FY16 Budget	Early 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to develop budgets and timelines for any public art purchases through 2% for Arts Policy 	Staff and VAC Subcommittee	Mid 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a public outreach event to promote art in Cedar Rapids 	Staff and VAC	Mid 2015



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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Anne Russett, Planner
Subject: 2015 Historic Preservation Commission Work Plan
Date: November 19, 2014

This memo is to provide a summary of the Historic Preservation Commission's 2015 Work Plan [Attachment 1]. After review by the Development Committee, the work plan will be submitted to the City Council for final review and approval. As part of ongoing organizational development, the Community Development Department facilitates a discussion with boards and commissions to establish a work plan for the upcoming year. The work plans allow the boards and commissions to address the City Council's priorities, communicate their own priorities, and serves to measure the accomplishments of the board or commission.

Overview of the Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission (Commission) was established per Chapter 18 – Historic Preservation of the Cedar Rapids municipal code as an advisory commission to the Cedar Rapids City Council regarding historic preservation matters. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council.

Some of the Commission's main responsibilities include:

- Making recommendations for the listing of a historic district or site on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Making recommendations on the adoption of ordinances designating historic landmarks and districts.
- Reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness.
- Making recommendations to City Council or other City commissions regarding preservation issues, as appropriate.
- Making recommendations on the disposition of historic properties.
- Providing information for the purpose of historic preservation to the governing body.
- Promoting and conducting an educational and interpretive program on historic properties within its jurisdiction.

Recent Accomplishments

In 2014, the Commission achieved the following:

- Partnered with other organizations, such as the State Historic Preservation Office, on the 2014 Preserve Iowa Summit, which incorporated mobile tours of the city and informative sessions.
- Hosted the third annual Preservation Awards ceremony to honor the City's most outstanding preservation efforts in seven categories.

- Worked with salvage operations like Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore program to salvage historic materials from demolished buildings over 50 years old.
- Completed the following projects from the FEMA Memorandums of Agreement:
 - Designation of the 3rd Avenue SW Commercial National Historic District, accepted by the National Park Service in Summer 2014
 - Completion of the *Cedar Rapids Citywide Historic and Architectural Reconnaissance Survey*
- Continued working with the City staff to implement various projects from the FEMA Memorandums of Agreement, including the development of a Historic Preservation Plan and the Downtown National Historic District.

2015 Work Plan

In the 2015 Work Plan [Attachment 1] the Commission has identified a variety of tasks to help achieve the following five goals:

- Goal 1: Participate in preservation, salvage and documentation of historic structures
- Goal 2: Increase communication
- Goal 3: Improve public relations
- Goal 4: Provide information and educational opportunities for the public
- Goal 5: Provide educational opportunities for HPC members

Some key items to highlight for 2015 include reaching out to property owners in the local historic districts to provide them information on the requirements and benefits of owning property in an historic district. In addition, the Commission will be hosting the 2015 Preservation Showcase in May and will be involved in the development of the City’s Historic Preservation Plan, which will be an opportunity to identify preservation goals and initiatives for the future.

Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Work Plan for 2015 – Final Draft



City of Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission

FINAL DRAFT Work Plan for 2015

General Information

CHARTER

The Historic Preservation Commission is comprised of at least 11 volunteer citizens appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council for three year terms. The Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission makes recommendations on National Register of Historic Places nominations and local historic district designation. With City Council approval, the Historic Preservation Commission initiates historic preservation studies designed to identify and preserve the City's historic building resources. The Commission also reviews and approves applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in the two local historic districts.

MEETINGS

The Historic Preservation Commission meets every second and fourth Thursday of the month at 4:30 p.m. unless otherwise published. Meetings are held at the Cedar Rapids City Hall.

COMMISSIONERS and CONTACTS

Commissioners

Amanda McKnight-Grafton, *Chair*
Todd McNall, *Vice-Chair*
Bob Grafton, *Secretary*
Pat Cargin
Barbara Westercamp
Tim Oberbroeckling
Mark Stoffer Hunter
Ron Mussman
Caitlin Hartman
Sam Bergus
B.J. Hobart

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This work plan serves as a guide to action and may be adapted or revised as new events and opportunities arise.

City of Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission
Work Plan for 2015

Process

On September 25, 2014, the Historic Preservation Commission met to affirm its goals for the 2015 work plan. The Commission engaged in an action planning process that involved the following steps:

- **Commitments and Vision:** Selection of goals that the Commission agreed upon and believed were achievable over the course of a year.
- **Key Actions:** Identification of action steps to address goals.

