



Historic West Des Moines Master Plan Steering Committee – 2021 Update

Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 4:30 pm

MINUTES

- I. Chair calls meeting to order – called to order at 4:36 pm
 - a. Attendance
 - i. Committee members
 1. Nate Hon
 2. Meredith Wells
 3. Ralph Haskins
 4. Mark Veiock
 5. Steve Frevert
 6. Cleo Underwood
 7. Scott Hatfield
 8. Scott Cutler
 9. Vicki Long Hill
 10. Steph Trannel
 11. Katherine Harrington – Via Teams
 12. Renae Johanningmeier – via Teams
 13. Renee Hardman – via Teams
 14. Julie Eliason – via Teams
 15. Debbie Westphal Swander – via Teams
 - ii. Staff Members
 1. Brad Munford
 2. Christine Gordon
 - iii. Consultant
 1. Mike Hoffman – Teska – via Teams

2. Erin Cigliano – Teska - via Teams

iv. Guests

1. Victoria Veiock
2. MJ Hoag
3. Nick Waage
4. Kevin Goodlaxson
5. Colin McBee
6. Jack Hon
7. Bud Beveridge
8. Helen Rodish
9. Jennifer Hampton
10. Teena Shineflew
11. Gregory Allen
12. Frank Duncan
13. Geno Van Patten
14. Kay Schiller – via Teams
15. Tom Hyde – via Teams
16. Mary Miller – via Teams

- II. Committee Approves the Agenda – Motion by Nate Hon, , Seconded by Steve Frevert– all in favor
- III. Approval of February 16, 2022, Minutes – motion by Steph Trannel, seconded by Mark Veiock – all in favor
- IV. Opening Statement is read for all in attendance – Read by Meredith Wells
- V. Citizen Forum
 - a. Colin McBee – Where I can find the approved minutes? Christine Gordon said they can be found on the City website and the link is on the agenda.
 - i. Debbie Westphal-Swander – likes that the information is available on the website.
- VI. Recap of the February 21, 2022 City Council Meeting – Separate Historical Survey
 - a. Brad Munford –
 - i. City Council approved pages 1-40 of the Design Guidelines for the VJ Mixed Use area
 - ii. Approved 6 month moratorium for the red area (Mixed Use area) with the exemption at 111-5th Street, National debate building, and City owned restroom facility at Railroad park
 - iii. Asked Finance & Administration City Council Subcommittee to develop scope of work for the update to the historical study and also directed staff and F&A to create incentive programs for redevelopment in Valley Junction focused on rehabilitation rather than new construction.

- b. Ralph Haskins – at the Saturday meeting it was discussed there is not one concise sheet/booklet that provides a summary of the assistance/incentive programs available to citizens and businesses. He requested there be some dialogue about the programs. He asked for a hard copy to be made available to the Steering Committee
 - c. Gregory Allen (Guest) – He is okay with a soft copy/electronic copy.
 - d. Mike Hoffman – part of Teska’s job is to offer ideas for incentives so they will be involved with those conversations and people can email him or Erin Cigliano Mhoffman@teskaassociates.com
- VII. Discussion of Historic Design Guidelines for Railroad Avenue District - Teska– Erin Cigliano (Teska) – presented the PowerPoint slides
- a. Nick Waage – Commercial buildings will be oriented south and residential buildings nearby or oriented east/west. Why not use the typical set back as 25 feet between commercial and residential uses? Would also like to see 8 foot fencing allowed.
 - i. Mike Hoffman – with parking in the back of the commercial uses, the setback between uses will be at least 25 feet. Not opposed to making the dimensions larger. This will be flushed out further later.
 - b. Gregory Allen – It appears the railroad tracks go between the properties in the RA area. How will people live near the railroad tracks?
 - i. Mike Hoffman – in the Chicago area, there are plenty of residential units near railroad tracks. Mitigation methods for dampening sound would be needed, but it is certainly possible to have units close.
 - c. Helen Rodish – along RA1 and RA2 – how deep are you going on the lots? On 3rd Street people have put in gravel parking 119 3rd Street torn down and put in a gravel to provide parking – how is that consistent with city code? Why are we allowing 2/3 story? We are bringing EP True to Valley Junction. Leave Valley Junction alone and leave it as it is. You’re making us look like the rest of the City and not Valley Junction. At the Colorado businesses they are now allowing food sales and people are going into residential lots. Fences just allow for junk and are not maintained. Fences do not give privacy. It may be code enforcement now but decisions you make today will be code enforcement in the future.
 - i. Mike Hoffman – going four lots deep which is consistent with the current zoning pattern
 - ii. Brad Munford – Code Enforcement is the proper department to address the gravel on 3rd Street. The food trucks and garbage are other departments. Those are past issues that this Steering Committee has no control over. This Steering Committee is discussing future ideas including the fencing.
 - iii. Vicky Long-Hill – What would you like to see along Railroad?
 - 1. Helen Rodish – it should stay single family. Better housing.

