

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY & PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF JANESVILLE, WASECA COUNTY, MINNESOTA

**APRIL 5, 2016**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mike Finely called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

EDA Members present: Stacey Babcock, Cliff Blaisdell, Mike Finley, and Terry Gardner.

EDA Members absent: Jeff Bartelt.

Planning Commission Members present: Jenny Dumdei & Myron Volker.

Planning Commission Members absent: Jeff Bartelt, Jenny Dumdei, & Katherine King.

The Planning Commission did not hold a quorum. Motions and actions made during the meeting were of EDA only.

Staff present: City Planner Brandon McCabe & Intern Dillon Petrowitz

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Blaisdell to approve the agenda, seconded by Gardner. Motion carried 4-0 (Bartelt absent).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Gardner to approve the minutes of the EDA meeting held on Monday, February 1, 2016 seconded by Blaisdell. Motion carried 4-0 (Bartelt absent).

4. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review of City Nuisance Ordinance

McCabe stated that he desired the Planning Commission and EDA to meet to discuss the EDA's goal to review the state of the Downtown. One option was to review the nuisance ordinance. McCabe stated that currently the City enforces

nuisance on a complaint basis. There is a procedure in place to enforce nuisance violation. For example the City receives a complaint for long grass and weeds. The City will give notice and allow the property owner to address the nuisance. If not, the City will mow the lawn and bill or ultimately assess the property if it goes unpaid.

McCabe stated that the enforcement of the nuisance is a cost to the City and the City runs a risk of not recouping costs. McCabe has spoken with the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) and they advised that when something such as chipped paint or broken panes of glass are made to be a nuisance, then all properties within the City are subject to enforcement. McCabe did not find that the City would be able to enforce all cases of maintenance issues if they were made to be nuisances.

Finley clarified that the City runs a risk of not being able to recoup costs for enforcing specific issues particularly when attempting to enforce issues on abandoned properties. Blaisdell asked about the downtown property currently in tax forfeiture. McCabe stated that they are in process to send the property to auction but did not have a timeline as to when that is.

Blaisdell stated that it is not possible to enforce action on property owners due to the current laws. McCabe said it was not feasible to do so or a common practice of other Cities.

Babcock asked how a building is deemed hazardous to enforce action by the City to clean-up a property. McCabe answered the Building Official determines that. Babcock asked who pays for the inspection. McCabe answered, "The City".

McCabe stated that the City of Le Center will take a dilapidated property when it is offered to them and in-turn offer it for free on a condition to demolish. Blaisdell asked if the City could look into how that may work and if that may be a feasible solution.

Common consensus was it is not feasible to move forward with a nuisance amendment. No action was taken.

b. Feasibility of District Design Standards

Dillon Petrowitz gave a summary of his memo. Stating that the EDA asked to review the possibility of Design Standards for the Downtown District. A number of Cities have design standards and the vary from very minimal standards to heavily extensive standards to follow. He gave the example that Mankato

enforces issues such as structure color and type of awnings. He cautioned that imposing design standards may place additional restrictions on development.

Blaisdell asked when they would need to conform to the design standards. McCabe stated they would need to conform when they renovate the property. Blaisdell thought that the City should not enforce the design standards until the City is able to financially support those properties with changes.

Gardner asked if the City can simply asked the property owner to make improvements or taking down old banners. Finley stated that it would simply be “asking” to do something and directly forcing the owner to make the changes. McCabe that a letter can be sent as a friendly notice. Finley thought a walk-through of the downtown may help. The EDA agreed. Blaisdell asked if we could schedule that in May or June.

c. Review Current Zoning of Hwy 14 Non-platted Land

McCabe summarized in 2009 when a developer proposed a development of the Hwy 14 land the surrounding residence greatly opposed the proposal. In 2010 City Council asked staff to present an alternate use of the land. The land was then changed to residential use with the sole exception of a few townhomes. McCabe all the proper procedures were followed to change zoning and the comprehensive. McCabe asked if the residential use is what is best for that area and if that will limit the commercial space available.

McCabe proposed the EDA and Planning Commission consider the land for commercial use. As it currently sits, if a developer wants to develop the land as residential the City is permitting that. A short discussion regarding the County’s proposal to acquire land south of Hwy 14.

Common consensus was that the land usage had been changed to residential use and it is not appropriate to change the use back unless they are approached by an interested party.

d. Review Home Occupied Businesses

Dillon gave a short summary of current Home Occupation ordinance. He opened discussion to determine if the Home Occupation Ordinance was structured in a way that promotes new home-based businesses. The EDA discussed that there is no directory of home-businesses and they do not really know what those businesses’ needs are. McCabe stated that he can draft a letter to reach out to those businesses and attempt to record what home-based businesses are in town and what they may need for resources.

6. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Building Permit Report.

The report was included in the meeting packet for review.

b. Available Revolving Loan Funds.

The report was included in the meeting packet for review.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Babcock to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m., seconded by Blaisdell.  
Motion carried 4-0 (Bartelt absent).