

**REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 30, 2015**

President Niksch called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Recording Secretary Gena Knapp took the roll. Members present were Doug Niksch, Jim Langen, Craig Earley, and Greg Shook. LeAnn Angerman and Timothy Cottingham were not in attendance. Also present were Building Administrator Tom Trulley, SEH Representatives Rich Oman and Eric Keith, Planning Consultant Jim Mandon, Town Council President Christopher Salatas, Councilman Donald Parker, and two citizens.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 26, 2015 – Mr. Langen made a motion to approve the March 26, 2015 regular meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Earley and carried with four ayes.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Vacancies – Potential Incentives – Building Administrator Tom Trulley stated that at this time he did not have any updates. Mr. Niksch stated he had spoken with Karen Lauerman from the Lake County Economic Alliance, and she had informed him that there are currently twenty-seven projects going on within Lake County, which would bring in about \$240 million, and around 1,000 jobs. She had also mentioned that there has been interest in the Route 2 and Route 65 corridor, along with various railroads that have approached the LCEA regarding Lowell. Mr. Niksch stated that he had also spoken with Ms. Lauerman regarding her discussions with the intern that is recreating the Town website, and the fact that she will try to create a monthly summary for the meetings.

Process for addition to the TIF District – Industrial (Rich Oman) – SEH Representative Rich Oman handed out a map showing the current TIF District in town and briefly explained the area. He stated if you are looking to add parcels to the district, you could amend the Declaratory Resolution as long as the area being added is not more than 20% of your current TIF. Once you amend the Declaratory Resolution, a public hearing would be held for any remonstrance. If this area happens to be more than 20% of your current TIF, you would need to start over and recreate your current TIF District. That would consist of recreating an Economic Development Area, creating a new Declaratory Resolution, sending the Resolution to the Plan Commission, and then a public hearing would be held. Discussion followed regarding the potential areas the Commission would like to add to the TIF District which included a few smaller parcels near Avery and the possibility of adding some of the 80 acres that was recently annexed. Mr. Earley asked if the figuring of the 20% would include the entire TIF District since some of the area is in Cedar Creek and the other part is in West Creek. Mr. Oman stated he would need to double check, but it is just considered one district. Mr. Trulley stated there are two parcels that really need to be in the TIF due to some potential expansion coming up. Those two parcels are numbered 377-001 and 377-002. Mr. Mandon and Mr. Oman discussed the new legislation that has been passed and how certain bills may affect the TIF District and how you can add parcels. Further discussions were held regarding parcels the Commission would like to add and/or remove from the TIF District and the possibility of those parcels falling under the 20% rule. Mr. Earley made a motion to amend the declaratory resolution to include parcels 329-002, 330-007, 377-001, and 377-002. Mr. Trulley stated property 330-007 does not need to be added because Avery would not be able to build on that parcel. Mr. Niksch asked if they would be able to do improvements. Mr. Trulley stated the TIF would not benefit them, and this could mess with your 20% rule. Mr. Mandon suggested to leave it in because there are instances where improvements

could be done and the TIF could benefit them. Discussion followed regarding the need to figure out the 20% before the recommendation of the listed parcels could be added. Mr. Niksch stated he would not want to wait another month to figure out the percentages, and added that based on the map it is relatively visible that these parcels will not exceed the 20%. Mr. Earley stated if we find out the parcels are over the 20%, then the motion will just have to die and we will have to figure out a different amendment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Langen and carried with four ayes.

Façade Rebate Program – Review Examples – Mr. Niksch stated he had reviewed some examples that were given to him by Matt Reardon for the applications in regards to the Façade Rebate Program. He stated he really liked the program that LaPorte has in place because it does not require us to put forth a lot of money, but it does give an incentive to these owners. We also talked about getting local banks involved and Centier has responded saying they would be interested in seeing this program because it is something they have participated in before. Mr. Niksch stated he really appreciated the purpose that was stated in LaPorte's program because it matched the purpose for Lowell's downtown district. Mr. Niksch highlighted some of LaPorte's guidelines and stated there would be some tweaks we would do to the guidelines to fit our desires for the program, but it is a good overall application. Mr. Trulley mentioned that he had an owner that would like to come before the Redevelopment Commission next month in regards to this program.

Mr. Niksch stated the nice thing about this is that we have the final say in what is granted to the owner's and for what. Mr. Earley stated we need to at least have some sort of cap on this for our budget, and if it runs out, then people may have to wait until the next year to reapply. Discussion followed regarding how the program would work, standards that would need to be set, and how the money would be granted. Mr. Trulley suggested rather than allowing a certain amount of money for each project, you could use a percentage of the project. He gave the example of Crown Point and how they allow up to 50% per project. They do not have to give that percentage, but that is their limit per project. Discussion followed on different ideas of how to grant the money to the building owner's and the application process. Mr. Mandon stated he has seen the application process go two ways. One is where applications come in whenever and are approved per project, but the risk is that you run out of money before you will be getting more and you have to turn down a good project. The second way is to have an application deadline, maybe once a year, and then weigh each project against each other to see which would give you, in the interest of the Town, the best "bang for your buck". Mr. Earley agreed to start off with once a year, and then maybe do it bi-annually if the interest is there. Mr. Langen stated the only issue is if you turn down someone, they may start bad-mouthing the Town. Discussion followed.

Mr. Earley stated he believed a dollar amount needed to be set to fund the program before applications can be taken. Mr. Niksch stated we have about \$32,000 in there now, and will have \$180,000 by the end of next month. Mr. Earley stated he believed that Mr. Mandon and the Town Attorney needed to review some of the applications and then come back with recommendations. Councilman Parker stated the program may need to have parameters in place for what the money can be used for in order to make the downtown area look cohesive. Mr. Earley stated the Historical Board covers that with their guidelines. Councilman Parker stated the applications should be given out for the same project each time. Ex: the first application is for windows, the second application will be for doors, etc. Mr. Mandon stated you could do that by weighing the applications against each other. Discussion followed. Mr. Niksch stated he would like to use \$30,000 to start the program, and match LaPorte's application to Lowell's standards. That would at least cover three projects. The Commission agreed that \$30,000 would be good to start the program with. Discussion followed regarding how the program should be set up. Mr. Trulley stated Mr. Mandon and himself could get with the attorney and draw up some examples

for Lowell. Mr. Niksch made a motion to have Mr. Trulley and Mr. Mandon draw up a few examples for the Commission to review and then bring the determined guidelines to the attorney for review, seconded by Mr. Earley and carried with four ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

With no further questions or comments, Mr. Langen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 PM, seconded by Mr. Earley and carried with four ayes.

Doug Niksch, President

LeAnn Angerman, Secretary