

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Community Development Committee Meeting
March 19, 2012

Members: Carrie Snyder, Chair
Vince Rubino
Mary Ellen Pyke

Mrs. Snyder called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the March 5, 2012 Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

Legislation Considered

Temp. Ord. A-31

Temp. Ord. A-32

Temp. Ord. A-33

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-31

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Community Development to enter into a contract with Wohlwend Engineering Group, Ltd. for the professional design engineering services necessary to prepare public roadway, utility and other public infrastructure plans and regulatory documents associated with the proposed "Nikki's Walk" Development (Parcel Nos. 37-00484 and 37-00485), and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Guerra stated this is part of the final work being done associated with the Buckeye Clean Ohio Program. The City received \$1.8 million in 2009 from the State of Ohio to do clean-up of lead contaminated property on the site. The City matched part of that amount with \$80,000 from the Community Development Block Grant Program. Now in 2012, they are finishing up the program. Approximately \$1.4 million has been spent on the site. There is approximately \$380,000 of Clean Ohio money still not spent and about \$28,000 in CDBG not spent. With the Clean Ohio money, they have to do final grading to the east side of the lake, which is now about twice the size it was prior to clean-up. Also, they will use approximately \$140,000 to move soil from the west side of the lake to the east side of the lake. At that time the project began, the City hired Wohlwend Engineering for \$14,500 to do all the grading and testing plans. Once the grading is done, the second part is for the developer to begin Phase I of Nikki's Walk. In order to do that, the engineering must be completed. It was decided that instead of the developer doing the Phase I engineering, the City would do it because it would use the CDBG funds. That way, the City will always own those engineering drawings. Also, since the City hired Wohlwend to do all of the grading and surveying work, the City would like to hire them to finish it up. Phase I includes a parkway the Planning Commission recommended and approved that goes from State Road to the end of the property line with bicycle lanes and sidewalks. It also includes a residential road that would be south of the parkway and will contain approximately 40 units. The project will go back to the Planning Commission for final subdivision approval. Once that is received, development could begin in late 2012 or early 2013.

Mrs. Pyke moved to bring out A-31 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Rubino. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Ord. A-32

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract without competitive bidding with Suite 200 Group, LLC for the sale of certain real property not needed for any municipal purpose, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Snyder stated that Mr. Janis will correct the year on Ordinance A-32 to reflect 2012. Mrs. Truby stated this is for the purchase of the property formerly known as 1110-1130 Portage Trail. By way of history, the property was vacant for many years before foreclosure was filed five years ago. In September, 2008, the property was set for Sheriff's sale but there were no takers. Because the City had multiple orders against the property, it urged the bank to demolish the structures, however, the court docket was lengthy and the bank was unable to do so. In 2009, the Engineering and Fire Depts. determined the properties were unsafe and many issues were ordered at that time for demolition. In March 2010, the City offered to buy the property but Fifth Third needed a court authority to sell it. In July 2010, the City successfully received an award of \$155,000 for a Phase II environmental assessment on the property. In September 2010, Fifth Third agreed to sell and City Council approved legislation to purchase the property and enter into contracts for demolition. In the spring of 2011, while in the process of demolishing the property, the City sent out RFPs to 20 parties and interested developers and received one response that was later withdrawn. Mrs. Truby subsequently received a call from a realtor who had an interested party and that is the project that is now before Council. The City utilized several funding sources to get to this point. They used CDBG recovery funds in the amount of \$41,000 to demolish the property. They also used regular CDBG funds to purchase the property as a spot slum and blight property at \$10,000. They used CIC money of \$17,330 to pay delinquent taxes. And because the process took so long, more delinquent taxes were due, which the City picked up in the amount of \$21,355. The sale price for this property is \$50,000 which equates to \$75,000 an acre. She had distributed a site plan for Pediatrics of Akron, whose current offices are at 1754 Portage Trail. She pointed out that this legislation is for sale of the property and not for site plan approval. She just thought it would be beneficial for Council to view the rendering of the proposed 3,000 sq. ft. medical building on this site. The plan also calls for the potential to expand to another 2,000 sq. ft. She stated that the City is very excited about this project and that the purchasers have a commitment to the area and want to reinvest here yet again.

Mr. Ihasz confirmed this was just for the sale of the property. He asked if the site plan would have to go to the Planning Commission. Mrs. Truby stated it would not because it was less than 5,000 sq. ft. Mr. Ihasz stated he was glad to see a fresh new building go up in place of the old JR's, which was an eyesore. He lives on 11th Street and stated it is currently difficult to come up to Portage Trail and look east and west due to the angle of the road. He is concerned that the bushes or shrubs are shown in the diagram on the corner of 11th and Portage Trail would be a possible site obstruction. Mrs. Truby stated this is the first draft. Mr. Guerra will be reviewing it in more detail, and they will not put anything that would have a site obstruction.

Mr. Rubino moved to bring out A-32 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mrs. Pyke. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Ord. A-33

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Community Development to enter into a Community Reinvestment Area Tax Exemption Agreement with Albrecht, Inc. and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Truby stated there has been a lot of good news lately regarding Acme's proposed project on State Road. She thanked City Council for passing last weeks ordinance approving the new State Road CRA. The Acme 10 would be the first project to be considered under the new program. The company is requesting real estate tax incentives on the construction of their proposed 52,500 sq. ft. building at 50% for ten years. This \$9 million project will create 20 additional permanent jobs. At a 50% abatement, Acme will realize approximately \$926,000 in savings over the 10-year term of the agreement. While they are at the threshold of 50%, school board approval is not required. However, she did speak with Dr. Nichols and the amount

currently received by the school district is \$27,000 annually. With the 50% abatement, the Cuyahoga Falls School District will receive yet another approximately \$31,000 on top of that during the abatement period. When the abatement period is up in ten years, they will receive their full compliment of about \$117,000. This is a win-win for all. She is excited to have this project kick off the State Road CRA. Ms. Snyder was quite happy to see the amount that the school district and City would be receiving and also, even though Acme was eligible for a higher level of tax exemption, they applied for the 50% in ten years. She appreciates that and she is sure the school district does, too. Mr. Barnhart thanked Mr. Albrecht for all of the contributions to the City. He has been a loyal customer of that store for over 30 years and is glad to see the improvements coming. Mr. Iula also thanked Mr. Albrecht for what he is doing in the City. He also has gone to that store for about 30 years.

Mrs. Pyke moved to bring out A-33 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Rubino. Motion passed (3-0).

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.