

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
January 27, 2005

Chairman Day called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and the Clerk confirmed that appropriate meeting notice had been given.

Members present: Day, Whalen, Schwabe, Rowe and Jones

Members absent: Bartel and Gross (a quorum was present)

Staff present: Duffy, Coenen, Senfleben, Gard and Attorney Chapman

Others present: Ald. Antonneau

There were no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

Comments from the audience – Mr. Ron Schneider, 514 W. Lincoln, representing St. Paul's Church, commented that at their recent annual meeting a lot of concern was brought up as to what is happening in the redevelopment area. In particular, they are wondering about whether St. Paul Street will be closed. He remarked that very little has changed since the resolution was adopted last July, or it has been done in closed session and he is hoping to learn something from the discussion this evening.

Review CDA Mission – Chairman Day commented that the CDA's key focus is trust within the community and promoting a private/public partnership. We have been working with property owners and key members in the community, and realizing that what we do will have a lasting effect on our community, it is important to go slow and make sure things are going to be done right. Mr. Jones agreed, pointing out that many people want to know, but it is sensitive material and timing, and nothing has been settled. Ms. Whalen stated that she could understand the frustration, but the CDA has not been able to resolve anything, and this should be conveyed to the public. We need to determine where we are and how much we can say, because there is a danger that it appears that we are not doing anything. She pointed out that we have to wait for the State to do something before we do anything that really shows. She recognized that Mr. Duffy, and the Chamber of Commerce are working very hard on proceeding with a Downtown Manager. Ms. Rowe also stated that people and press think that we are stalled, but we are not stalled. There are so many elements that have to be worked out that depend on others, and we need to make a public statement to that effect. We do have valid reasons and we cannot share what is going on yet.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 8, 2004 – Moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Rowe to approve the minutes of December 8, 2004, as written. Voice vote carried with no dissenting votes.

Old Business

a. Update on Expo Center project - Mr. Duffy stated that the agent for Magna indicated that they would be moving forward with some plans with the City. He called the owner and asked for the status of the project, and advised that we need to move forward to an approval process. He distributed a copy of an e-mail from Ms. Anderson which he received this afternoon, outlining their intent. They have hired the firm of Grubb & Ellis, and are working with Kevin Riordan from that firm who is doing a marketing prospectus. In the e-mail, Kevin has advised them not to make too many changes until they can market it to see who they can attract. Mr. Duffy asked for direction from the group as to their expectations.

Mr. Schwabe stated that he has talked with Ms. Anderson a couple of times and thought that they were moving forward to make construction this spring. However, he is disappointed that it took 12 months to get a broker on board, and felt they are going at this backwards. Although Ms. Anderson may be doing all she can, it appears the owner is holding things back. Ms. Rowe voiced disappointment in the fact that we are where we were a year ago, and regretted giving her a year. Ms. Whalen felt that the hiring of a broker is a significant step, with which Mr. Jones agreed. He felt the next step should be to get Kevin to come in to present a floor plan, and give us an idea of when they will proceed. Mr. Duffy pointed out that Ms. Anderson intends to be at the February meeting, but Kevin will be out of town and will send someone else from their firm. Mr. Day stated he is also frustrated by the lack of progress on this project, but pointed out that there is a lot of other action going on, with Summit Centre Marketplace, and across the highway on the Jensen property, where action is indicated by the Kent Kowalak sign. He suggested that we ask our attorney, Bruce Block, to advise us as to what our options are in order to move forward on this matter. We have been generous in allowing them to proceed at their own pace.

Attorney Chapman reported on a land division on this location which our Finance Director was made aware of by a call from the Register of Deeds office. He contacted Ms. Anderson and asked how that could be done without City approval, which prompted a call from Mr. Baysari who explained it was done for financial reasons. Within 3 days there was a correction with a new description, which includes the entire parcel again. So, it is back to the original parcel, but felt the CDA should be informed of this.

Mr. Duffy stated he will contact Ms. Anderson and express the concerns of the CDA, and ask for input from our attorney.

Discussion: Update on Downtown Projects – Mr. Duffy reported that the Chamber Board has created a Foundation to take in money for a Downtown Management program. They felt it was important to create the Foundation, and are proceeding to assemble materials for funding. Ms. Whalen reported that some people think the Downtown Manager is a City government position. Mr. Duffy pointed out that they would not be reporting directly to himself or the Chamber, but that they need certain autonomy as it relates to the downtown. It was created as a dual advocacy entity, i.e. a public/private partnership, and a financial vehicle for downtown management. The Downtown Manager would be an employee of the Foundation Board. We are striving to keep the momentum moving and are asking the private sector to help. He stated they will begin implementation of the plan in conjunction with Tim Anderson, as an adviser to the CDA. He is hoping to have him come and meet with us at the February 24th meeting. He does want to make sure the CDA is kept informed.

He reported that the DOT has been doing preliminary work, and the roadway work is taking place; St. Jerome's school building is down, and work will begin on Berkshire in February; last week we got word that we will receive \$23,000 through a CDBG grant he applied for, to be used for façade design on downtown buildings. We received \$5,000 in 2004, for a total of \$28,000. We will reimburse downtown business owners for design improvement and the fees involved in our process, if they improve their building. The process will be that an agreement will be drawn up by the City for the owner to sign, and they will be reimbursed at the time they get a building permit and give us some indication of a completion date.

Regarding the subject of the closed session, we were asked to bring the parties together, and gave them a timeline to come back to us. He announced that they are now working together, but are not prepared to come tonight with a presentation. The closed session, therefore, is cancelled for tonight. They want to approach City staff for comments with any issues we have, but will come here when they are ready, and that could be within weeks. They asked if the CDA would be willing to have a special meeting for this specific issue prior to the regularly scheduled February meet, if that becomes possible. Mr. Duffy pointed out that this body only endorses the project to the Plan Commission, and ultimately to the Common Council, in open session. It will require multiple public hearings, and a Planned Development Ordinance. Mr. Duffy felt this was a very positive thing, and is just what we were looking for.

New Business

- a. Discussion/action: Resolution to Certify the St. Paul-E. Wisconsin Ave. Redevelopment Plan - Mr. Duffy reported that, in discussion with Bruce Block, although the moratorium has run, we can certify by Resolution and recommend to the Common Council that no new construction be permitted in the redevelopment area unless authorized by the local legislative body. This is allowed by Wis. Stats. 66.1333(6)(e). This will allow the CDA to continue with orderly development according to the plan. There would be no expiration date on the prohibition. If this body certifies this resolution, the Common Council will act on a Resolution restricting construction in the redevelopment area. Ms. Whalen referred to a recent editorial regarding the extension of the moratorium in the "blight block" of no construction during the planning process. This resolution will allow that prohibition, but it is ultimately a Council decision. Chairman Day felt this action will help some of the owners in the area.

Motion was made by Mr. Schwabe, seconded by Ms. Whalen to approve the CDA Resolution #2005-01 Certifying the St. Paul/E. Wisconsin Redevelopment Plan. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Chairman Day stated that obviously the closed session will not take place. There was a brief discussion regarding concern that some of the properties in the redevelopment area have not been properly maintained and have become uninhabitable as a result. The situation will be reported to the City's Building Inspector, to make sure all utilities are turned off and that buildings are secured. The police department should also be notified to check on the properties.

Attorney Chapman cautioned that if members have topics they wish to discuss at an upcoming meeting, they should ask Mr. Duffy to add it to the agenda.

There being no further business to properly come before this body, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Rowe, seconded by Mr. Schwabe, and carried. (7:45 p.m.)

Ardyce Senfleben, City Clerk