

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
ANOKA COUNTY**

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION NOTES
NOVEMBER 9, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Work Session via Zoom was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Steve Feldman.

2. **Roll Call:** Present were Mayor Steve Feldman, Council members Robert Bauer, Kevin Robinson, Sarah Udvig and Joe Muehlbauer. Also present were City Planner Beth Richmond, City Administrator Joe Kohlmann, and Community Development Director Kate Thunstrom.

3. **Senior Housing Project:**

Thunstrom reported before you this evening is the idea of the senior housing project at 3518 Bridge Street. At the October 13, 2020 work session staff identified there was an interested developer, pro/cons, and the steps needed for the land use and zoning changes to the Comprehensive and Redevelopment plan. The Developer is looking to enter into a Preliminary Development Agreement before their submission of the land use application. This agreement is similar to the letter of intent we have done before. It is currently in review with the city attorney's office. The agreement is to clarify the responsibilities of both parties along with providing the time to complete due diligence and sue processes. The agreement is not a purchase or sale agreement. Items within the agreement include; developer to not assign its rights without city consent, city is to not negotiate or contract with other parties during the agreement period, both parties agree to negotiate in good faith to reach agreement on conditions and sales agreement being responsible for their own expenses and the agreement to run 180 days from the effective date. Also, a tentative timeline was outlined to identify the path this project will take to get to permitting. Thunstrom stated it is the intent of staff to bring the Agreement to the November 16th City Council meeting unless there is direction otherwise. The developer Greg Anderson of Anderson Companies is also viewing the meeting to answer any questions you may have on the proposed project.

Greg Anderson spoke to the council and gave a background of his company. He indicated they did a market study for senior housing in St. Francis and the need was there. That is why they felt confident in building a facility in St. Francis. Also, he like the location of this parcel in particular because of it's adjacency to the river and trails. Anderson then went into more detail of the type of building they are looking at building based on the needs. A three level building would have approximately 90 units and a four level 120 units. It would be a mixed use building to include senior housing, assisted living and memory care. We don't see a lot of road blocks but do need your approval for the land use portion. We would like to have a building permit by mid next year. There are new building

restrictions coming in next August. Please let me know if you have any questions and if I can't answer them I will follow up with you.

Feldman said I too don't understand the new building requirement of steel versus wood on these projects. It needs to be sprinklered anyway so not sure why there is a need for steel. Feldman spoke on the building designs. So you are the designer of the building and you will hire an operator to run the building.

Anderson said yes groups that we have used in the past. Feldman said they are not asking for TIF right now but still may be in play down the road so please be open minded about that. Anderson said I don't know yet but would like that option open if needed.

Robinson asked about the affordability. Seniors like to stay in their community. Anderson said I couldn't quote tonight. Robinson asked about food service, on site? Anderson said full food service available in the building. Robinson asked about retail in the building. Anderson said I don't see it have it retail per say for outside shoppers. But they would have services available to them such as laundry and cleaning.

Muehlbauer thanked Anderson for being there and like both designs provided to them. Timeline is for being built? Anderson he would like to have at least applied for a building permit by mid-year to beat the code change. Hopefully by the holidays by 2022 for occupancy. Muehlbauer said I appreciate the information that was provided to them and for being at the meeting.

Udvig thanked Anderson for being here tonight too an answering our questions. Robinson asked most of the questions I had. Udvig asked would there be things for the residents to buy if they needed things like Tylenol, snacks, etc. Anderson said some of the basis would be available to them, yes. I like to see this project get moving forward and appreciate you looking at our community. The need is there.

Bauer said welcome. I do like the first design and thank you for looking at St. Francis but want to make sure it is aesthetic looking. I do like the look of your buildings you have in other communities. I think this site would be a great area for this type of building. Would like for the seniors to have some area to sit outside on the west side of the building to enjoy the river.

Feldman said I believe the view is important and thanked Anderson again for coming in speaking with us. We are looking for long term reputable developers.

Thunstrom I do not have further comments. Council did have several questions on TIF and explained the different types and the needs for the different lengths of TIF loans. Consensus of the council was for Thunstrom to bring the Preliminary Development Agreement to the November 16th City Council meeting for council action.

