



**City of Cedar Rapids  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
City Hall Training Room  
Wednesday, August 20, 2014  
4:00 p.m.**

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

Present: Council members Vernon (Chair) Weinacht and Shey. Staff members present: Jeff Pomeranz, City Manager; Sandi Fowler, Assistant City Manager; Jasmine Almoayed, Economic Development Liaison; Caleb Mason, Housing Redevelopment Analyst; Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner; Jeff Hintz, Community Development Planner; and Alicia Abernathey, 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 June 30, 2014. Council member Shey made a motion to approve the minutes from June 30, 2014. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

**Recommendation Items:**

**1. Downtown Façade Improvement Program**

Jasmine Almoayed, Economic Development Liaison, stated the proposed new Downtown Façade Improvement Program will encourage renovation of building fronts and will cover 50% of eligible expenses on a project. Projects are covered 25% from the City, 25% from the Downtown SSMID and 50% from the property owner. The funding amount cannot exceed \$100 per linear foot of building frontage. Ms. Almoayed stated on August 26<sup>th</sup> a resolution will be taken to City Council for consideration to contribute \$50,000 to the program. The Downtown SSMID will match the \$50,000 if City funds are approved. Eligible structures and applicants include any property within the Downtown SSMID either commercial or residential. Priority will be given to buildings with the greatest need for renovation, or the greatest implementation of the Downtown Vision Plan. Eligible improvements of the program include removal of existing façade materials to restore historic building features, restoration of historic painting or design on building exterior, installation of exterior lighting, etc. As part of the program, a Façade Improvement Committee will be established that will have two SSMID members and a member from the Economic Alliance that will review the applications. The program will be branded as a City of Cedar Rapids and Downtown SSMID partnership program.

Council member Shey recalled a previous façade program and asked if that was in existence. Doug Neumann, Economic Alliance, stated some of the language of the proposed program comes from a 2006 effort to have a similar program. The 2006 program couldn't find funding so no awards were made.

Jeff Pomeranz, City Manager, asked how to prevent one project from utilizing all the funds. Mr. Neumann stated awards have a maximum of \$100 per lineal foot. The majority of the awards for would be \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the Downtown Façade Improvement Program recommendation forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

## **2. Multi-Family New Construction Round Six**

Caleb Mason, Housing Redevelopment Analyst, stated this is the sixth round of the Multi-Family New Construction (MFNC) program. Earlier this year, the City was made aware \$30,000,000 in funding is available state wide for cities to compete for. Cedar Rapids is competing against the five largest communities in Iowa. An Administrative Plan was adopted by City Council in June 2014 and the plan kept the program in line with past practices. Mr. Mason went through the 16 proposed projects identifying amounts of investment, number of units, adaptive re-use versus new construction and also provided location maps and renderings. Mr. Mason stated past practices have been to submit all proposed projects for review by Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). A market analysis of the City will also be submitted to ensure IEDA knows what Cedar Rapids can handle for housing.

Council member Shey asked if the units would be market rate. Mr. Mason stated the requirement of the program is 51% of the units be designated as affordable housing. The affordable units have a rent rate that is capped and also have an income limit that is capped. The assistance is to make up the gap created by holding 51% of the units at an affordable rate. There isn't a big difference in the capped rate and the market rate. The developer is required to have the rent rates for 10 years if over 12 units and 5 years if under 12 units.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the Multi-Family New Construction Round Six recommendations forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

## **3. Design Review Technical Advisory Committee Consolidation**

Seth Gunnerson, Community Development Planner, stated there are three overlay districts including Czech Village New Bohemia, Kingston Village and Ellis Boulevard. Staff has been working with the City Clerk's office to find people to serve on the Kingston Village and Ellis Boulevard committee. There is a desire to have a technical professional on each committee and there have been barriers of getting enough technical professionals to apply. Staff recommends the mayor proceed with appointment of the two committees and appoint someone who can serve on both committees. The workloads wouldn't overload the person serving on both committees.

Council member Shey asked how often the current committee meets. Mr. Gunnerson stated the committee is scheduled to meet biweekly and there are some meetings that are cancelled due to lack of agenda items. Other times a special meeting is scheduled to accommodate applications.

#### **4. Northwest Flood Mitigation Overlay District**

Jeff Hintz, Community Development Planner, stated staff is proposing a Northwest Flood Mitigation overlay district for properties included in the current building permit moratorium. The proposed ordinance would limit new development, limit changes in development patterns and would limit significant investment in the area. The proposed ordinance would allow routine maintenance and upkeep of existing structures and would allow properties to meet building and mechanical codes. The overlay district would preserve existing conditions of properties in the area, keep properties habitable, and avoids losses on private redevelopment.

Council member Shey made a motion to move the Northwest Flood Mitigation Overlay District recommendation forward to the full City Council. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with none opposed.

#### **Informational Items**

##### **1. Cell Towers**

Mr. Hintz stated a stakeholder meeting was held which included neighborhood representatives, cell phone companies, and City staff. Staff drafted revisions to the current regulations to address concerns expressed at the stakeholder meeting. Staff will distribute the drafted revisions to the stakeholder group and bring a recommendation to the Development Committee in September.

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Abernathey, Administrative Assistant II  
Community Development