

**Community Development Authority (CDA) Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2020 Zoom Meeting**

Committee Members Present: William Streeter, Dave Gobis, Fran Martin, Kjell Erlandsson.
Others in Attendance: Peter Wagner, Helena Dowd, Lee Wishau
Not Attending: Jim Dobbs, Marla Wishau

1) Meeting called to order

Zoom meeting called to order by Streeter at 4:05 p.m.

2) Approval of minutes from the July 22, 2020 meeting.

Motion to approve by Streeter

Seconded by Martin

Approved unanimously

3) Blight Ordinances and Enforcement –Wagner

Property Maintenance Case at **6121 STH 31**: Wagner shared a Power Point presentation showing the letter and list of violations sent to the owner of the property after staff from Engineering, Zoning and Building Inspection conducted a special inspection on August 5. Findings include lack of vegetation, disruption of drainage, property maintenance violations, junk vehicles, dwelling in disrepair with foundation work done with no permit or engineering calculations. The documentation sent to the owner included pictures of all the violations, necessary actions to gain compliance, and deadlines. Any junk vehicles remaining on the property after **September 28, 2020** will be ticketed. If the property is not brought into compliance, the Village has the option to take the case to court and get authority from a judge to clean up the property and charge the owner. If progress is made and owner continues making an effort, the Village will continue giving notice and more time. It will be the Village's choice when to take further action if not cleaned up.

Charles & Johnson: The owner of **4652 Charles St.** cleaned up miscellaneous junk that was in the front yard. There are a number of unsightly vehicles parked at this property and the one across Charles Street, **1327 Johnson Ave.**

7021 Douglas Ave.: The raze is still pending. Wagner said he did not realize the Village had to contact WE Energies for gas and electric disconnections. He has now requested the disconnects so the project can move forward.

7915 USH 41

Other businesses on Hwy 41 complying with rules and complaining about this property. Zoning will issue a citation to the owner for violating the Conditional Use Permit for the property.

Foley Road, Vacant Parcel: Concerns about a portable toilet on the property as well as tall weeds. Zoning will notify the weed commissioner. The portable toilet was not there when then original Notice of Violation was sent. Owner had indicated he would be applying for a new home building permit, so a notice was not sent for the porta john. As no permit has been submitted to date, Zoning will send a new Notice of Violation advising the owner to remove the toilet.

4) Douglas Avenue Business Association

Not present, excused absence. The CDABA did not meet in August, Streeter said.

Wagner said he met with a few of the members regarding the O&H Coffee Brewer development.

He said their conversation turned toward Conditional Use Permits. Association members would like business owners to know about the conditions of approval and approved uses and said they can serve as a first contact for information. Members could reach out to business owners and let them know if they are in violation of the conditions and inform them of the approved uses. They could help owners avoid a notice of violation from the Village.

Gobis brought up the concern that many owners may not know what their approved uses are and asked if there is a way to inform them. Wagner said that there might be, but the Village does not have the staff to set up and carry out such a process. Conditional Use Permits are on file at Racine County. If we obtained the paper documents, they would need to be prepped for scanning and then a staff member would need to do research, send notifications, and conduct enforcement. One way to make the notifications would be to go by quarter sections, review the permits and conditions, and contact the business owners. Wagner noted that the first step toward migrating to electronic document retention has been taken by getting approval to purchase a scanner in 2021. Documents for all current zoning permits are being filed electronically.

5) Update on Land Use Plan Committee –Martin

Martin brought up the idea of having high-density housing in the former Kmart building. She said the property was formerly zoned high-density residential. A developer she talked to is enthusiastic about the idea and would like the CDA to be involved at an early stage of the development process. It would help “center” the Village and there are potential advantages of having high-density housing on the site, she said. The developer may be able to apply for federal tax credits in return for a small number of the units being leased based on income. Only a small number of units would be subsidized. The proposal would be dependent upon the current owner being willing to sell. If it were to become housing, the project would include a tear-down. Issues include the cost of developing the site and whether expanding water and sewer capacity would be required. Martin asked if other members think this is a feasible approach to the Kmart site and whether they think it would help to anchor Douglas Avenue as the Village’s primary commercial corridor.

