

## VILLAGE OF GRAFTON

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

JULY 1, 2009

The Community Development Authority (CDA) meeting was called to order by Chair John Gassert at 6:08 p.m.

CDA members present: John Gassert, Alan Kletti, Dan McKelvey, Ron LaPean, Jim Grant, Sharon Walbrun and Roger Kirgues (6:23 p.m.)

Staff/Officials present: Village Administrator Darrell Hofland, Director of Planning and Development Michael Rambousek, Village President Jim Brunnquell, Village Clerk Teri Dylak

#### **MINUTES**

Motion by Trustee LaPean, seconded by Alan Kletti, to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2009 Community Development Authority meeting, as presented. Approved unanimously.

#### **HEAR PERSONS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD**

None.

#### **CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION**

Motion by Alan Kletti, seconded by Trustee LaPean, to convene to closed session, at 6:16 p.m., pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(e) for real estate and competitive bargaining matters (purchase of downtown properties for parking and redevelopment including Grafton Hotel, Grafton Village Center loan, and other redevelopment efforts). Approved unanimously by roll call vote.

A closed session of approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes was held. During the closed session the CDA reviewed a proposal for the possible Downtown redevelopment. In addition, the members were updated by staff on the status of several potential projects in the downtown.

#### **RE-CONVENE TO OPEN SESSION AND THE REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Motion by Trustee LaPean, seconded by Roger Kirgues, to reconvene to open session and the regular order of business, at 7:37 p.m. Approved unanimously.

#### **DISCUSSION OF LUMBERYARD SITE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Director of Planning and Development Michael Rambousek reviewed the potential timeline for the possible redevelopment of the former lumberyard site.

Mr. Mark Smith and Mr. Larry Witzling, PDI/Graef, were present to review possible development options for the site. They distributed a lumberyard site base map and several development concept plans.

Mr. Rambousek indicated that four items were taken into consideration when designing concept plans for the development of this site. They include:

1. Project phasing – Will the development make sense from a phasing standpoint? There should be more than one development type on this site to create different development opportunities
2. Which properties can be easily obtained for development? It is likely that John's Pizzeria will remain and need to be considered in the overall plan.
3. There must be synergy between the uses on site and the need to be economically compatible.
4. Do the sites have adequate parking and green space?

Mr. Larry Witzling stated that each concept plan includes a central amenity to assist in organizing the site.

Mr. Mark Smith reviewed the two concepts favored by the design team (Plan 1D and 2C [attached](#)). He indicated that Plan 1D has no amenity on Wisconsin Avenue. There is a simple access point off of Cedar Street extended, parking around the perimeter of the buildings and a centrally located green space amenity. The green area includes a small gazebo type structure.

Concept plan 2C includes a green space amenity at the site entrance on Wisconsin Avenue. This area is intended to be shared with the community and provides an open visual entrance to the site. The area would be privately maintained but open to public use.

Both Plans include an access point from Beech Street and extensive landscaping along the railroad tracks at the rear of the site. Plan 2C includes a line of parking along the railroad tracks which intensifies the buffer between the tracks and the buildings.

Mr. Witzling indicated that the two concepts were designed to show the different size buildings that could be built. There are options for larger and smaller size buildings with a mix of both.

Mr. Smith commented that phasing of the project will be a critical component for the development of this site, in addition to acquiring the Musbach property. In addition, there will be a need to acquire additional properties along Wisconsin Avenue and Beech Street. The site is designed for an integrated development and will require the connection of infrastructure throughout the site.

The members and consultants discussed the various types of development that could be included in this area. The possibility of commercial/retail on the main level and residential in the upper level will be a viable option. Providing all residential or all commercial development options will be a challenge. Additional parking will be required if all of the development is of a commercial nature.

Director of Planning and Development Rambousek informed the members that, at this time, it is unknown whether there will be a need for onsite storm water management. If required, the layout of the site will need to change.

Trustee Grant questioned if the adjacent manufacturing use will be problem for the proposed residential development component.

Mr. Smith responded that an extensive buffer area is proposed between any residential development and the adjacent manufacturing use. The Plans currently show a 150 foot extensively landscaped buffer between the manufacturing area and building placement. How the area is marketed will be crucial to a successful development.

Mr. Rambousek also stated that the orientation of the buildings will lessen the impact of the adjacent manufacturing area.

Chair Gassert commented that the plans appear to be dependent upon the acquisition of several properties. The properties along Beech Street do not need to be acquired to make the plan work with slight design modifications.

Mr. Witzling commented that the marketing of the area will be critical to its success. The location of the railroad and adjacent manufacturing area present development challenges. Staff is currently investigating the depth of the bedrock on the site. It may be necessary to raise the first floor elevations because of the bedrock. This would provide a similar design to the former Grafton Hotel property which has a raised main level.

Alan Kletti questioned how this project will be marketed in this type of economy. Mr. Witzling responded that the layout will be developer driven. Staff and the consultants will be meeting with area developers for feedback on the design layout of this area.

Mr. Smith reiterated that each development will need to be coordinated so that the next area can be developed. The infrastructure will also need to be set to allow expansion of the needed services.

Administrator Hofland commented that the size of the buildings and the mix of commercial and residential development will be very important to the success of the development of this site. The current concept plans show 2 and 3-story buildings with underground parking. The site should include several different size buildings to accommodate a variety of uses. Mr. Witzling responded that a 4-story building along the tracks would be a good development option. The building could be designed for commercial uses or converted into condominiums should the need arise.

