

CITY OF VERONA
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (“CDA”)
April 4, 2019

1. **Call to order:** Errin Welty called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **Roll call:** Luke Diaz, Katie Kohl, Errin Welty, Art Cresson, Steve Rudolph and Christopher Zak were present. Also in attendance: Dayna Sarver, Economic Development Manager; Adam Sayre, Interim City Administrator; Jesse Charles, Verona Area Historical Society and Ellen Clark, City Clerk.
3. **Minutes:** Motion by Kohl, seconded by Cresson, to approve the minutes from the February 28, 2019 CDA meeting. Motion carried 7-0.

4. **Presentation: 2018 Development Summary**

Sarver presented the 2018 Development Summary. This summary is a high level view of taxable projects that began in 2018 and public improvement projects within the City limits. Sarver stated that most developers do a lot of their research using a municipality’s website before even calling Staff. This summary could be hosted on the City’s website as a scrolling slideshow, so developers can see the activity in the city from the last year. She hopes to get feedback on the report from the CDA before posting it to the website.

Discussion followed regarding adding a video or a YouTube link to the website.

Welty likes the commercial map, and commented that it would be good to have residential and industrial development maps, as well. We may also want to have some sort of graph going forward indicating growth rates and trends.

5:09 p.m. – Adam Frey now present.

The consensus of the group was that the summary is complete and well-composed.

5. **Discussion and Possible Action: Sugar Creek Elementary School and New Century School property site.**

Jesse Charles spoke regarding the New Century School building. Based on the application he submitted to the Wisconsin Historical Society, they believe the building will qualify for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. The cost of having the work done for submission of an application to the National Register would be \$1,800 - \$10,000. As plans for future uses for the building are considered, preserving the layout of the original plan will make it more likely for the building to be placed on the National Register. The Matts house was a success story, but they had to pretty much gut it. This building is different.

Charles went on to explain that the Wisconsin Historical Society administers a Certified Local Government program. Becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) would make the City eligible for funds to pay for the cost of having the building submitted for national registration. At this time, however, the City does not meet the basic criteria required to

become a CLG. Those criteria include establishing an historic preservation commission, enforcing state and local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties, maintaining a system for the survey and inventory of local historic resources, and providing for public participation in the local historic preservation program.

The benefits of becoming a CLG include tapping into grants to cover an architectural survey of the City, the ability to designate landmark properties within the City, and opportunities for public education about historic preservation.

Next steps for the City to apply to become a CLG include passing a historic preservation ordinance, creating a historic preservation commission, and applying to the Wisconsin Historical Society for designation as a CLG. Historic preservation commissions have the ability to designate properties as landmarks protected under the historic preservation ordinance.

Welty stated that placement on the National Register of Historic Places allows for tax credits for restoration and upkeep projects, and prohibits the Department of Transportation from destroying the building.

Charles is able to facilitate a visit by Joe DeRose from the Wisconsin Historical Society. Joe can answer any questions that the group may have about setting up a CLG.

Sayre stated that for this meeting, we have to stick to looking at the Sugar Creek properties. The CLG could be a future agenda item.

Welty asked if Jennifer Davel from the Wisconsin Historical Society has been here to look at the Matt's House or discuss New Century School.

Charles replied no, and remarked that once a property is considered a landmark, there is no opting out of it, which makes some developers nervous.

Sayre stated that the Council required a deed restriction for the Matts House stating that the property cannot be destroyed without approval from the City.

Welty stated the CDA may want to have Jennifer Davel walk the school property and tell us what we want to keep and what we do not. It would be good for her to get a sense of the plan for the property. She would ultimately approve or deny a building's placement on the Registry. It would make for one less piece of risk for developers.

The consensus of the CDA was to have a conversation with the School District Superintendent to see if Jennifer can take a tour through the New Century School. City staff will contact the Superintendent.

Sayre stated Staff has had contact with Carolyn Esswein, Director of Community Design Solutions through the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UW-Milwaukee, to discuss the potential of working with some of the program's grad students on concepts for the Sugar Creek Elementary School site. The students attend meetings and develop designs and drawings under the supervision of Professor Esswein. Funding for the program may be challenging, but Recreation Director Casey Dudley is willing to shift budget money to this

project from the recreation center design project, in exchange for the school being considered for a recreation site. Staff will continue to research this.

Kohl stated that it may be a good idea to wait to set our values and visions for this property until after the property is viewed by Historical Society staff.

6. Discussion and Possible Action: City owned property located at 130 N. Franklin St.

Sayre explained that this property is the old library. The lease with Redeemer Bible Fellowship runs through 2020. The building will need some major repairs soon. The roof is leaking, new lighting is needed, and the front columns are rotted. The cost of these repairs could be significant. This is a 1/2 - 3/4 acre lot targeted for redevelopment as part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan. There is interest in redeveloping the lands around it, as well. With the lease coming due on October 1st of 2020, Staff wanted to talk to the CDA about what they think would be the best move forward for this property. Should the City spend the money to make necessary repairs and continue leasing to the church, redevelop the property, or something else?

Rudolph asked what the Master Plan shows for this area.

Sayre stated the Master Plan shows Harriet Street being realigned on the west side, office space on the north side, and the potential for apartments or mixed use south of the property on N. Main Street. Multi-family use would be challenging because lots are shallow in this area.

Cresson likes the idea of lining up the streets, and developing properties that will generate property taxes.

Rudolph concurred with Cresson. I would be good if the properties contributed to the tax base.

Welty stated that a non-profit would be fine, if it generated jobs.

Zak asked if the building is worth updating.

Sayre replied we would be looking at approximately \$80,000. If the City continue to put money into the building, it becomes more difficult to support redevelopment.

Discussion followed regarding the cost and infrastructure requirements attached to the realignment of Harriet Street. It is not part of the City's capital budget. The street would have to be vacated and the utilities abandoned.

Zak and Kohl believe that making the necessary repairs to the building and continuing with a short term lease with the church would be a good idea.

The members agreed that the best plan is to repair the building and make a capital plan for developing the property.

7. Reports and comments from CDA members.

Welty asked the group if the City should to pursue becoming a CLG? It is free, but it will require some work on the City's part.

Rudolph believes the City should pursue becoming a CLG.

Kohl suggested conducting a survey of the properties we have in the City, and going from there.

Charles stated if the City forms a CLG, it could get a grant to cover a study of that type.

8. Reports and comments from City Staff.

Kohl asked Sarver about the results of the business survey.

Sarver replied there were only 54 responses to the survey. That is not enough data on which to base decisions. There are other avenues for gathering data that she will try. She learned that a lot of our business community is not familiar with the opportunities and resources that are available to them and will be working with the Chamber on some different programming & education resources.

For example, 6th-12th graders have access to a web-based academic and career development platform to help determine which careers might be best for them. Madison Region Economic Partnership is working to connect kids using this program with career opportunities at local businesses. Local businesses just need to be informed and enroll in the program.

9. Adjourn: Motion by Cresson, seconded by Diaz, to adjourn at 5:50 pm. Motion carried 7-0.