



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Community Development Authority

Thursday, August 5, 2021

6:00 PM

City Hall, Room 303

Call To Order

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Michelle Cook, Associate Planner, took the roll call.

PRESENT: 4 - Mason, Vice Chair Adamski, Chair Martin and West

EXCUSED: 3 - Thomas, Pucci and Madsen

Approval of Minutes for the July 7, 2021 Meeting.

A motion was made by Mayor Mason, seconded by Alder West, to approve the July 7, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion **PASSED** by a voice vote.

[0624-21](#)

Subject: Resolution 21-09 authorizing the acceptance of a proposal and the negotiation and execution of a contract for the sorting, loading, and hauling of scrap material as related to the demolition of 1500 N. Memorial Drive.

Attachments: [CDA Resolution 21-09](#)

Matt Rejc, City Development Assistant Director, presented the item. He stated that the salvage of material from the 1500 N. Memorial Dr. demolition was bid out in June and one bid was received. This item is to accept the proposal from Alter Metal Recycling.

Michael Lechner, Community Development Facilitator, added that Alter Metal Recycling is a local company. He stated that the proposal is 'cutting out the middle man' and going direct to market. Further, the CDA will be receiving a metal recycling refund based on American Metal Market Chicago's 10-day pricing.

Commissioner Adamski requested clarification that this is better than market rate pricing. Lechner confirmed that it is.

A motion was made by Alder West, seconded by Mayor Mason, to approve the item. The motion **PASSED** by a voice vote.

[0625-21](#)

Subject: Review and discussion of current CDA-owned properties.

Attachments: [CDA Properties List - 2021](#)
[CDA Properties Map - 2021](#)

Chair Martin stated that he requested a review of the many CDA-owned properties to figure out how more can be sold.

Bill Bowers, City Development Director, stated that he also wants to move these properties so he appreciates the time taken to review the properties.

Matt Rejc, City Development Assistant Director, presented each property, beginning with the South Side Industrial Park, previously the Jacobsen Textron Factory (1800 S. Memorial Dr., 1831 Phillips Ave., 1701 De Koven Ave., and 1623 De Koven Ave.). He stated that the sites are now cleaned to industrial standards. Also, that the Westside property (1730 Phillips Ave) was recently sold to Jacquet. Lastly, that the property is one of the most valuable industrial sites in the City of Racine. Micheal Lechner added that the road between 1701 De Koven Ave and 1623 De Koven Ave is decommissioned and he would like it to be one continuous property. Jeff Hintz added that all four properties are zoned I-2 General Industrial. Chairman Martin questioned what I-2 zoning entails. Hintz replied that it's the most intensive zone district in the City's ordinance, it allows for any sort of factory and no retail unless it's an accessory to a factory. Martin asked Bowers what he believes the property is worth. Bowers replied with an estimate of \$20,000 to \$30,000 per acre based upon the recent sale. Also, there is a minimum lot size that is useful to an industrial user.

Rejc then when on to present the 1511 Washington Ave. property. He stated it is a storefront in the Uptown neighborhood near the former Corner House restaurant. He said it was previously used for commercial use on the first floor and residential on the second floor. The CDA/RDA has owned it for many years and the inside is blighted so it needs a lot of work, but it is in a prime commercial redevelopment site. Lechner added that it is a solid building that is similar to a 1970's office build-out, so it is very dark with many cubicles. It has tall, original-tin ceilings with two front entrances and a parking lot in the back. Further, it needs to be cleaned up and opened up so interested parties can see the potential. Martin examined that there is potential for redevelopment of the contiguous properties at 1515 and 1521 Washington Ave. since the Corner House restaurant moved locations. Lechner and Rejc explained the property needs to meet the "White Box" (WB) standard, meaning the property would be in a condition for a commercial space with no fixtures or furniture but with electricity, plumbing, and up to code. Therefore, it can be turned into any specific commercial space. Bowers added that the property is negatively valued right now as it needs to get to the WB standard to determine the value. Martin asked how much it would cost to obtain the WB standard. Lechner responded that the commission could use federal blight elimination funds. Rejc added that they need to bid it out to understand the cost to get to the WB standard. Mayor Mason added that, while the Branch at 1501 is still hanging in there, losing Schmidt music and Corner House restaurant in the past year has been hard on the area.

