

Tomah Long Range Planning Committee Minutes

The City of Tomah Long Range Planning Committee met in regular session on Tuesday, January 23, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers 819 Superior Ave., Tomah, WI.

Call to Order – Roll Call: Chairperson Eric Prise called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present: Tony Farmer, Eric Prise, Travis Scholze, Jeff Holthaus, Nellie Pater, Tina Thompson, Joanne Westpfahl and Pam Buchda (5:45 p.m.) Absent: Steve Peterson and Pete Reichardt. Quorum present. Also in attendance: City Administrator Roger Gorius, Alderperson Lamont Kiefer, VAF Director Chris Hanson (6:00 p.m.) and Andrew Bremmer (Skype).

Review and Approval of November 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes: Motion by Holthaus, second by Thompson to approve the November 28, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried without negative vote.

Downtown Master Plan Marketing Discussion – Andrew Bremer, MSA: Recommends that the City have all necessary resources on hand for business owners to access. Plan are to develop a brochure to promote the program. It is recommended that each committee member be responsible for contacting a few business to explain the Downtown Master Plan and the availability of TIF assistance. Once the business owners have been provided with that information, a meet and greet could be held or the Committee could at least make annual contact with business owners to discuss any plans they may have such as expansion or remodeling,

The Chamber Board has formed a Downtown Development Committee to market the downtown design plan. Director Thompson would like information, brochures or other materials to be provided to the committee so they can pass the information onto the local businesses when meeting with them in March and April. Mr. Bremer suggested that he could develop an interactive story map that would be accessed through the Chamber of Commerce and City websites which will demonstrate how the plan works as well as show completed projects.

Committee members are questioning what the process will be for someone who wants to borrow funds for a project. Per Mr. Bremer, the LRPC is responsible for making sure that potential projects are in compliance with the City's design standards (Certificate of Appropriateness). As far as financing, the Committee of the Whole provides direction regarding financing which then would be forwarded to the City Council to be voted on.

Mr. Bremer will work with Administrator Gorius and Chamber Director Thompson to provide a proposal with various options for marketing the master plan, financing options available for potential projects, and a timeframe for holding a public info meeting. That information will be provided at the February 27th meeting.

Discussion Regarding Possible TID Assistance to the Veterans Assistance Foundation: The VAF is in the process of remodeling their building at 1118 Superior Ave. \$80,000-100,000 is needed to finish the second floor remodel which will have eight apartments for rent to low income veterans. The VAF has already invested \$225,000 in purchasing the building and an additional \$200,000 in rehabilitation of the building. Veterans Affairs has donated property (including vehicles). The VAF is selling that property to have more funds to put toward the project.

Mr. Bremer indicated that this project would fall under a rehabilitation loan rather than a grant since the parcel is tax exempt and there will be no tax increment. Director Hanson is not looking for a grant. He would like to borrow \$100,000 and whatever is not used could be applied to the loan. The potential profit from selling their building at 312 Superior Avenue and rent from the apartments will be used to repay the loan. Mr. Bremer stated that the City does have the ability to set loan terms on rehabilitation projects and that the Council needs to consider whether they want to provide funding on a project that will not provide future tax increment. Administrator Gorius will talk to the Assessor to find out if the finished apartments will change the value of the building. This matter will be addressed again in February.

Discussion of Downtown Information Center: The building interior has been gutted. Plumbers will be coming this week to submit a proposal for the plumbing work. Building Inspector Rolff, Public Works Director Arity and Recreation Director Joe Protz are researching building materials. Design standards and Certificate of Appropriateness will hopefully be available at the February meeting. \$260,000 was originally approved for the remodel project. The planned construction should come in below the budgeted amount.

Administrative Updates: The \$250,000 grant application to acquire the houses adjacent to the 3rd Gen project was submitted and is under review. 3rd Gen is working on plans to shore up the wall of the building that is adjacent to the proposed building. The City is considering opening up TID #10 for construction of a hotel and convention center near the Tomah Memorial Hospital. Gundersen Clinic will construct a cancer facility that will provide tax revenue. TID #9 and #10 will be donors to TID #8 in order to provide the funds needed to make aesthetic improvements to the downtown area. The Annual Monroe County Economic Development Conference is being held on February 21 & 22 at Three Bears Lodge.

Next Meeting Date: February 27, 2018. Committee member Westpfahl will not be able to attend.

Adjourn: Motion by Thompson, second by Farmer, to adjourn. Motion passed without negative vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Webster.