



Historic West Des Moines Master Plan Steering Committee – 2021 Update

Wednesday, August 11, 2021 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm

MINUTES

- I. Chair calls meeting to order – at 4:05 pm
 - a. Attendance –
 - i. Committee members –
 1. Scott Hatfield
 2. Aaron Sewell
 3. Mitchell Callahan
 4. Ralph Haskins
 5. Nate Hon
 6. Nan Earll
 7. Vicky Long Hill
 8. Cleo Underwood
 9. Vincent Valdez
 10. Debbie Westphal Swander
 11. Julie Eliason
 12. Meredith Wells
 13. Mark Veiock
 14. Scott Cutler
 - ii. Staff Members
 1. Clyde Evans
 2. Brad Munford
 3. Christine Gordon
 4. Sally Ortiogs
 - iii. Guests
 1. Sarah Kehienbeck

- II. Committee Approves the Agenda – added SharePoint Site for Master Plan Update
- III. Approval of Minutes – Motioned by Scott Hatfield and seconded by Jack Hon, all approved
- IV. Opening Statement is read for all in attendance – read by the Chair, Meredith Wells
- V. SharePoint Site for Master Plan Steering Committee – Christine updated the committee - - Meredith Wells introduced Steve Frevert as new executive director of HVJF
- VI. Citizen Forum – no one spoke
- VII. Review and discuss Request for Proposal (RFP)for updating Master Plan
 - a. Public comment on scope of work– no one from the public spoke. Committee member’s comments on the RFP and Staff’s responses are highlighted in yellow and italicized below.

SCOPE OF WORK FROM RFP:

Develop a detailed action plan for the overall enhancement and redevelopment of the study area which will result in the following:

- a. The Plan Update shall include the following:
 - 1. Development of design guidelines for new construction as well as renovation which will respect the existing character of the Neighborhood.

Committee comment 1: Do we want to use another word instead of guidelines? Concerned about being too relaxed or too restrictive.

Staff response comment 1: Ordinances are more restrictive than guidelines. Guidelines allow for the governing body the ability to grant relief more easily. Ordinances have specific and sometimes lengthy protocols that must be met prior to granting relief. For this reason, guidelines are the tools typically used throughout the county to set a standard without becoming too cumbersome.

Committee comment 2: Does this committee need to talk about the level of specificity for review/approval? Will happen through the process?

Staff response comment 2: This is something that we will talk about in more detail later with our consultant. At this point, we are confirming that design guidelines are something we want to include in the scope of work.

- 2. Development of specific recommendations for either modification of the existing zoning regulations or development of new zoning regulations that will allow effective implementation of the Plan.
- 3. A detailed parking analysis which looks at existing as well as future parking needs particularly in the commercial district.

4. A detailed analysis of the needs, if any to expand the commercial district, into the 400 and 500 blocks of 5th Street.
5. A robust public input and out-reach plan that uses all forms of social media to reach hard to reach population in the Neighborhood.
6. Specific recommendations on how to maintain viability and encourage continued investment in or redevelopment of existing commercial and residential areas.
7. Analysis of current land uses along Railroad Avenue and specific recommendations and guidelines that would allow redevelopment/renovation of the commercial properties while respecting the interface with adjacent residential properties.
8. A detailed analysis of the mix of residential styles and densities and what residential products are needed for the area. Rental vs. owner occupied single family, single family detached vs. attached and multi-family rental.
9. Analysis of the opportunities and constraints facing the business and residential areas of the Historic West Des Moines Neighborhood.
10. Analysis of existing land uses and recommendations of potential changes.
11. Analysis of existing economic market and how it affects the Valley Junction business district.
12. Analysis of what types of commercial uses might be missing and recommendations on how to attract those uses to the area.

Committee comment 1: We not only want commercial. We want to have a mix of commercial- housing- entertainment- restaurants- and places to have experiences.

Committee comment 2: Can the consultant provide use with a visioning comparative analysis of communities like ours? What do thriving historic districts have and what are we missing?

Committee comment 3: We believe that historic districts that are thriving the best right now have this mix of commercial. Can that be confirmed?