Rejc moved on to the Water Street Redevelopment area (700, 800, 900, and 1010 Water St., 615 S. Marquette St., 526 Marquette St., and 922 Sixth St.). He stated that there used to be multiple industrial buildings at these properties, but the properties aren't that contaminated so there is potential for residential development. Hintz added that there is a combination of I-2 and B-4 Central Business zoning; should be rezoned B-4 or B-5. Martin asked if an entertainment district or housing fits the B-4 zoning. Hintz replied yes. Martin asked if the property allows for river rights to put up docks. Mayor Mason replied that it would require a DNR permit that would be extremely difficult to obtain; tie-ups would possibly be easier. Bowers added that the water depth is not sufficient to allow for docks. Further, the riparian rights would cut off public access, which is not the goal. Mason mentioned the City Root Works Plan is to provide ample

public access, like a river walk. Hintz added that any development that occurs will need to plan for a parking structure. Bowers stated that the highest and best use analysis will be done before development occurs. Lechner added that 526 Marquette St. is ready to be developed, and the water street properties have about another six months of remediation left. Adamski asked if the Marquette St. bridge will be raised for boaters to pass. Mayor Mason replied that the bridge was initially put in that way to signal that the river is not navigable past that point, but there is potential to redo the bridge with the designation of State HWY 32 being moved from Main St. to Marquette St. as the State would pay part of the costs.

Rejc moved on to 734 S. Marquette, he stated the property was intended to be Phase Two of the River Bend Lofts, which never came to fruition. The site is in a TID and zoned B-5 Central Service District. Further, it is used by Racine Urban Garden Network, at the moment. The Comprehensive Plan calls for mixed use development of the site. Bowers added that the site use is minimally productive for the TIF. Mayor Mason added that it creates a sense of community for the gardeners.

Rejc then presented the next property, 233 Lake Ave. He stated that the Hovde Properties group has an active option to purchase right now and City Development staff are engaged with them to create market-rate housing on the property. Mayor Mason added that this is a good example of why the CDA exists because the property used to be a coal pile and gasification site for We Energies, who did a lot of remediation of the site. Therefore, due to the complexity of the property, it will have to remain owned by the CDA and be leased out.

Rejc presented the former Racine Steel Castings Site, 1425 N. Memorial Dr., adjacent to 1500 N. Memorial Dr. It is a heavily contaminated site; a lot of remediation work has been put into it, but there is still much to be done to get it to industrial development standards. He stated that it should be considered in tandem with the 1500 N. Memorial Dr. property. He added that there is a very strong brick and concrete building remaining. Lechner added that it is one of the most contaminated properties in the State; therefore, Mayor Mason added that it will more than likely never be a residential site. Bowers added that the next best use would be an automation-type business (that requires fewer people) or storage facility.

The next property presented by Rejc was 1500 N. Memorial Dr. He stated that the building is falling into itself and trees growing through the roof, hence the item prior. Lechner added that they don't know what is underneath the building so they can't say if residential redevelopment is feasible right now, but he is hopeful. Bowers added that commercial use is possible.

Rejc then presented the former West Racine Farmer's Market, 1218 West Blvd. It is a surface parking lot used for community congregation in West Racine, zoned B-2 Community Shopping. Further, there is a Farmer's Market sign on the property.

Rejc presented the next property, 3124 Washington Ave. It is a very small lot, formerly a gas station with brownfield concerns but the lot size is a larger redevelopment issue. Martin asked if it was possible to redevelop the site if combined with 3122 Washington Ave. Mayor Mason said it could be combined with the old Piggly Wiggly site to the North.

Rejc moved on to say that the next property is 1500 May St and 1501 West Blvd is a vacant parcel that has turned into a path behind Save-A-Lot. Lechner added that the property was a leftover piece of land from the Save-A-Lot development given to the

City. He says that it needs to be cleaned up often. The railroad won't do anything to stop access to the property from their neighboring right-of-way. Martin brought up that the railroad has been proposed to become the new KRM railway. The consensus is that there isn't much to be done here at this time.

Rejc then moved on to 1014 Dr. Martin Luther King Dr. which is a property that currently has some redevelopment options in consideration. Hintz noted it is zoned R-3 residential. The consensus was that there wasn't much to talk about with this property.

Rejc stated that the next property, 1423 State St., is right next to railroad tracks, which used to be the Cruz Inn. The structure is sound and there is a lot of peeling, lead paint. It's right next to the transit center. There has been some commercial redevelopment interest. The City owns the adjacent parking lot.

Rejc presented the last set of CDA-owned properties, known as the State St. TOD properties (1321, 1350, 1348, 1354, 1402, 1406, 1408, and 1414 State St.). A conversation ensued about connecting some of the properties and closing some of the streets to do so. Martin mentioned that since they are vacant it provides more opportunity for building a historic corridor.

Martin questioned how the public would know that a property is owned by the CDA. Bowers replied that they are listed on the Build Up Racine website, but there is no active marketing other than Build up Racine. Also, there is no issue with developers finding these properties open for development. He went on to say that more active marketing will occur when properties are decontaminated. Mayor Mason added that in the coming week the Common Council will be moving ARPA funds into the CDA's account for more redevelopment programs.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Martin at 7:10 p.m.