Work Plan

VISION

The purpose of Chapter 18 of the Municipal Code, which outlines historic preservation and the duties of the Historic Preservation Commission are to:

- (1) Promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the recognition, enhancement, and perpetuation of sites and districts of historical and cultural significance;
- (2) Safeguard the city's historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage by preserving sites and districts of historic and cultural significance;
- (3) Stabilize and improve property values;
- (4) Foster pride in the legacy of beauty and achievements of the past;
- (5) Protect and enhance the city's attractions to tourists and visitors and the support and stimulus to business thereby provided;
- (6) Strengthen the economy of the city;
- (7) Promote the use of sites and districts of historic and cultural significance as places for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the people of the city.

GOAL 1

Participate in preservation, salvage and documentation of historic structures

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Review historic surveys and National Register nominations related to the FEMA MOAs and State LOA	Full Commission/Staff	Ongoing
-Prepare a list of criteria to aid property owners, developers, and others in the identification of potentially historic buildings	Full Commission	2 nd Quarter
-Determine neighborhoods' interests in establishing local historic districts/landmarks	Full Commission	3 rd Quarter
-Continue recommending improvements to historic preservation ordinance and processes through the development of the Historic Preservation Plan	Full Commission	Ongoing
-Explore potential financing strategies and economic incentives and recommend incorporation into the Historic Preservation Plan	Full Commission/Staff	Ongoing

City of Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission
Work Plan for 2015

GOAL 2

Increase communication

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Continue to improve the HPC website for ease of use and to provide more information	Staff	1 st Quarter
-Create informational brochure(s) to explain benefits of historic districts and HPC processes	Full Commission/Staff	2 nd Quarter

GOAL 3

Improve public relations

TASK	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Send brochure to all property owners in historic districts explaining benefits and requirements	Staff	3 rd Quarter
-Continue to honor exemplary preservation efforts through annual Community Preservation Awards and the Preservation Showcase	Full Commission	2 nd Quarter

GOAL 4

Provide information and educational opportunities for the public

TASKS	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Hold two trainings per year on various practical preservation topics like adaptive reuse, wood window repair, and brick tuck-pointing	Full Commission/Staff	2 nd and 4 th Quarters
-Plan and host the 2015 Preservation Showcase	Full Commission	1 st and 2 nd Quarters
-Develop historic district markers and signage to help public identify key historic areas and landmarks	Full Commission/Staff	3 rd Quarter

GOAL 5

Provide educational opportunities for HPC members

TASKS	ASSIGNMENT	DUE
-Continue to provide outside training opportunities, and encourage attendance at the 2015 Preservation Showcase	Full Commission/Staff	Ongoing



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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Jeff Hintz through Jennifer Pratt, Community Development and Planning Director
Subject: Communications Facilities (cell towers)
Date: November 19, 2014

Background:

In the late spring and early summer, there had been a number of requests for placement of new communications facilities, most commonly cell towers. Due to the complexity of the Conditional Use process, Board of Adjustment and City Planning Commission members had expressed uncertainty about the application of the current codes to establish findings and recommendations.

Citizens in areas near the proposed towers had expressed concerns about this type of land use within the City Limits. Staff convened several meetings with citizens and industry professionals to receive input and suggested changes to the current regulations on the following dates:

- August 13, 2014 – Citizen and industry professionals input session
- September 10, 2014 – Citizen only input session
- October 20, 2014 – Citizen only input Session
- November 5, 2014 – Industry professionals phone conference update

Proposed Changes:

Entire tower placement process for a freestanding tower based solely upon distance from existing detached single and two-family dwelling units. A three tier system separates freestanding towers using the distance from existing residential and specifies different requirements based upon that distance. The tiers, through design, notification requirements, materials requirements and process length, encourage towers to be placed further from existing residential areas.

- Enhance design review for all towers within 500 feet of an existing detached one or two family dwelling unit. Design review would now include stealthing (disguising) of the tower.
- Ease co-location requirements for those towers within 300 feet of existing detached single and two-family dwelling units to keep tower height lower.
- Enhance materials requirements for towers, including requiring a building or decorative wall to enclose all tower equipment and not allowing visible razor or barbed wire within 500 feet of existing detached single or two-family dwelling units.
- Require neighborhood meetings for all towers within 500 feet of existing detached single or two-family dwelling units.