4. **Infill Housing Project:**

Thunstrom said staff has been working with a developer on an infill housing project on the 3731 Bridge Street (Ramacher) property. Over the past two years,

staff has had conversations with various developers to discuss projects from multi-family housing to single family housing options. We do have a developer who is looking at developing this into single family parcels and building split entry homes. The city also owns a land locked parcel to the north of 3731 Bridge Street that is roughly 50% wetland. This parcel alone cannot be developed. The developer is looking at both parcels and the EDA will be approached to sell each parcel for \$1.00. This will allow to keep lot prices competitive which allows the final house price to meet a market supported product. The EDA acquired the Ramacher property for redevelopment efforts on Bridge Street and increase the density of the area. In regards to the Woodbine Street Extension request to participate in the cost of the extension. This would allow the City to benefit on mobilization and quantity costs and the developer to benefit on the costs associated with the length of road needed to get the housing project developed.

So this evenings discussion would be the council interest in this project, the level of participation with this developer or any developer and where we want to go from this.

Feldman discussed the layout of the project and some of the lots with a lot of wetland. I am for giving a reduced price for that area but not the parcel. The EDA has money invested in this, \$204,450 to date. Yes, I know we will be receiving funds from WAC/SAC, park dedication, trunk water/sewer and tax base but at the same time but when we have over \$200,000 invested in this I can't see the Ramacher property for one dollar. But the parcel to the north I am okay with that. I was hoping for maybe townhomes in that area but I am open.

Muehlbauer in agreement with what you said. I thought too in the way of townhomes being built back there. Giving the one parcel for \$1.00 doesn't make much sense. I guess it doesn't hurt for him to ask. Thunstrom said it is like another form of subsidy. Ramacher property is a nice property and were hoping for higher density. Definitely room to negotiate with them. What do we want to see there and what is our level of participation? Muehlbauer said I am open to ideas.

Udvig I am pretty much echoing with what you and Joe have already discussed. I understand them asking for the \$1.00 price but think we need to come up with a different price. I think the market is more for apartments.

Bauer is not really for this type of concept. I know the dentist is looking for access parking too in that back area. Is there anyway we can reach out to him. I would like to see a bigger project back there with maybe shared parking. If we are looking for density then maybe an apartment building.

Robinson agree with the amount of money we have invested already we have to get more. You can ask for anything you want. Agree too with the higher density. Not interested with their request. With the Woodbine Street extension is that something we need for the corner lot. Thunstrom said yes. Anoka County wants to remove the access point to Bridge Street now that the lots are vacant and put

in some type of backage road to access that area. Robinson said if they come back with something more reasonable I am willing to listen but right now will hold.

After more discussion the council agree not to proceed with the request of selling it for \$1.00. Thunstrom said she will relay the message and see if they want to come back with another offer if not we will continue to market this area.

Feldman asked what City Planner Beth Richmond thoughts on this request. Richmond agreed to stay closer to the plan you may want to look at higher density in this area.

5. **City Zoning Code Re-Write:**

Richmond gave an update on the zoning code re-write update. The Planning Commission has been reviewing this also. Reviewed were the different zoning districts along with select use-specific standards. The select uses to be discussed included vehicle sales, accessory dwelling units (ADU's), mobile food units, rural event centers and short-term vacation rentals. After Richmond's presentation on the proposed changes, she asked that the next presentation be before the city council and the planning commission for a joint meeting.

Thunstrom stated if we can have Beth do the presentation at the November 18 regular scheduled Planning Commission then Beth would only have to do the presentation once and we could hear every one's feedback that night too.

The council agreed for a joint meeting with the Planning Commission on Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

The council agreed with the changes so far. Clearing up areas is a good thing. The council thanked Richmond for all her hard work in this project.

Miscellaneous: Feldman said he received a call from Kelly Kelley asking that she can give a presentation on the fence issue. This will be on the agenda, just a heads up.

6. **COVID-19 Verbal Update:**

City Administrator Joe Kohlmann gave a update on COVID-19. We have weekly meetings on this topic with the police and fire chiefs and periodically the public works director. Kohlmann spoke on a number of items that have happened in the last few days in the area and state and the increased cases. We wanted to get through the elections. Asking what the council thought if we went to a rotating staff, close to the public or what do you think. Kohlmann spoke on the cleaning protocol, wearing masks and social distancing.

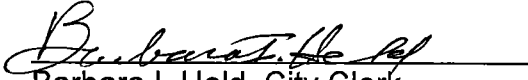
Feldman said main priority is safety for our staff and residents. If we have to shut down and work remotely now that we have what it needs to be able to do that I am for it.

Council agrees to shut down if we have to and work remotely if we need to keep staff safe. Just keep the council posted. Kohlmann said he appreciates the feedback.

7. **Adjournment**

Mayor Feldman adjourned the work session at 7:56 pm.

Submitted by,


Barbara I. Held, City Clerk