- iv. Meredith Wells – For RA-1 & RA-2 – the Committee made this area smaller already and the area is currently zoned commercial
- v. Erin Cigliano – These recommendations are based on the visual preference survey that included many, many comments
- vi. Debbie Westphal-Swander – Thinking about the differences between 2 and 3 story – it is also about mass of the buildings. Could we get more consensus with we limited it to 2 story?
- vii. Jack Hon – Are we talking about going four lots deep? This Committee will then be allowing those houses to be gone
- viii. Julie Eliason – is what is proposed for RA-1 not realistic for what that area could be? I don't see people walking along Railroad to go to lunch, etc. Maybe this area is more for makers spaces and such.
- d. Erin Cigliano – discussed Railroad Avenue Example Renderings (in PowerPoint slides) as a case study of what a development could look like.
- e. Nate Hon – Based on current zoning, the houses that currently exist there are legal non-confirming? If there is a fire, those houses cannot rebuild if more than 50% of the house is damaged. He would like more clarification on legal non-confirming and what can be rebuilt.
 - i. Brad Munford – reviewed existing zoning map for RA-1, RA-2.
 - ii. Vicki Long-Hill – there was a Iowa Supreme Court case a few years ago that addressed this issue.
- f. Jack Hon – Originally this process began for 5th Street and now we are going down Railroad. How far are we going to go? Be careful on what you vote for tonight.
- g. Nate Hon – Three story is ridiculous. Three lots deep is enough. Why are taking housing out? This is affordable housing we are talking about taking out when so many people are talking about wanting more affordable housing.
- h. Vicky Long Hill – Open to 1 and 2 story. Needs to see what is existing visually.
- i. Nate Hon – Need to look at what is behind these properties
- j. Mike Hoffman – talking about new development, these projects would need to come through as a PUD. We are not suggesting to change the zoning. This is why we are asking for renderings to understand how proposed development fits into existing. These are ideas, that may or may not happen.
- k. Helen Rodish – yes, we have two story houses, but they don't take up the same space as a multi-family development. Residential two story is different than two story big buildings.
- l. Nick Waage – what height limits are there? What if we limit the height of each floor?