- Increase mail out distance for neighborhood meeting.
- Establish requirements for neighborhood meeting content including all the following:
 - Photo simulations of tower from a distance of 500 feet;
 - Proposed initial site plan for comment showing location of tower;
 - Discussion of preferred stealthing measure;
 - Suggestions for alternate tower locations on parcel or in area.
- Establish lower maximum tower height within 500 feet of existing detached single or two-family dwelling units.
- Establish criteria specific to communications facilities for evaluation by City Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment for review in preliminary site plan and conditional use process. Criteria would include:
 - A. Height of proposed tower.
 - B. Proximity of tower to residential structures and districts.
 - C. Nature of uses on adjacent and nearby properties.
 - D. Surrounding topography.
 - E. Surrounding tree coverage and foliage.
 - F. Design of the tower, with reference to design characteristics which reduce or eliminate visual obtrusiveness.
 - G. Proposed ingress and egress.
 - H. Availability of other towers or structures for installation of facilities.
 - I. Whether applicant has considered alternative designs and locations within the site based upon feedback at the neighborhood meeting.

Rationale:

Towers built in close proximity to existing detached single and two-family residences will be built with a higher quality design, if they are built there at all. The tiered system strongly discourages placement of towers in established residential neighborhoods; towers proposed in these areas will require more investment due to the enhanced design requirements.

City Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment members will now have a specific set of criteria to evaluate this type of land use application. More importantly, a neighborhood meeting will take place to ensure the citizens input is gathered in the planning process for the project, not once it has already been designed and completed. This will allow for a collaborative dialogue between citizens and communications companies to enhance the overall quality of the project.

Recommendation:

Community Development Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendments to the communication facilities section of the zoning ordinance.

Timeline:

- December 2, 2014 - City Council Motion Setting a Public Hearing
- December 4, 2014 - City Planning Commission Review and Comment
- December 16, 2014 - City Council Public Hearing
- January 13, 2015 – City Council Second and possible Third Reading of Ordinance



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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Sara Buck, Housing Programs Manager, through Jennifer Pratt Director of Community Development & Planning
Subject: Housing Choice Voucher – Section 8 Administrative Plan Update
Date: November 19, 2014

Background: The City of Cedar Rapids Housing Services Office has been administering the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) as the Public Housing Authority (PHA) of Linn and Benton Counties for approximately 37 years. This program is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and is designed to accommodate very low-income families and individuals with rent assistance for decent, safe, and sanitary housing provided by private owners and rental agents. On average the program assists 1,200 families with rent assistance per year.

The Housing Services Office maintains the programs waitlist, which was closed in 2011 with upwards of 4,000 people on the list and a 3-5 year wait for assistance. Since that time, the waitlist has remained closed to new applicants. Staff and Community Service Agencies met on October 29, 2014 to review policy and procedures pertaining to the Section 8 waitlist in preparation for its re-opening in the near future.

Proposed Changes: The City of Cedar Rapids administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the functions and responsibilities of the PHA through the HCV Administrative Plan. The purpose of the Administrative Plan is to establish policies for carrying out the program in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives.

- Current PHA Policy within the Administrative Plan states the waiting list will remain open until it reaches approximately 60 months (5 years) worth of applicants.
 - This is not meeting the urgent community need.
 - Lease-up rates drop to 25% or less for families waiting more than two years as many no longer qualify.
- Amendment of the PHA Policy within the Administrative Plan to allow closure of the waitlist once it reaches approximately 24 months (2 years) worth of applicants.
 - This will allow the PHA to open the waitlist more often, better meeting the community's needs.
 - Participation will increase with more current applications.
 - This was also a recommended change by HUD.

Recommendation: Community Development Staff recommends Development Committee forward the amendment of the HCV Administrative Plan on for approval by City Council.

Timeline:
December 2, 2014 - City Council Motion Setting a Public Hearing
December 16, 2014 - City Council Public Hearing
January 13, 2014 – City Council Approval



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To: City Council Development Committee
From: Paula Mitchell through Jennifer Pratt, Community Development and Planning Director
Subject: Requests for City Support – Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Projects
Date: November 19, 2014

Background:

At the October 15, 2014 meeting of the Development Committee, staff previewed a request for City support from High Development for the Sonoma Square project, a proposed 50-unit Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) development at Ellis Boulevard and J Avenue NW, located in the Ellis Viable Business District.

At the time the project was proposed, the Iowa Finance Authority had not finalized its Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) outlining how projects would be awarded for the 2015 application round. Subsequently, the QAP has been finalized and contains language that strongly discourages development in a 100-year flood plain. The developer has been in communication with IFA regarding potential flood proofing and mitigation measures that might allow the project to move forward. However, the developer states that IFA staff has made it clear that projects in the 100-year flood plain will not be funded, regardless of flood proofing or mitigation measures. As a result, the Sonoma Square project has been withdrawn for the 2015 application round and City support is not needed.

Staff has provided feedback to the developer in the form of a staff report regarding Ellis Boulevard Overlay District Standards, in the event that alternative funding strategies are identified for the site that would allow a project to be developed in the future.