Gobis said he does not agree with tax credits and would want the housing to be priced at market rate. He said he is in favor of looking into any proposals for the site.

Streeter asked how the CDA would be involved.

Martin said the developer told her they usually work with CDAs looking at a proposal at the outset of the process instead of going to committees and plan commissions. In his experience CDAs meet with the perspective developers to look at the numbers and assess the upsides and the downsides.

Streeter said, “Since we’re trying to figure out what our role is, maybe we should just move forward and take it on. He asked for Wishau’s opinion as a Village Trustee.

Wishau said the idea is worth discussing.

Martin said the development would support the current retail but noted that retail seems to be dying so it is time to look at something different for that spot. Streeter agreed and asked what the next step would be.

Martin said it would be to speak with the developer and see if they want to set up a meeting. This process is different from going to Plan Commission when the plan is already formulated, she noted.

Streeter made a motion to move forward to assist the developer with formulating plans for STH 32, the old Kmart shopping center.

Motion seconded by Gobis.

Unanimously approved.

Streeter asked Martin about Land Use Plan Committee which now has a different purpose from when it was set up earlier this year. Wagner discussed the scope of the committee and said it may have to be small to look at use at a neighborhood level. The group may look at redefining zoning code ordinances regarding uses in the various districts versus planning land use.

6) Signage – Marla Wishau had submitted a report about the status of Village signs. He asked Martin about the progress on the project of installing a Village sign on the northwest corner of 3 Mile Road and STH

32. Martin said the Village has requested Payne & Dolan to move their cyclone fence further back onto their property and they were amenable. Streeter mentioned that the sign on STH 32 and County Line Road is now lit and gives an appealing look at the north entrance to the Village.

7) Treasurers Report – Kjell Erlandsson
No spending for the month

8) New Business – Dobbs was to lead a discussion about the role of the CDA.

Streeter voiced his frustration saying the CDA has made “zero progress,” over the past six months on defining the role of the CDA and that “it feels like we’re not doing anything.” Referencing attracting new members for two vacant spots, he said current members must have something to tell people about what the CDA does to get them interested. He said he is not sure what to do other than talk to Dobbs and let him know the group needs a vision of what it is supposed to do.

Martin said the group should propose CDA manage this early look at high-density residential at the former Kmart site. She mentioned there is also pressure to have high-density residential, especially along the freeway, where it may attract workers from Mt. Pleasant and Foxxcon.

Streeter said the group needs direction. He said he will contact Dobbs.

Erlandsson mentioned defining the Planning Commission’s role versus the role of the CDA.

Wishau said there needs to be an economic development committee “of our own,” so that when a proposal comes forward, we need to talk to the developer and let him know about other business properties. Noting a commercial development was just approved on a residentially zoned parcel, he said the Village ends up with vacant buildings and while “virgin territory,” is developed. The CDA could steer developers to properly zoned areas, he said.

Martin said the old buildings are blight or potential blight. She questioned the purpose of allowing vacant buildings to become blight while new buildings are put on vacant land.

Wishau asked if the CDA could be a marketing group to help developers get to the right areas.

Gobis said the CDA should be much more involved in things like zoning changes, development, both business and residential, and noted there are benefits to being an independent source not related to any elected position. Noting the recent rezoning on 4 Mile Road and STH 31, he assessed that the developer provided very little information because, “they wanted a clean sheet.” He predicted the developer is going to, “explore whatever loophole might be available,” and that such projects need citizen review instead of just being reviewed by elected officials. Martin concurred.

Streeter said the Village has the responsibility to move forward on plans for empty buildings such as the old Western Publishing site and the old Olympia Brown School site.

Martin said they are blights and belong in the CDA.

Erlandsson said CDAs used to deal with urban renewal to put life into old buildings and that should be the role of CDA, to look at projects before they get to the Village Plan Commission.

Streeter said Dobbs has stated that is the role of RCEDC.

Wishau said he will check with proactive communities to find out what processes they use to steer developers toward existing vacant buildings rather than building new on vacant land.

9) Adjourn

Adjourn 5:45 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Erlandsson

Seconded by Martin

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by Helena Dowd