Council Communication

Department: Community Development Case/Project No.: N/A	Ordinance No.: N/A Resolution No.: 24-	City Council: March 11, 2024

Subject/Title

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Cleanup Grant Enrollment into the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Land Recycling Program

Location

The Former Reliance Battery Factory site located at 813 22nd Avenue

Background/Discussion

Background

The Reliance Battery Factory site encompasses 0.93 acres within the 800 block of 22nd Avenue. Constructed in 1925, the building was located in an open area without any adjacent property owners. As the city expanded, the area surrounding the property became residential and the battery factory became a legal, nonconforming use within the neighborhood. The site was used for manufacturing, repairing and reconditioning lead acid batteries and remained in operation until Spring 2020. During its operation, the factory was cited several times for lead contamination which resulted in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completing a soil removal project in 1991 to reduce the lead exposure in the neighborhood. The building and associated structures were demolished in 2022.

Discussion

In 2022, the City was awarded a $500,000 Brownfield Cleanup Grant to utilize EPA funding to clean up the lead contamination in the soil. Part of this grant requires enrollment in to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Land Recycling Program (LRP). This program allows the City to voluntarily assess and implement remedial actions at a site that is contaminated or is perceived to be contaminated. The IDNR will provide a No Further Action Certificate for the site following assessment and implementation of appropriate cleanup activities and/or other remedies to assure the protection of public health and the environment. This certificate shall provide limited liability protection from further regulatory action relative to the problem(s) addressed. City staff has reviewed the request and found it to be in the best interest of the City.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends City Council adopt a resolution authorizing City staff and the Mayor to prepare and submit an application to the IDNR LRP for enrollment of the former Reliance Battery Factory site located at 813 22nd Ave. and authorizes staff to sign necessary agreements to execute enrollment into the LRP and to gain a No Further Action Certificate from the IDNR.

Attachments

none