Mr. Smith suggested different unit sizes and types. Another choice would be 2-story town homes with underground parking. This type of development appears less dense, but increases parking.

Trustee Grant questioned if the development of this site is viable in today's economic climate. Mr. Witzling stated that as things begin to turn around, there will be developers looking for a low risk development opportunity.

Mr. Witzling informed the CDA that they will need to review each proposed project to be sure that the project is economically viable.

Administrator Hofland commented that the Village needs to be sure that this area is developed in a manner that will not be in direct competition with other development in the Village. The Highland Ridge project is mostly residential and we need to ensure that any development that occurs on this site does not have a negative impact on that project

Sharon Walbrun stated that any development that occurs in this area will need to have considerable architectural review. Mr. Rambousek responded that the Downtown Master Plan has specific architectural guidelines that will be looked at when this area develops.

President Brunnuell commented that while he appreciates all of the work that has gone into preparing the concept plans; he is concerned with the lack of commercial development proposed for this area. The vision of the downtown is to create a center hub that provides a number of services to the downtown. The plans only show a small commercial area at the north edge of the plans. This basically stops the downtown foot traffic from going any further south on Wisconsin Avenue. One purpose of the downtown hub is to promote foot traffic in this area. By including a large residential component on this site, with limited commercial, you are forcing people to go to another location for their shopping needs.

Mr. Brunnuell also stated that a residential subdivision in the center of town is not a good use of the parcel. If the thought is to stop the downtown at the Grafton Hotel site, then the plan is fine. If not, it needs to be amended to include a greater mix of development types. Mr. Brunnuell also commented that the plan was to create density in the downtown not green open space.

The members discussed the two main concept Plans 1 D and 2 C.

President Brunnuell reiterated that any development of this site needs to fit with the downtown.

Mr. Smith commented that, at the current time, the commercial market is very slow.

The placement of a green space amenity on the site was discussed. The placement of the green area along Wisconsin Avenue could be narrowed and benches placed along the driveway to encourage pedestrian traffic.

President Brunnuell commented that he does not consider the green space amenity as an upgrade to the site.

Member Dan McKelvey left the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Roger Kirgues suggested that the consultants work with staff to create additional concepts. Mr. Witzling indicated that following discussions on site development options with developers, additional concepts will be prepared for presentation to the CDA.

President Brunnuell commented that there is a need for a development focus in the downtown and the adjacent areas.

Chair Gassert asked if the east side of Wisconsin Avenue should be considered in the lumberyard redevelopment plans. As President Brunnuell stated earlier, the Village needs to determine how far south downtown Grafton will extend.

Administrator Hofland identified that there may be a demand for commercial/office space in this section of Wisconsin Avenue but demand for retail space may not exist.

Sharon Walbrun commented that, from a shopper point of view, the current activity in the downtown stops people at the Plaza. She is in favor of a green space area along Wisconsin Avenue to provide people with a view of the interior site options.

Mr. Rambousek indicated that the concept plans presented at this meeting are very preliminary and will evolve as more information is known. The purpose of tonight's presentation was to get feedback from the CDA.

Mr. Smith stated that the market will dictate how this area is developed as well as the Village of Grafton's vision for this area and the downtown as a whole.

#### **PURCHASE OF PROPERTY - 1312 WISCONSIN AVENUE**

Motion by Trustee LaPean, seconded by Alan Kletti, to table action on this item to a future meeting, if deemed necessary. Approved unanimously.

#### **OLD BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS**

##### Discussion regarding Brewery Site redevelopment options

This item was placed on the agenda at the request of Trustee Grant. The CDA briefly discussed the lack of maintenance on the site and the significant number of old service station signs being stored at this location.

While the members all agreed that the site needs to be cleaned up, they realize that it is difficult to force the property owner to clean up the site because no public health issue is present. The Village code does not include any property maintenance requirements.

Administrator Hofland stated that one option would be for the CDA to invest in the cleanup of the site and split the associated costs with the property owner. The problem with this option is that it opens the door for additional property cleanup requests.

### Installation of Wi-Fi in Paramount Plaza

Village Administrator Hofland stated that the installation of Wi-Fi service in the Paramount Plaza has been previously discussed. The approximate cost of the equipment necessary for this service is under \$1,000; however, there is monthly fee of between \$100-\$150. In addition, a 2-3 year contract would be required.

Mr. Hofland stated that Brian Bernier, owner of the Paramount Grille and Bakehouse restaurant, has indicated that he will be installing Wi-Fi in the restaurant. He is willing to work with the Village to piggyback onto his system, for a no charge lease of the outdoor dining area in the Paramount Plaza.

The drawback to this option is that users would have to obtain a code from the restaurant to utilize the Wi-Fi connection

President Brunnuquell stated that having Wi-Fi in the Plaza fits with the branding initiative to create additional amenities in the downtown. Wi-Fi in this area would promote additional outdoor activities.

Chair Gassert questioned if the river walk area would be included. President Brunnuquell responded no.

Roger Kirgues suggested this option be considered for implementation next summer after the restaurant is established and the future of the Grafton Hotel property is more likely to be known.

President Brunnuquell commented that this service could be utilized as a selling point for the community as a whole as part of the quality life perception.

Chair Gassert stated that he supports this project, but suggested that the Chamber of Commerce be the sponsoring entity.

After limited discussion, it was the consensus of CDA that the Village encourage the expansion of Wi-Fi services into the Paramount Plaza with a reevaluation of the project next year.

### **ADJOURN**

Motion by Trustee Grant, seconded by Sharon Walbrun, to adjourn, at 8:50 p.m.  
Approved unanimously.