

MINUTES of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
September 7, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

Committee Members present:

Councilor Martin Dumont, Chairman
Councilor Don Austin, Vice Chairman
Councilor Richard R. Michaud
Councilor Crystal Paradis

Staff Members present:

City Manager Bob Belmore
Finance Director/Deputy City Manager Scott Smith
Director of Planning and Comm Dev Michelle Mears
City Clerk Jonathan Slaven

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dumont at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 12, 2021

Councilor Austin made a motion to accept the July 12, 2021 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 4-0.

SALE OF PROPERTY: FORMER BRETONS CLEANERS AND FORMER POLICE STATION

City Manager Belmore stated he is requesting feedback from the Committee in regards to developing a new request for proposals (RFP) to purchase and develop the former Bretons Cleaners' site and the former Police Station site. Manager Belmore stated he is suggesting the City issue an RFP on the former Breton's Cleaners site, but wait on the former Police Station site and deal with it when the cleanup is completed. He stated a prior RFP that could serve as a template was included in the meeting documents which staff will modify so as to include any updates on the properties. Councilor Dumont asked if both properties fall under the new regulations regarding form-based codes. Director Mears replied that they do. Councilor Austin agreed rebidding was a good idea especially after recent cleanup was performed. Councilor Michaud stated he is in favor of this; adding it will be good to see what interest is out there and select an option best suited for the City. Councilor Paradis inquired if we were tied to accepting an RFP. Manager Belmore replied that the City has the absolute right to reject any and all proposals. Councilor Paradis asked if language could be added to the proposal for the RFP to adhere to goals of beautification and revitalization. Manager Belmore replied that the suggestion was a good one and will have staff include similar language. Councilor Austin inquired about the process of choosing or rejecting proposals. Manager Belmore replied that City staff can take the RFPs in and provide a short list or the Committee can review each individually. Manager Belmore added that it is possible a proposal could come in for a project to purchase and develop a parking lot since there are landlords in that area that have requested more leased parking from the City; this might not be acceptable to the City. In order to get ahead of this potential, Manager Belmore asked the Committee if language should be included in the RFP stating a particular project is not what we are looking for. Councilor Austin and Michaud both stated their agreement to that they were not interested in supporting a parking lot. Councilor Michaud stated that a parking lot doesn't do anything for the City's economy. Councilor Dumont inquired about the timeline for the process. He stated his fear is that we accept a proposal that isn't on an organization's immediate development plans.

Manager Belmore replied when the City accepts a proposal a timeline for development can be agreed to in advance before any final property transfer.

MISCELLANEOUS

Manager Belmore mentioned that he was recently asked a question regarding the removal of signage after a business closes and stated that zoning regulates the removal of such signage.

Director Mears stated she has been working with Sundance Sign who provided an estimate for wayfinding signs in the downtown area. She stated the signs will cost approximately \$4,500 each which does not include the cost of installation. Councilor Dumont questioned the color of the signs as shown. Director Mears said that was just for demonstration purposes to see the different style of signs, and the color can be whatever the City chooses.

Councilor Paradis inquired about potential Historic District signs on side streets. Manager Belmore stated feedback would be necessary from the Historic District Commission before getting a cost estimate.

ADJOURN

Councilor Paradis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Austin and passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk