

Redevelopment Authority of the City of Eau Claire
Minutes
Wednesday, September 19, 2018
Room 1277, 721 Oxford Ave, Eau Claire County Courthouse

Members Present: Mike DeRosa, Catherine Emmanuelle, Jeff Halloin, Thomas Kemp, Connie Pedersen, Dale Peters

Members Absent: Janine Wildenberg

Staff Present: Dave Solberg, Doug Hoffer, Scott Allen, Josh Solinger, Kristine Basom, Mike Schatz, Amy Kalmon, Ray French

1. Call to order. This meeting was called to order by Chair DeRosa at 7:28 a.m.
2. Minutes from the meeting of August 22, 2018. The minutes from the meeting of August 22, 2018 were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. Pedersen and seconded by Mr. Kemp. The motion carried.
3. Financial Statements. Mr. Solinger presented the financial statements for the month ending August 31, 2018. Operating expenses totaled \$4,645 due to utility, auditing, and recording expenditures and unchanged from the previous month. Utility expenses will be accrued back to August at a later date. Capital expenditures in August total \$2,417.54 due to rental costs of the properties located at 1702 and 1706 Oxford Avenue. A funding commitment was also made to Right of Way Professionals, Inc. at \$19,805 for the acquisition and relocation costs at 1704 Oxford Avenue.

The financial statements for the month ending August 31, 2018 were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Ms. Emmanuelle. The motion carried.

4. Discussion and feedback on potential road alignments in the Cannery District. Mr. Schatz introduced the next step for the Redevelopment Authority in the Cannery District to determine the road alignment of Oxford Avenue. Mr. Solberg reviewed the development of the trail and current alignment of Oxford Avenue. He then provided four possible options for road alignment.

Option 1 showed the road following the trail along the river creating the largest area of developable land at about 6.8 acres. The road in all options will have on-street parking and could be 80 feet wide like Riverfront Terrace or 66 feet like Barstow Street.

Option 2 contains a subtle shift away from the trail creating developable land on both sides of the road at about 7 acres. There would be a loss of viewing for law enforcement on the trail if fully developed. They are expecting a split in traffic between Oxford Avenue and Bellinger Streets from Madison Street.

Ms. Emmanuelle asked whether there will be a view from Vine Street over the District. Mr. Solberg mentioned a traffic study in the area and discussed numerous options for developing a neighborhood draw through that corridor. He also noted the Health Impact Assessment and the concern of residents for pedestrian safety.

Option 3 was presented as a hybrid that creates a calming entrance with a move toward the trail halfway through.

Option 4 showed the existing right-of-way for the road widened, leaving tighter lots along the river. All options include about 7 acres of developable land. Mr. Solberg said he wanted to gather input today, narrow it down internally and bring it back next month, and establish the right-of-way by the end of the year.

Mr. Halloin discussed the principle that right-of-way to the river is dedicated to the public. This was established in the development of Royal Credit Union and Riverfront Terrace. He urged staff to adopt the same view and that anything east of the Oxford Avenue remain public. He also thought something nice could be developed on the Vine Street right-of-way.

Mr. Kemp added that research corroborates how to develop areas like this for the long-term property values. The most value is achieved when you have the water, public space, road, and then private space. There is less property value in a Water Street-type scenario where the bike path detracts from property values.

Ms. Pedersen asked whether there will be restrictions on what can be developed. Mr. Schatz responded that Central Business District rezoning would likely occur and that there are no height restrictions. The Redevelopment Authority can impose its own restrictions. Ms. Emmanuelle noted that the wider public space and room to breathe is important and supported by the larger public space from the road to the river. She also noted the importance of opening the viewpoint from Vine Street.

Mr. Peters agrees with the comments on the design of the space. He also noted the importance of curves in creating an open space. Mr. DeRosa summarized that the Board supported a modified option 2 or 4 so that there is maximized development. Mr. Solberg said he would return with two options, one with Vine Street and one without.

5. Discussion of the history, purpose and process of the Redevelopment Authority. Mr. DeRosa discussed his interest in having Mr. Schatz present this retrospective to the Board as he retires and experienced Board members rotate off at the end of the year.


Mr. Schatz reviewed the history of the Redevelopment Authority Districts beginning with Half Moon Lake. He continued with the North Barstow Redevelopment District, Soo Line Redevelopment District, West Madison Street Redevelopment District, and now the Cannery District. He concluded with the valuation history of each.

He continued with a discussion of the developers list he maintains, which includes developers across the Midwest who have expressed an interest in Eau Claire. Proposals that have not been pursued in the past are usually due to financial reasons, where valuation and requests did not generate enough increment. Other times the proposed project did not fit the look and use of the district. Projects have been funded in the past through the Economic Development Fund and Community Development Block Grant funds. The City Council put \$1.2 million in the Capital Improvement Plan in 2018, and is considering more in 2019 to complete acquisition in the Cannery District. Mr. DeRosa asked how grants are monitored, which Mr. Schatz responded that Finance and Risk Management staff keep up-to-date on opportunities. He also noted that the City Manager's Development Team meets every two weeks to review projects and proposals internally. Lastly, the City Manager will appoint the Redevelopment Authority Executive Director.

Mr. Halloin added that Mr. Schatz met with people constantly to generate interest in development in the projects. Mr. DeRosa commended Mr. Schatz's leadership throughout this time.

6. Motion authorizing Scott Allen to sign lease agreements. Mr. Schatz said that a motion was needed to have Scott Allen sign lease agreements as they may come available before a replacement can be appointed. A motion was made to authorize Scott Allen to sign lease agreements by Ms. Emmanuelle, seconded by Mr. Kemp. The motion carried.
7. Executive Director's Report. Mr. Schatz reviewed the status of projects. Proposals for Block 7 are due by noon on Friday, September 28. He is expecting two for sure but could be as many as 6 or 7. In the Cannery District, staff met with WiRED Properties after the last meeting and they are supposed to be getting back to staff with information. The Curling Club is planning on moving forward on a project in the Cannery District. He has also assisted a developer who is looking at lots along the rivers. There is a client looking at a river restaurant. He noted that there is a lot of interest in Redevelopment sites and that there are will be good projects to look at. The next meeting is Wednesday, October 17.
8. Announcements and correspondence. Mr. DeRosa presented a plaque to Mr. Schatz and thanked him for his long-time service. Mr. Schatz said he has enjoyed serving this Board representing economic development.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.



Connie Pedersen, Secretary