



City of Cedar Rapids
Development Committee Meeting Agenda
City Hall Training Room
Wednesday, September 23, 2015
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

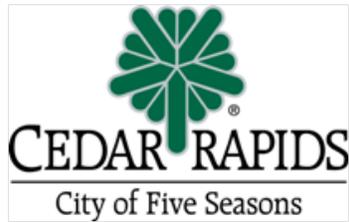
Council member Pat Shey

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 – July 15, 2015
- Presentations:
 1. Food Environment Work Stephanie Neff
Blue Zones Project
- Recommendation Items:
 1. Fiscal Year 2016 CDBG and HOME Priorities Paula Mitchell
Community Development
- Informational Items:
 1. Upcoming Project Updates: Bill Micheel
Community Development
 - Collins Road Corridor Action Plan
 - Mt. Vernon Road Corridor Action Plan
 - Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan
- Public Comment



**City of Cedar Rapids
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
City Hall Training Room
Wednesday, July 15, 2015
4:00 p.m.**

The meeting was brought to order at 4:02 p.m.

Present: Council members Vernon (Chair), Shey, and Weinacht. Staff members present: Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director; Anne Russett, Community Development Planner; Matt Myers, Traffic Engineering Manager and Anne Kroll, Community Development Administrative Assistant.

Council members Shey and Vernon approved the minutes from June 17, 2015 with unanimous consent.

Recommendation Items:

1. Cedar Lake

Jennifer Pratt, Community Development Director, stated that Friends of Cedar Lake is an active group of citizens who came together to create community support to improve Cedar Lake. They are developing a vision plan that includes the Lake's water quality/watershed, the adjacent area, and recreational opportunities. In January 2015, the City entered into an MOU with Friends of Cedar Lake, Linn County Board of Supervisors, and Alliant Energy (owner of Cedar Lake) to form a Steering Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to plan for future enhancement of Cedar Lake as an amenity for the community. The Cedar Lake Steering Committee has met every two to four weeks to explore options for additional recreational and development opportunities. In June 2015, it was agreed that prior to obtaining grants and determining long-term ownership, the desired end use of the lake needs to be defined through public engagement. The following is a timeline for public engagement:

July 28, 2015	City Council consideration of resolution supporting Public Engagement strategy
Aug./Sept.	Friends of Cedar Lake completes Vision Plan. Cedar Lake Steering Committee works on messaging and Public Engagement.
Oct.	Focus group discussions
Nov.	First Open House
Dec./Jan.	Second Open House

Ms. Pratt stated that Friends of Cedar Lake have been working on this for a while and there is a fear that this process tends to be long and it is possible to lose momentum. This strategy provides Friends of Cedar Lake time to complete their plan, time to work with the Cedar Lake Steering Committee on messaging and public outreach, and clear milestones that will build the momentum necessary to keep this project moving forward.

Council member Weinacht arrived at the meeting at 4:07 p.m.

The Development Committee members all shared their concerns with the timeline and asked if it could be shortened up. Ms. Pratt stated that staff will work as quickly as possible but it has been found in these processes that it takes time, especially with four different groups, to keep that coordinated.

Dale Todd, on behalf of Friends of Cedar Lake, stated that they appreciate the work done by City staff and value public input, but have concerns about the timeline. It would make more sense to hold public engagement in the summer/early fall while the Cedar Lake area is actively used. Friends of Cedar Lake would like to be ready for the Legislative Session.

Council member Vernon suggested having an open house at Cedar Lake while it is nice out, so that people can have a hands-on experience. Council member Weinacht suggested doing public engagement in conjunction with the Mound View Neighborhood Association meeting because that could move the timeline up by a month.

Council member Vernon spoke about the trails around Cedar Lake and suggested having multifamily housing on the City-owned property set back from the Lake.

Robin Cash shared his concerns with water management and public safety. Mr. Todd stated that there have been discussions about that and there will be more discussion on mechanics and hydrology.

Council member Shey made a motion to recommend moving forward with the strategy and timeline for Cedar Lake public engagement. Council member Weinacht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Items:

1. Main Street Update

Jennifer Pruden, Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street District Executive Director, stated that since 2009, Main Street has seen over \$33 million dollars in private investment and that currently, that same amount is in progress with new additions. There have been ninety (90) new businesses creating two hundred ninety one (291) new jobs. Ms. Pruden shared the 1-5 year goals and the progress of those goals. So far in 2015, eleven (11) new businesses have opened in the Main Street District. Ms. Pruden shared the statistics from a parking survey. Since 79% of visitors prefer free parking and a longer walk over paid parking next to their destination, Ms. Pruden recommends having the free parking at a distance and keeping the parking up close as paid parking. On July 29, 2015, the Main Street District will have an available property tour for new businesses to see the space available. Ms. Pruden shared the resources available through Main Street and information about the Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street Revolving Loan Fund.

Council member Vernon stated that things are going well in this district. With the New Bohemia area becoming so active, we need to make sure the Czech Village is included. The parking is an issue and it is a good idea to have free parking further away and charging a little more for closer parking.

