Council Communication

Department: Community Development CASE # URV-20-002	Ordinance No. _____	Council Action: 5/18/2020

Subject/Title

Ordinance establishing the 5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Area within the City of Council Bluffs.

Location

An area generally bounded by West Kanesville Boulevard to the north, West Broadway Street to the south, North Main Street to the East, and South 6th Street to the west and excludes property commonly known as TS Bank (legally described as Lots 1 through 3, Bluffs Center 1, Replat 1).

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 by The 712 Initiative for 530 West Broadway (the former EQ building.) The 3-story brick building, originally completed in 1880, will be fully renovated to include 8,930 sq ft of residential space in 15 units on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The main floor will consist of four retail bays with a total of 6,178 sq ft of commercial space. The historic character of the building will be maintained in the redevelopment, returning large storefront windows to the street level encouraging walkability and window shopping.

Additionally, the 712 Initiative has plans to renovate the old Council Bluffs Community School District building into residential multi-family and construct a new residential multi-family building on the parking area to the north. The City also believes these projects could entice the remaining owner on the block as well as the owners to the east to renovate and rehabilitate their properties to provide new residential and commercial space in the future.

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 404.1.2: An area which by reason of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, incompatible land use relationships, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the actual value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, or the

existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or a combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of a municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability and is a menace to the public health, safety, or welfare in its present condition and use.

On April 6, 2020, City Council approved Resolution 20-93, which directed staff to initiate the process of creating the 5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Plan and Area. This resolution set May 18, 2020 as the date of the public hearing.

This matter was brought before the City Planning Commission at their May 12, 2020 meeting. The Commission found the following: 1) That the proposed 5th & West Broadway Urban 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 5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Area is an area appropriate for urban revitalization as specified in Section 404.1.2.

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.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends approval of the 5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Plan and Area and 1st consideration of the ordinance.

Public Hearing

1. Speakers in favor: Sheryl Garst, 1228 S Main St, Council Bluffs, IA 51503
2. No one appeared in opposition.

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the 5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Plan and Area.

VOTE: AYE 11 NAY 0 ABSTAIN 0 ABSENT 0 Motion: Carried

Attachments

Boundary Map
5th & West Broadway Urban Revitalization Plan draft