

Committee of the Whole
July 24, 2018

Present: Mayor Vulich, Councilmembers Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, Allesee, Connell, Schemers, and Odor, City Attorney, City Administrator, City Clerk, Press and interested citizens.

1. Tax Abatement on Single-Family Residential Homes – City Administrator Matt Brooke

Administrator Brooke stated the topic was an extension of the discussion that occurred at the July 10, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting. Administrator Brooke stated the City currently offered a 50% tax abatement for three years for improvements made to dwellings in the entire City. Administrator Brooke stated it would be recommended to adopt the blight schedule whereby a 100% tax abatement for ten years for improvements be implemented.

Administrator Brooke presented the draft map of blighted areas, as prepared by Simmering-Cory. Administrator Brooke stated multi-residential properties could be included in the blighted area and suggested that the Miller Ridge area remain in the blight designation. Councilmember Seeley inquired about the area being previously removed. Administrator Brooke stated prior minutes indicated the area was removed due to being multi-residential; however, in reviewing Iowa Code Chapter 404, it appeared that multi-residential properties could be part of the designated area.

Councilmember Seeley inquired if adopting the tax abatement for blighted areas would affect the current 50% abatement option. Administrator Brooke stated that it would not. Administrator Brooke stated the tax abatement options, combined with available Community Development Block Grants (“CDBG”) and Opportunity Zones, could help spur revitalization in blighted areas of town.

Councilmember Schemers inquired about marketing of the tax abatement option. Administrator Brooke stated the Public Information Consultant would assist in determining the best way to reach citizens. Administrator Brooke stated the Neighborhood Improvement Committee could also assist with disseminating the information. Councilmember Connell stated he believed the County Assessor’s office and the Building and Neighborhood Services Department should disseminate information to customers about the available abatement and grant options. Mayor Vulich stated some of the documentation for CDBG applications could be difficult to complete and volunteers would be helpful to assist customers in completing the forms. Councilmember Connell stated the Chamber of Commerce could also assist with disseminating information on the available grants and tax abatement options. Councilmember Allesee stated meetings could be held in the individual wards to speak with citizens about the available programs.

M/S, Gassman-Allesee moved to forward the amending of the City’s Urban Revitalization Plan to offer 100% tax abatement on improvements for 10 years for blighted areas of the City, as presented on the draft blighted areas map, to the next Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

In discussion before roll call, Councilmember Seeley inquired about the options for abandoned buildings. Administrator Brooke stated information could be provided to the Council on what was available for abandoned buildings.

2. Lyons Tech Park Update – Dennis Lauver

Lauver stated prior updates were provided to the Council about the Lyons Technology Park and Lauver was before the Council to provide a regular update. Lauver stated a virtual building was being developed as a marketing tool to help attract potential developers. Lauver stated a virtual building was being created for Lot 2 at the Tech Park by Klingner & Associates, P.C. Lauver stated the site plans had received tentative pre-approval by the Building and Neighborhood Services Department in order to reduce the amount of time a developer would have to wait prior to construction beginning on the Lot. Lauver stated Klingner & Associates, P.C. was chosen by Mike Fry, John Totten of Clinton Engineering and Steve Howes as the firm to complete the virtual building. Lauver introduced Michael Fries, Senior Architect, Mark Lee, Engineering Project Manager, and Heather Olson, Interior Designer.

Fries stated the virtual building created for Lot 2 could also be created for Lot 8. Fries reviewed the locations of Lot 2 and Lot 8 in the Tech Park with the Council. Lee reviewed the schematic site plan and stated the plan would comply with all City requirements. Lee stated the design of the building was meant to blend in with the existing buildings at the Tech Park.

Councilmember Schemers inquired about trucks entering and exiting the Lot. Lee stated it would be dependent upon the developer. Lee stated the current virtual building was designed as an office space and if the space was intended to be used as a warehouse, the plan could be adjusted.

Olson reviewed the interior floor plan and the potential square footage usage. Olson stated the plan was flexible and would appeal to a wide range of clients. Olson stated the virtual building created for Lot 2 was a 20,966 square foot building. Fries stated the structure could also be divided to accommodate two businesses in the same building.

Fries stated the area would be appealing to potential developers or business owners, as nearby sidewalks could provide walking and biking options for fitness and transportation for employees. Fries reviewed the potential rendering of the exterior of the building and stated the virtual building had some masonry façade. Fries stated the building incorporated many windows and the design was flexible.

Councilmember Connell stated the design was well done. Lauver stated Klingner & Associates would be completing the drawings in the near future and would then work with the City Engineering Department and the Building and Neighborhood Services Department in order to receive pre-approval of the plans to the extent possible. Lauver stated a fly-over aerial of the Lot would also be completed to aid in the marketing of the Lot. Lauver stated the Lot would be listed on LOIS, an economic development database. Lauver stated marketing would also occur with the Clinton Regional Development Corporation, Quad City Development and the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

Lauver thanked the Chamber of Commerce, Clinton Regional Development Corporation, Business Park Board, Klingner & Associates and the City Council for their support. Lauver stated regular updates would be provided to the Council.

Mayor Vulich inquired what would occur if a developer wanted a larger or different shaped structure than the virtual building. Fries stated work would be completed in attempt to accommodate the client's needs. Mayor Vulich inquired if changes would delay the timeframe for development. Fries stated changes could delay the timeframe by a couple of weeks to a

couple of months, depending on the extent of changes requested. Fries stated any changes would be compliant with City building codes.

Councilmember Allesee inquired about the square footage charge of the virtual building as presented. Lauver stated that was not yet known and once the drawings were finalized, a contractor could be procured in order to obtain a quote.

3. Mayor and Council Updates

Mayor Vulich stated the press conference for the BUILD Grant was well done and well attended. Mayor Vulich stated more information could be obtained at the grant's website: www.drivertoprosperty.com. Mayor Vulich stated the 28E Agreement for the landfill (Clinton County Area Solid Waste Agency) would be reviewed in the near future and would include the removal of the head tax and weighted votes – to be replaced by a County levy.

Councilmember Allesee thanked I.T. Lead Josh Hansen for his work on the technological upgrades to the Council Chambers.

M/S, Gassman-Seeley moved to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Frederick
City Clerk