Council Communication

Department: Community Development Case/Project No.: URN-25-001	Ordinance No.: Resolution No.: 25-	City Council: 2-24-2025 Planning Commission: 3-11-2025 P.H. and First Reading: 3-24-2025

Subject/Title

Adoption of the Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Plan

Location

Generally located south of 35th Avenue and north of Veterans Memorial Highway and east of South Expressway and west of Interstate-29

Background/Discussion

Background

In 2024 Cornerstone Housing Group approached the City about developing a parcel of land included in the proposed Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Area. Cornerstone is proposing to construct a 280-unit multi-family project. It has been determined the proposed area meets the definition of "economic development area." This determination is based on Chapter 403.17 of the Iowa Code.

In order to invoke its urban renewal powers, the City Council must agree to designate the subject property an Urban Renewal Area, adopt an Urban Renewal Plan and negotiate a development agreement with the Developer. Assistance in the form of an urban renewal project area, conforming to the Section 403 of Iowa Code, is necessary to acquire land; improve regulatory control; improve public infrastructure and facilities; and to allow for private development of vacant land.

Discussion

On February 24, 2025, the City Council passed a resolution of necessity, which directed staff to initiate the process of creating the Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Plan and Area. This resolution establishes the following timeframe:

3-05-2025	Consultation meeting to be held with other taxing jurisdictions
3-11-2025	City Planning Commission hearing and review
3-24-2025	City Council public hearing on the proposed urban renewal plan

The consultation hearing was held on March 5, 2025 and no public attended. Additionally, no written correspondence has been received by the Community Development Department either in support or against the proposed plan.

Iowa statutes require the City Planning Commission to review the plan for conformity to the comprehensive plan and to forward a recommendation to City Council prior to the public hearing. This was held 03-11-2025 and Planning Commission recommended approval of the Power Drive Housing URN with a 8-0-3 vote. An urban renewal plan conforming to the requirements of Chapter 403 of the Iowa Code has been prepared and is attached for your review.

The Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Area is being designated as an economic development area that is appropriate for the development of new low and moderate income (LMI) housing units and the provision of public improvements related to housing and residential development conforming to Chapter 403.17 of the Iowa Code. Designation is necessary to assist and promote local commercial enterprises to strengthen and revitalize the economy. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will be utilized to provide assistance to the City for the infrastructure costs that will be incurred.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends concurrence that the Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Plan and Area is in conformity with the *Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Comprehensive Plan*.

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Planning Commission Recommendation
The City Planning Commission recommended approval of the Power Drive Housing URN with a 8-0-3 vote. VOTE: AYE – Freund, Hutcheson, Knauss, Rater, Rew, Stroebele Van Houten and Watson. NAY – None. ABSTAIN – None. ABSENT – None. VACANT – Three. Motion carried.
Attachments
Attachment 1 - Power Drive Housing Urban Renewal Area Plan Attachment 2 – Resolution Attachment 3 - Ordinance

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