

Tomah Long Range Planning Committee Minutes

The City of Tomah Long Range Planning Committee met in regular session on Tuesday, November 28, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers 819 Superior Ave., Tomah, WI.

Call to Order – Roll Call: Chairperson Eric Prise called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present: Steve Peterson, Pam Buchda, Tony Farmer, Eric Prise, Travis Scholze, Jeff Holthaus, Nellie Pater, Tina Thompson and Pete Reichardt present. Absent: Joanne Westpfahl. Quorum present. Also in attendance: City Administrator Roger Gorius, Public Works and Utilities Director Kirk Arity, Alderperson Lamont Kiefer and Veterans Assistance Foundation Director Chris Hanson.

Review and Approval of September 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes: Motion by Scholze, second by Thompson to approve the September 26, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried without negative vote.

Discussion Regarding Possible TID Assistance to the Veterans Assistance Foundation: Chris Hanson was present to explain the VAF's financial situation and to request TID funding. The VAF purchased the former Hardware Hank building and remodeled the first floor for a thrift store and office space which is currently in use. The second story is in the process of major remodeling. The second story will have eight apartments to provide housing for low income veterans. The apartments will produce income for the foundation however the rent will be well below current market value. The project is 75% complete but additional funds are needed to finish the work due to unforeseen expenses. The foundation had to use \$125,000 of their funds to cover the cost of moving homeless veterans out the VA hospital and \$80,000 was spent to install a stairwell to the 2nd floor and re-route the roof drains. VAF is requesting a HUD loan for \$80-100k in order to finish the project and start moving people in. This past year, the VAF lost a federal grant which forced the elimination of three employees. The remaining staff have moved into the new building and the former VAF office at 312 Superior Avenue is for sale. If the building sells, they are looking at a profit of \$40-50k which would be put toward the loan. Other sources of income include the VAF branching out to include people with needs other than veterans so that they can qualify for more types of public assistance and rental income once the apartments are occupied. At this time there are no other requests for TID funds. This will be brought back for discussion in January.

Discussion of Downtown Information Center: Plans are to split building into 2 sections. One side will be used by the Parks Department for cold storage and other half will be remodeled and heated with public restrooms and an information kiosk. Public Works personnel will work on the remodel process however the City will have to hire contractors for the HVAC and electrical work. The cost is estimated at approximately \$125,000 and the project could be completed by the spring of 2018. The proposed plan will be brought back before the committee in January to make sure the building design complies with the downtown master plan.

Downtown Master Plan Marketing Discussion: Beginning in January 2018, Chamber of Commerce Director Thompson plans to meet with downtown business owners to explain the downtown master plan. She would like to put together an information packet including before and after pictures of the businesses who have remodeled using the City's new design standards. Administrator Gorius will contact Andrew Bremer of MSA to request that he attend the January LRPC meeting with some background on marketing plans and the costs associated with promoting this project.

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Administrative Updates: 3rd Gen LLC plans to break ground in December for construction of a mixed used building on the former Tee Pee site. 3rd Gen has opted for the \$1.25 million up front financing option. Administrator Gorius will follow up on the application of a \$250,000 grant to help pay for the necessary parking area. The Tomah Veterinary Clinic is being purchased by VIP Realty. Kwik Trip has inquired about purchasing the former Superior Automotive building for potential construction of a car wash facility. A petition has been submitted to annex property along Gopher Avenue. Millhaven Foods is open and fully operating. A request has been made to designate the corner near Millhaven's property as "No Parking" to allow better access to truck traffic. The City Council has approved creation of TID #9 which will be addressed by the Joint Review Board on November 30. Steve Peterson advised that developers hope to break ground on a hotel/convention center in April 2018 near the new hospital site. The Army Corp of Engineers were in Tomah regarding Pete Thorsen's property at N. Superior Ave. and Jefferson St. Two developers are currently looking at purchasing that property. Additional property is available adjacent to the Thorsen property for potential development. Mr. Peterson will be going to the Twin Cities to meet with 12 prospects to promote Tomah as a location for potential development. Rolling Hills is considering the possibility of building their new facility near the new hospital campus.

Next Meeting Date: January 23, 2018 (No meeting in December)

Adjourn: Motion by Peterson, second by Prise, to adjourn. Motion passed without negative vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Webster.