

City of Merrill
Meeting of Redevelopment Authority (RDA)

Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.
City Hall Common Council Chambers

RDA Present: Clyde Nelson (Remote), Derek Woellner, Tony Kusserow, Sheila Polak, Steve Sabatke, Lori Anderson-Malm, and Val Mindak

Others: Alderpersons Rick Blake, Steve Hass, and Mark Weix, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Public Works Director/City Engineer Rod Akey, City Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, Bill Bialecki from Lincoln County Economic Development Corp. (LCEDC), Scott Kwiecinski from Horizon Development Ground, Ryan Ott from Ott Development and Construction, LLC, and video operator from Merrill Productions,

Call to Order: Woellner called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Consider approval of RDA meeting minutes from February 2nd:

Motion (Sabatke/Anderson-Malm) to approve the meeting minutes from February 2nd.
Carried.

Public Comment: Bill Bialecki from LCEDC announced that there will be a Lincoln County Housing Summit on affordable housing on Wednesday, March 16th. Representatives from Lincoln County, UW Extension, City of Tomahawk, and City of Merrill will be participating.

Mindak suggested involving Merrill Area Housing Authority (MAHA) in view of the City's Strategic Plan identifying affordable housing as an priority issue.

Review fiscal impacts of Rock Ridge Residential (TID No. 11) and E. Main St. Commercial (TID No. 3) developments:

Unertl highlighted two of the City's major redevelopment efforts begun in mid-2015.

TID No. 11 – Rock Ridge Apartments and Single-Family Homes

- Increased assessed valuation of over \$4.1 million since 2016.
- Property taxes have gone from under \$3,000 to over \$131,000.
- There will be further tax base growth due to the Rock Ridge Park single-family home developments.

TID No. 3 – E. Main St. Commercial Developments (former mobile homes)

- Increased assessed valuation of over \$2.9 million since 2015 with expansion of four commercial businesses.
 - Property taxes have gone from \$13,250 to almost \$106,000.
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Update on responses to Request for Proposals (TID No. 9) former Anson-Gilkey site:

A National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette map for the property was distributed. Further engineering review of options is needed.

Sabatke and Anderson-Malm commented on the noise impacts of railroad. Sabatke suggested planning trees and potential for dredging area for boat docking on the Wisconsin River.

The RFP response will be reviewed in Closed Session.

Review and discussion of “Enabling Better Places: A User’s Guide to Wisconsin Neighborhood Affordability:

Unertl reported that this recently release document was provided as background information. City Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel advised that changes in City of Merrill zoning code in recent years have incorporated many of the concepts, including allowing for new construction of non-conforming lots.

Next RDA meeting: Due to the Tuesday, April 5th election, the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 13th at 8 a.m.

Closed Session:

Woellner read the following: The RDA may convene in closed session per Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.85(1)(e) – deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session to consider: a) Potential TID No. 9 RFP responses and b) Potential purchase of development sites.

Motion (Sabatke/Polak) to move to Closed Session. Carried on roll call vote at 8:15 a.m.

There was review of the only RFP response proposal for TID No. 9 redevelopment site. The development response is from Horizon Development Group and Ryan Ott Construction & Development. The concept proposal includes a 54-unit Federal tax credit-financed project, as well as duplexes.

No RDA action taken. Further City staff and engineering is planned on potential flood plain options.

City Administrator Johnson reported that there has discussion for potential site for new housing lots where existing street and utility infrastructure exists. Representatives of the property owner are reviewing. Negotiation on potential property purchase will continue.

Adjournment: (Mindak/Kusserow) to adjourn at 8:58 a.m. Carried.

Minutes prepared by RDA Secretary Kathy Unertl