

**Redevelopment Authority for the City of Eau Claire**  
**Minutes**  
**Wednesday, May 17, 2023**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**

**Members Present:** Jenny Fesenmaier, Jeremy Gragert, Pam Haller, Michael Halloin, Connie Pedersen, Dave Solberg

**Members Absent:** Wayne Wille

**Others Present:**

**Staff Present:** Corey Lee, Steve Nick, Aaron White and Jake Wiensch

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. This meeting was called to order by Ms. Haller at 7:30 a.m.
2. Review and approval of minutes from 4/19/2023. The meeting minutes from 4/19/2023 were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. Pedersen. Second by Mr. Solberg. The motion was carried.
3. Review and approval of financials. The financials were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Mr. Solberg. Second by Ms. Fesenmaier. The motion was carried.
4. Public comment for items that are not listed as public hearing or discussion.
  - A. None
5. Business items with public hearing or public discussion.
  - A. None
6. Other business items:
  - A. Request from Merge, LLC to Amend the Purchase Agreement for 161 N. Barstow St.
    - i. Mr. White gave an overview of the amendment to the Purchase Agreement with Merge, LLC regarding the purchase of the 161 N. Barstow St. lot. The closing of this site was postponed due to Merge, LLC negotiating out the residential aspect of the Transit Center. Closing was supposed to be the end of December and with this amendment it would be pushed to September 30<sup>th</sup> or earlier. Merge, LLC plans to build 57 units of residential with commercial space on the first floor.
    - ii. RDA Discussion: There was no further discussion or concerns with the proposed amendment.
    - iii. RDA Action: Consideration of a motion to Amend the Purchase Agreement with Merge, LLC regarding closing date and other benchmark dates. Mr. Halloin motioned. Mr. Gragert seconded. Motion carried.
  - B. Discussion regarding future RDA areas of focus
    - i. Mr. White gave an overview of the four potential RDA focus areas that the board instructed staff to bring back to them. These focus areas include the extension of the Cannery District, the industrial area in the southwest quadrant of Eau Claire, the former Shopko Plaza, and the North Barstow District expansion.
    - ii. RDA Discussion: There was discussion on the four potential focus areas from the RDA. It was determined to look at each location individually so questions could be asked and answered by staff. First, staff restated the idea of using a surgical approach for the extension of the Cannery District so it could encourage natural growth and revitalization

in this area. Next, a discussion was held on the possibility of acquiring land and potential future use of the industrial area in the southwest quadrant of Eau Claire. Mr. White shared that with this area, WisDOT had already shared the concerns with this area and traffic flows that could be interrupted with development in this region. There were also talks of the bike trail that works its way through this area and how that could impact growth and development. Next, discussion was held on the former Shopko plaza space. Ms. Haller asked if it was necessary for the RDA to step in if there was already naturally growth and development happening in this space. Mr. White mentioned that the strip mall would be the main area of focus within this potential redevelopment area. Mr. Gragert stated that he would like to see a more pedestrian friendly area throughout this area. Ms. Fesenmaier wanted to know what the RDA could do if the land owner is not willing to sell and unable to be contacted. Mr. White went over the authority the RDA would have in a situation like this one with a absent landlord. Lastly, discussion was held on the North Barstow District expansion. Mr. Gragert wanted to know how the neighborhood association was involved in this process. Mr. White mentioned how staff had done a walk around in the neighborhood district with the neighborhood association president and looked at different properties. Mr. White mentioned how the RDA would use a surgical approach to this district and use resources already within the community to create affordable housing and revitalization within this district. After discussion Mr. White encouraged the board to narrow down their focus to one to two districts so staff could do further research. The RDA decided to narrow in their focus on the former Shopko plaza location and the industrial area in the southwest quadrant of Eau Claire. With the goal of the plaza to be a shorter-term project and the other focus area to be a longer-term project, if it seems feasible.

- iii. Next Steps: Staff will be reaching out to land owners in the industrial area in the southwest quadrant of Eau Claire and do further research into both spaces.
7. Executive Director's Report. Mr. White reported that there is a lot of projects in the community and downtown Eau Claire. Work is being done in the Cannery Park and once the park is online, then Kessler Park will be opened up for redevelopment. Silver Creek Equity and Ambient Inks projects are moving forward; we are just waiting on financials.
8. Announcements – None
9. Next meeting date – June 21, 2023
10. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn by Ms. Pedersen. Seconded by Ms. Fesenmaier. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 a.m.



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Ms. Pam Haller, Secretary