2. 11th Avenue and 3rd Street Public Safety

Matt Myers, Traffic Engineering Manager, stated that when intersections are looked at they generally count traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists. There are triggers that move an intersection into an all way stop. For 3rd Street and 11th Avenue the side street volume is so low that it does not hit the triggers for an all way stop; however, Mr. Myers recommends an all way stop because it is difficult to look around the parked cars. When people are walking, it seems they take the extraordinary measures to make it as safe as possible, but cars pull through the cross walk until they can see around the parked cars, so there is the inevitable pedestrian conflict. Future development also plays a part in having the all way stop. There are developments, in the future that the area will build up around the intersection. The risk is the fact that sometimes when you put in an all way stop some people will consider it a nuisance and people could run right through the stop sign. However, there seems to be a lot more benefits than costs to having the all way stop there.

Council member Shey stated that the study probably cannot determine if that intersection is being used as a cut through, but that would be one of the benefits of the stop. Those people will find an alternate route which would decrease traffic there. Council member Shey and Mr. Myers discussed some other options such as lowering the speed limit and adding speed bumps.

Council member Weinacht asked if it was considered to pull the lights at 12th Avenue and 3rd Street and changing that to an all way stop instead of putting an all way stop in this intersection. Would that be more productive in controlling the entire area? Mr. Myers stated that was not considered, but that is a fair question. There are plans to collect core data from key intersections in the City. Right now, traffic engineering is working on the individual requests that come in. Council member Vernon suggested that Mr. Myers come to a future meeting to discuss other intersections.

3. NewBo Parking Signage

Ms. Pratt stated that staff met with Park CR and Economic Alliance and came up with some ideas. In the short term, when parking is free on weekends, there are signs that can be put in place that we already have. Ms. Pratt shared a mockup of the signs and a map of where they will go from Park CR. Parking signs will be at intersections close to Lot 44 and on the overhead signal mast arms. The signs will be the right size and will go along with the character of the neighborhood. There is also signage proposed to indicate the trail access.

4. Housing Access and Affordability

Anne Russett, Community Development Planner, stated that this is a continuation of the discussion at the last meeting where tiny houses were mentioned by Council member Weinacht.

- Micro-Housing:
 - Dwelling units (complete with kitchens and bathrooms) that are smaller than conventional home sizes
 - Some examples exist of units with separate living and bathroom, but communal kitchens
 - Units sizes generally start at 220 square feet, but examples of smaller units exist

Ms. Russett shared some potential benefits:

- Housing Choice:
 - Offers another type of housing
- Housing Affordability:
 - Rental / sales prices are lower due to smaller sizes

- Affordable option to those interested in less space, but close to transit, cultural amenities, etc.
- Potential housing for the homeless
- Environment:
 - Utilize less energy, less building material, and less land (if urban infill / multi-family)
 - Some projects are looking at incorporating composting toilets, greywater management, and rain catchment

Ms. Russett discussed the existing regulations:

- Chapter 32 – Zoning
 - Dwelling Unit Size: Minimum 660 square feet
- May be other issues with other municipal code chapters (e.g. Building), such as:
 - Multi-family, efficiency units proposed below 220 square feet
 - Multi-family units proposed without individual kitchens and bathrooms, but communal facilities
- Building code requires:
 - Fixed foundations
 - Permanent utilities

Ms. Russett shared micro-housing examples of recreational vehicles and single-family. Cedar Rapids has an example with the Herda House at 250 square feet. Ms. Russett also shared examples of micro dwelling units in Seattle and San Francisco. As staff is updating the Zoning Code, the one thing that can be looked at is the minimum dwelling unit size. The Housing Program is working on an update to the Maxfield Housing Analysis and it might be possible to look at market demand for smaller housing units.

Council member Weinacht thanked staff for looking into this. Council member Weinacht discussed efficiency housing vs. micro housing as well as square footage. Council member Vernon suggested giving a range of square footage instead of just a minimum.

Council members Weinacht, Shey, and Vernon unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development



Community Development and Planning Department
City Hall
101 First Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Telephone: (319) 286-5041

To: City Council Development Committee
From: Paula Mitchell through Jennifer Pratt, Community Development and Planning Director
Subject: Fiscal Year 2016 CDBG and HOME Priorities
Date: September 23, 2015

Background:

In an effort to better target the City's declining CDBG and HOME entitlement resources an annual prioritization process was established in September 2012 to target funds towards highest priority community needs. These needs were determined using City Council's strategic goals and priorities, as well as the City's 5-year Consolidated Plan and other City planning efforts. Additionally, there is a federal requirement to assist with funding of projects carried out by Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).

One proposed change for FY16 CDBG funding is a change to the way funds are allocated to qualified CDBG neighborhood association activities. In the past, these organizations have competed within the public service category, and funding has varied widely from year to year. With the development and implementation of the City's Neighborhood Certification Program, all participating neighborhoods now submit detailed annual work plans and report progress. In order to make the application process as similar as possible for CDBG and non-CDBG neighborhoods, staff is recommending a prioritized set-aside of \$50,000, or \$10,000 per qualified neighborhood. This is the same amount of funding available from budgeted general funds that is available to non-CDBG neighborhoods. If approved, both CDBG and non-CDBG neighborhoods will be able to submit the same simplified funding application.

Recommendations:

Recommended dollar amounts are based off of FY2015 funding levels of \$1,025,249 for CDBG and 270,425 for HOME. Recommendations are shown on the table following this memo. In general, the recommendations focus on activities that improve housing stock and promote neighborhood quality of life through provision of services in core neighborhoods.

It is also recommended that \$75,000 of the budgeted \$270,425 for HOME program funds be prioritized for CHDO applicants.

Preliminary timeline and Next Steps:

1. September 22, 2015 – City Council consideration of proposed priorities for the FY2015 CDBG and HOME program year.
2. October 1, 2015 – Pre-application workshop for CDBG and HOME applicants and distribution of funding applications.

3. December 7, 2015 – Applications are due to the City.
4. January – February 2016 – Consideration of funding applications by the Grants and Programs Citizens Advisory Committee.
5. March 2016 – Public Hearing on proposed Annual Action Plan and budget with 30-day public review period.
6. May 2016 – City Council adoption of final Annual Action Plan and budget.

Proposed FY16 CDBG Priority Percentages				
City Council Goal	City Council Desired Outcome	CDBG Activity	CDBG Percentage Allocation	Budget Amount
Create Current and Future Financial Strength	Balanced budget and long term financial plan	Admin Costs – CDBG Services provided without cost to the General Fund	20%*	\$205,050
Bold moves in Economic Development	Provide workforce housing options	Housing Activities, Including Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation, Rental Rehabilitation, Acquisition Rehabilitation	60%	\$615,150
Strategic/ Intentional Community Planning	Wide range of housing options Targeted use of resources to maximize impact and rebuild core of city			
		Public Services Including Neighborhood Services, Youth Services, Elder Services, Homeless Services, Handicap Services, and Other Eligible Expenses	15%*	\$153,787**
		Other Eligible activities as needed by the Community	Up to 5%	\$51,262**

* Allocations in this category limited by federal statute.

** Up to \$50,000 to be set aside for eligible activities to be carried out by CDBG-eligible Certified Neighborhood Associations, to be allocated between Public Services as Other Eligible Activities as determined eligible by staff review.



Community Development and Planning Department
City of Cedar Rapids
101 First Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Telephone: (319) 286-5041

To: City Council Development Committee
From: Bill Micheel, Community Development and Planning Assistant Director
Subject: Community Development Project Updates
Date: September 23, 2015

Background:

Community Development Staff is beginning work on two Corridor Action Plans and one Neighborhood Action Plan. Corridor Action Plans focus on corridors that provide key linkages and connections throughout the City. Examples of elements included in a Corridor Action Plan include Streetscaping, Gateways, Access Management, Enhanced Greenspace, Investment Catalyst Sites, and others.

Neighborhood Action Plans, initiated by the city, are strategic plans supported by the city. EnvisionCR establishes a process, guided by staff, by which residents and other stakeholders engage in a planning process that addresses the issues and identifies the opportunities unique to individual neighborhoods. Community Development Staff plans on completing one Neighborhood Action Plan each year. An example of a plan previously completed can be viewed online by searching for Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan and selecting the .pdf file from the search results.

Project Descriptions:

Collins Road NE Corridor Action Plan

The Collins Road NE Corridor Action Plan will evaluate roadway improvement alternatives between I-380 and First Avenue/US151, focused specifically on elements of the streetscape and multi-modal improvements, especially for pedestrians. The study area is a major commercial corridor with some residential neighborhoods to the south. Improvements are planned along the corridor to address safety, congestion, and intersection issues. Community Development Staff is coordinating these efforts with staff from the Engineering Division of Public Works to avoid duplication of their improvement project within the study area.

Mount Vernon Road SE Corridor Action Plan

The Mount Vernon Road SE Corridor Action Plan will evaluate roadway improvement alternatives between downtown Cedar Rapids and 44th Street SE. This corridor has a history of generating high volumes of truck traffic destined for downtown from US highway 151. Mount Vernon Road will likely see increased congestion due to future traffic volumes as growth occurs further east. The plan will identify alternatives to address current safety issues, mitigate future congestion issues and improved overall functionality of the corridor. This plan will consider, among other examples, multi-modal transportation system, placemaking, a mix of land uses, reinvestment opportunities, and historic resources.

Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan

The Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan will focus on issues including the following: land use, transportation connection, creating opportunities for infill development, neighborhood design, placemaking, connection to schools, green building practices, and historic resources. This plan will build on the effort put forth in drafting the Greenway Project plans and plans for Ellis Blvd.

Update:

Individual Community Development staff members have been designated as lead and support staff for these projects. Work plans are currently being formulated for each project by the project's lead staff member and some preliminary work has begun. Staff anticipates that these projects will all have a completion date in late 2016.