- i. Mike Hoffman – he responded with what the current height limits are. Typically the first floor with a commercial use will have a higher limit of 13-14 feet vs. residential use at closer to 10
- m. Nate Hon – why not put small business spaces along Elm Street?
 - i. Meredith Wells – we currently have that in spaces such as the candle shop
- n. Ralph Haskins – the ideas proposed by Teska have all of the things we asked them to include – parking lot as a buffer between building and residential, alley/walkway, landscaping. It is different to have a 3 story along 5th Street compared to Railroad. It is just a concept, not for sure.
- o. Steve Frevert – If we don't have enough information to decide about RA-1 or RA-2 maybe we move on to RA-3. Then we come back to RA-1 and RA-2 when we have more information.
- p. Debbie Westphal-Swander – made a motion that the Committee move to RA-3 and come back to RA-1 and RA-2 at the next meeting with more information, seconded by Steve Frevert
 - i. Gregory Allen – what are the questions that are going to be answered?
 - 1. Height maximums
 - 2. Number of single family homes
 - 3. Non-conforming uses
 - ii. 15 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 - Abstaining
- q. Mike Hoffman – RA-3 has standards similar to RA-1 & RA-2. Discussion of height for RA-3 and wanting Committee input.
 - i. Nate Hon – What can be put in at the corner at 1st & Railroad?
 - ii. Mike Hoffman – there are about 3 decent sites for development – near Foundry, 1st & Railroad
 - iii. Brad Munford – should we finish the presentation to see architectural guidelines
 - iv. Nate Hon – want this area to be similar and appropriate for Valley Junction. Don't want it to be out of line with what is happening north of Railroad.
 - v. Ralph Haskins – The taller height may be a compliment to what is already there
 - vi. Vicky Long Hill – South of Lincoln Street has building limitations
 - 1. Mike Hoffman – correct – no building can happen south of Lincoln
 - vii. Nate Hon – are there other uses we are not thinking of to have in the RA-3 area?
 - viii. Erin Cigliano – the design standards/architectural ideas we discussed in Mixed Use would be mirrored in this RA-3. But there is also opportunity for other kinds of development in RA-3.
 - ix. Meredith Wells – asked committee for thoughts on six stories
 - 1. Kevin Goodlaxson – six story seems large for this area. Maybe move the 2-3 story from RA-1 & RA-2 to RA-3. The tree line has value and should not be touched. Six story is too high.

2. Helen Rodish – since you are taking away our parks is there any way the floodplain can be recreational areas or a reserve?
 - a. Brad Munford - The floodplain is outside the area of the committee. That would be consideration by Parks & Rec Department.
 3. Mark Veiock – what about the bridge we've talked about?
 - a. Mike Hoffman – Park & Rec has been looking at the trail connection and they are focusing on a location at 8th Street. A bridge/tunnel has considered but it is too expensive to happen.
 - b. Steve Frevert – do we want to spend \$10 million on a bridge? I don't see it happening.
 4. Nate Hon – six stories are too high. Four at most
 5. Mark Veiock – is the six story because of the want for a hotel?
 6. Brad Munford – there are all heights of hotels
 7. Kevin Goodlaxson – can the wording be changed to not to exceed the height of Valley Station
 8. Steve Frevert – looking closer at 1st & Railroad – only really room for one or two buildings
 - a. Made a motion for RA-3 to make maximum height in the area is 4 story, seconded by Vicky Long Hill.
 - i. Nate Hon – would like to have a height maximum added to the story limitation
 - ii. Steve Frevert – doesn't sound like we are going to make any decisions tonight, so he is willing to withdraw
 9. Clyde Beveridge – since you want to increase the population in this town, have you looked at the sewer lines and utility lines? How are you going to get these properties? Will it be eminent domain? We need more one family houses and not big complexes. There is plenty of land out west. Keep it historical and leave it alone.
 - a. Meredith Wells – no this is not forcing anyone to sell. This is conceptual.
 10. MJ Hoax – Since there are already parking standards, they will limit the footprint for the buildings.
 - a. Mike Hoffman – he can do renderings showing the variations of four stories vs. six stories. A taller building may allow for underground parking or parking garage. He can offer various options based on height of building
 11. Steve Frevert – he withdrew his motion.
- r. Mike Hoffman – reviewed last slide of the PowerPoint which has the schedule

- i. Add meeting in early April to keep on schedule – most likely April 6th.
 - s. Helen Rodish – Asked when Mixed Industrial will be discussed. And wants to know when 100 block alleys will be paved.
- VIII. Discussion of Design Guidelines for the Transitional District – Teska - Erin Cigliano reviewed the PowerPoint slides
- IX. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm

Handouts

- Power point slides dated March 9, 2022

Staff Contacts:

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

Project website: <https://historicwdm.com/>

Future Meetings:

March 30, 2022 at 4:30 – Steering Committee Meeting

April 20, 2022 at 4:30 – Steering Committee Meeting

May 9, 2022 at 5:30 – Planning & Zoning Meeting

May 23, 2022 at 5:30 – City Council Meeting

May 25, 2022 at 4:30 – Steering Committee Meeting