Committee comment 4: What type of uses attract young professionals to our area

Staff response: We will revise this point and others to ensure these comments are addressed.

13. Strategies on how to better utilize the upper story space in the commercial area;

Committee comment 1: We need to remove the word better. It implies that it is not doing well.

Staff response: We will remove the word better and revise accordingly.

14. Visual depictions of how the area can be redeveloped (can be representative with use of photo examples, etc.).
15. An analysis of existing property maintenance conditions and specific recommendations for addressing any issues that are identified

Committee comment 1: The maintenance conditions seemed to be focus on commercial in the past. We need to make sure this is done for both residential and commercial.

Staff response: We will revise this point and others to ensure these comments are addressed.

16. Examples of grants, incentive programs, tax incentives, other possible funding sources that might be appropriate for the area

Committee comment 1: We need to make sure this applies for both residential and commercial.

Staff response: We will make sure residential is added to this point.

17. An examination of "Best Practices" from other Main Street communities and specific recommendations for those that should be potentially implemented within the commercial district.
18. Strategies on how to enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience through complete streets, including streetscape and landscape improvement and how to better connect with the area south of Railroad Avenue;

After the discussion, Clyde Evans suggested adding the following points (19-25) to see if they captured the scope of what the committee was looking for:

19. Market study and analysis of what types of commercial uses might be missing and recommendations on how to attract those uses to the area.
20. An analysis of what should be the target population to attract to live, visit and shop within the Master Plan area.
21. Strategies on how to utilize the upper story spaces in the commercial area to their maximum potential.

22. Analysis of existing buildings within the study area and a determination of their historic context and nature with recommendations for potential preservation and reuse.
23. Analysis of existing housing conditions and strategies to address housing needs and issues.
24. A comparative analysis of the study area to other similar areas in the Midwest.
25. An analysis of the socio-economic implications of policy and regulations that are proposed for implementation.

Memo from Brad concerning the RFP schedule:

Schedule

August 16, 2021 – City council approval of RFP

August 17, 2021 – Release of RFP

August 25, 2021 – Deadline for proposal to City Clerk

August 25, 2021 – Email proposal to committee

August 27, 2021 – Comments by Committee are due back to city staff

August 26-27, 2021 – Review by Staff

September 7, 2021 - Council award of contract

- Ralph made motion to appoint 3 members of committee to review proposal from Teska – Seconded by Nate – vote – 13-1
4 volunteers - Aaron, Nan, Ralph, Vicki
- The committee discussed if the smaller 3-member committee would be able to make RFP decisions on behalf of the whole.
- Ralph moved to rescind his motion to create a subcommittee, seconded by Nate – all approve, none oppose, none abstaining
- Ralph made motion to have a meeting on August 30th at 5 pm to review the final proposal from Teska – Seconded by Steve- friendly amendment by Nate - have the meeting at 5 pm via Teams – all in favor – Aaron opposed
- Ralph is making a motion to have regular meetings at 5 pm, seconded by Nate – Ralph – friendly amendment to change to 4:30, Nate seconds the friendly amendment – all in favor except Vicki opposed

**Vince asked for the document that list the historic properties – Report by Jim Jacobson – It is on HVJF website – City staff will send it out in an email, put it on our website and SharePoint site.

- VIII. Timeline Going Forward – did not discuss specifically – more about the schedule of the RFP
- a. Staff present Request for Proposal to City Council on August 16th for their review to release to Teska
 - b. Next meeting of Steering Committee – on hold until Teska has submitted their proposal based on RFP
 - c. Regular Meetings scheduled once consultant is hired

Handouts

- Agenda
- Minutes from 7-14-2021 Steering Committee Meeting
- Request for Proposal
- Memo from Brad Mumford – Request for Proposal (RFP) Schedule – dated 8-11-2021

Staff Contacts:

Community & Economic Development – 515-273-0770

Brad Munford – brad.munford@wdm.iowa.gov

Clyde Evans – clyde.evans@wdm.iowa.gov

Christine Gordon – christine.gordon@wdm.iowa.gov

Master Plan on Website: <https://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/community-economic-development/historic-west-des-moines-master-plan>