Council Communication

Department: Community Development Case No.: URV-22-009 Submitted by: Housing & Economic Development	Ordinance No.:	Resolution of Intent: 10/24/2022 Planning Commission: 11/8/2022 Public Hearing & First Reading: 11/28/2022 Second Reading: 12/19/2022 Third Reading: Request to Waive

Subject/Title

Establishment of the Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Area.

Location

Undeveloped property located at the northwest corner of S. 34th Street and 12th Avenue.

Background/Discussion

Background

Chapter 404 of the Iowa Code authorizes a City to designate an area as an urban revitalization area. Improvements to qualified real estate within designated areas may then be eligible to receive a total or partial exemption from property taxes for a specified number of years. The exemptions are intended to stimulate private investment by reducing the tax increase that would normally result from making improvements to real estate property.

Urban revitalization tax abatement incentives can apply to residential, commercial and industrial development. Both new construction on vacant or unimproved land and rehabilitation of existing structures are eligible for tax abatement.

A proposal has been submitted to Community Development for the construction of a new multifamily development to be known as Black Squirrel Flats at the northwest corner of S. 34th Street and 12th Avenue. Final plat approval of a four-lot subdivision known as Black Squirrel Flats Subdivision which includes this parcel was approved by City Council on 8/8/2022. The new tax parcel information is pending an update from the Pottawattamie County Assessor and GIS. Community Development wishes to create the Urban Revitalization Area consisting of one parcel at this location.

Staff has prepared an Urban Revitalization Plan in accordance with Section 404.2 of the Iowa Code and has scheduled the matter for City Council consideration. The Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Area will consist of approximately 1.3 acres.

Discussion

Iowa Code permits the City to establish urban revitalization areas which satisfy one of the five conditions outlined in Section 404.1. Staff believes this project meets the criteria under 404.1.5. Section 404.1.5 discusses an area designated as appropriate for public improvements related to housing and residential development, or construction of housing and residential development, including single or multifamily housing.

On October 24, 2022, City Council approved Resolution 22-261, which directed staff to initiate the process of creating the Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Plan and Area. This resolution set November 28, 2022 as the date of the public hearing.

This matter was brought before the City Planning Commission at their November 8, 2022 meeting. The Commission found the following: 1) That the proposed Black Squirrel Flats Urban

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Revitalization Plan furthers the goals of the City's *Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Plan,* which is the general plan for the development of the City of Council Bluffs; and 2) That the Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Area is an area appropriate for urban revitalization as specified in Section 404.1.5 of Iowa code.

Property owners were notified and no written correspondence was received by the Community Development Department either in support or against the proposed plan. Concurrent with the adoption of an urban revitalization plan, an ordinance establishing the urban revitalization area can be considered. Upon adoption of the area and approval of an ordinance, the City is permitted to grant tax abatement to qualified projects. If approved, the project as proposed could be eligible for full exemption from taxation for four years.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends approval of the Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Plan and Area and 1st consideration of the ordinance.

Planning Commission Public Hearing

Staff speakers for the request:

1. Courtney Harter, Director, Community Development, City of Council Bluffs

Speakers in favor: None
Speakers in opposition: None

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Plan and Area.

Vote: 11-0 (0 absent)
AYE – Bailey, Bass, Halm, Hutcheson, Knauss, Opperman, Rater, Rew, Scott, Stroebele and Van Houten
NAY – None
ABSTAIN – None
ABSENT – None
Motion: Carried

Attachments

A) Boundary Map
B) Black Squirrel Flats Urban Revitalization Plan

Prepared by: Tiffany Schmitt, Community Development Technician, Community Development Department
Approved by: Courtney Harter, Director, Community Development Department