



**City of Cedar Rapids  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
City Hall Council Chambers  
Wednesday, May 21, 2014  
4:00 p.m.**

The meeting was brought to order at 4:04 p.m.

Present: Council members Vernon (Chair), Shey and Weinacht. Staff members present: Jennifer Pratt, Interim Community Development Director; Thomas Smith, Community Development Planner; Caleb Mason, Housing Redevelopment Analyst; Rob Davis, Engineering Manager; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; and Alicia Abernathy, Community Development Administrative Assistant.

Council member Vernon stated the Development Committee meets monthly and the purpose of the committee is to review development and economic issues that involve the community. Items are brought forward to the agenda from City staff, Council members and sometimes citizens.

Council member Vernon called for a motion to approve the minutes from April 16, 2014. Council member Shey made a motion to approve the minutes from April 16, 2014. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

**1. Request for City-Owned Properties**

- a) **1919 Ellis Boulevard NW**
- b) **1915 Ellis Boulevard NW**
- c) **1895 Ellis Boulevard NW**
- d) **1871 Ellis Boulevard NW**

Thomas Smith, Community Development Planner, stated a letter of interest was received for City-owned properties at 1919, 1915, 1895, and 1871 Ellis Boulevard NW. The standard process in the past has been to bring these requests to Development Committee to evaluate the requests and proposed criteria to make a recommendation on opening a competitive proposal process to the City Council. Mr. Smith stated the properties were acquired by the City following the 2008 flood. The properties are currently vacant and are bordered by the Cedar River, Ellis Park and single family residential. The properties are part of the Viable Business Corridor and the Ellis Area Plan study area. The Ellis Plan indicates development on the properties would be contingent on integrating flood protection infrastructure into the development plan. The project selected for the parcels would have to be consistent with Army Corps standards and will become part of the City's future flood management system. The properties are located within the Ellis Area Overlay District so it would need to meet the design guidelines established for the overlay district. Mr. Smith identified the proposed criteria for use in inviting competitive proposals.

Council member Vernon asked if the pedestrian orientation identified in the criteria addressed public access to the riverfront. Mr. Smith stated the pedestrian orientation criteria addresses the orientation of the building to the street and ensuring it is part of a walkable neighborhood but access to the riverfront can be included in the criteria.

Council member Shey stated there is a trail that follows the river and cuts east at some point. Council member Shey stated the picture presented shows homes on some parcels and asked if the parcels would eventually be vacant and used for greenspace. Jennifer Pratt, Interim Community Development Director, stated there are still homes located on some of the parcels and there has always been a trail in the plans so having a trail as part of the criteria is reasonable.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the request for Ellis Boulevard City-owned properties forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

## **2. Request for a City-Owned Property**

### **a) Chipping Green (Corner of 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Zika Avenue NW)**

Caleb Mason, Housing Redevelopment Analyst, stated the Chipping Green site was previewed at the April Development Committee meeting. The purpose was to get the idea of disposition out to the public in order to receive feedback from the public. This item was not an action item at the last meeting as time was needed to go through the Greenway Planning process to determine if outcomes would have any impact on development of this site. Staff wanted to determine if this property would be replaceable as the property has potential park development and potential for recreational uses. Through the Greenway Planning process it was determined there will be opportunity for use of other land for recreational uses and park development. Mr. Mason identified the proposed criteria and timeline for use in inviting competitive proposals.

Council member Vernon expressed concerns that too much time was given to submit proposals. Mr. Mason stated a putting together a proposal takes time as people need to work with a bank for funding options and also with an engineer to determine what will work on the site. This is the typical amount of time given for this type of project as rezoning will need to take place as well.

Council member Weinacht asked if there will be surface water management. Mr. Mason stated it will be included in the criteria and developers will be expected to provide a plan that shows sustainability features in the building and site design. Council member Weinacht asked if the entire 6.4 acres will be open for disposition or if some will be protected for public use. Mr. Mason stated staff is working with the Parks and Recreation Department to determine a minimum threshold of what should be retained for the park. Council member Weinacht asked if the sale of this land will go back to the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Mason stated he is unsure of the answer. Council member Vernon requested staff find out where the money will go.

Council member Vernon stated she does not see the need for some of the land to be retained for the park as there is a need for replacement of homes in this area. The location is located next to Ellis Park and there will also be greenway so there is no need to retain some of the land. Council member Shey agreed that land does not need to be retained from this property for park use.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the request for the City-owned Chipping Green property forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

### **3. Request for a City-Owned Property**

#### **a) Iowa Iron Site**

Mr. Mason stated staff has received interest from several parties on the site. The City acquired the property pre-flood in 2001 and received funding to assess the site as it was formally an industrial site. Contaminants were removed and a Letter of No Further Action was issued by the DNR in 2011. Some of the site has been used in the short term for parking for the NewBo Market and there was a project for sand volleyball that never went through. Staff recommends initiating the process of inviting redevelopment proposals with an emphasis on master planning the entire site. This provides an opportunity for a developer to work with NewBo Market in regards to parking. Mr. Mason identified the proposed criteria and timeline for use in inviting competitive proposals.

Council member Shey asked if there are any requirements to give back any money to government authorities. Mr. Mason stated federal funds were not used to acquire this property so the City is able to keep all of the funds received for disposition.

Council member Weinacht made a motion to move the request for the City-owned Iowa Iron property forward to the full City Council. Council member Shey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

### **4. Update on Street Guidelines**

Rob Davis, Engineering Manager, stated several policies and plans have been created over the years including a Complete Streets policy that was followed by Jeff Speck doing a Trees Forever presentation. Staff was also working on the Sidewalk Master Plan and the Blue Zones initiative began. It is time to wrap all of policies into one and present them to City Council in July. Jeff Speck has been working on the Complete Streets Code for street typology, which is more of a design philosophy document, and will also be incorporated.

### **5. Renaming 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE**

Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner, stated staff is recommending renaming 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, from the Bridge of Lions to St. Wenceslaus Church, to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. South of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue the street grids on each side of the river don't line up and what is currently 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE lines up with 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. When the current 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE is extended it will line up with 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. With potential development in the area in the future now is the time to rename the street to avoid more work in the future.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the request to rename 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

### **Informational Items and Updates**

#### **o NewBo Station Update**

Jennifer Pratt, Interim Community Development Director, stated a memo was provided in the packet giving an update on the amended deed restriction.

Ms. Pratt stated an issue processing chart has been included in the packet and staff will review the chart to ensure it is updated and accurate. Ms. Pratt stated the City Hall Training Room is now available again and asked if the Development Committee would like to meet in the Training Room or continue to meet in Council Chambers. Council member Vernon stated switching back to the Training Room would be acceptable.

Council member Vernon called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council member Shey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant II  
Community Development