

**Community Development Authority
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

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1 The meeting of the Community Development Authority of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 4:05 p.m. on Wednesday, January 10, 2018. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Harvey Bertrand,
6 Ann Brandau, John Lyche, Mike Gargaro

7

8 Also Present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Planner/Zoning Inspector Katie Aspenson, City Engineer
9 Jarrod Holter

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11 Excused Absences: Ron Johnson, Joe Buchegar

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13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meetings**

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15 Motion by John, second by Ann, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting as printed
16 and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

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18 On voice vote, motion carried.

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20 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

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22 Mike called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that portion of the
23 meeting.

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25 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

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27 **Item 4 – Update on the proposed amendment to the “Form Based Overlay Districts” for**
28 **Onalaska’s downtown commercial and residential areas of the Unified Development Code**

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30 Katie said the amendment is now in effect as the Administrative and Judiciary Committee gave
31 Ordinance 1603-2018 (to amend Part 5 of Chapter of Title 13 of the Code of Ordinances of the
32 City of Onalaska relating to Special Districts) its First, Second, Third and Final Reading on
33 January 3, and the Common Council had done the same on January 9. Katie said CDA members
34 have a copy of the new Downtown Code in their packets, and she summarized how the city has
35 attempted to be proactive instead of reactive for future development opportunities:

36

- 37 • The code is divided into two sections, one of which focuses on residential. The lighter-
38 shaded boxes on the map included in CDA members’ packets represents Residential
39 areas.
- 40 • The darker shading is for Downtown – Planned Unit Development, and this is where the
41 primary changes are located. The ordinance allows an individual to run through the PUD

**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, January 10, 2018

2

42 process with a quarter-acre (approximately a quarter block). Katie said a developer may
43 write his/her own zoning district, if he/she chooses to do so.

- 44 • A developer is allowed to name the uses he/she wants to see, and also address density,
45 which includes criteria such as open space and parking. For example, a developer has the
46 opportunity to justify why he/she would need a reduction in parking. Katie said, “It’s
47 truly to allow for unique developments to occur in our downtown area and promote
48 redevelopment because as many of you are aware, we are running out of vacant land in
49 the City of Onalaska – especially in our downtown area. We’re hoping that this will spur
50 new development.” Katie also said there are individuals who wish to develop in the
51 downtown area, but the city’s Zoning Ordinance [Form-based Overlay District] “has been
52 more of a hindrance than a help. The intent of this is to allow for better development to
53 occur.”

54

55 Katie told CDA members that United Methodist Church, which is located within this area, plans
56 to do an expansion, and she said the church “looking at being the first to essentially test out this
57 new code as a Downtown – PUD.”

58

59 John noted Katie had said a quarter of an acre or a quarter of the block, and he referred to
60 Section 13-3-16(c)(1), which reads “*If a minimum of one-quarter acres of land (10,890 square*
61 *feet) is amassed by a single entity, an applicant/developer may petition the Plan Commission and*
62 *Common Council to consider a Downtown – Planned Unit Development.*”

63

64 Katie said it is a quarter of an acre, noting that some of the city’s blocks are an acre.

65

66 Jarrod said a block measures 240-by-300 square feet, so it is a little less than one block.

67

68 Katie reiterated it is a quarter of an acre and said, “If you amass a quarter of an acre and you’re
69 in the Residential area or you about the Downtown – PUD, you can petition to change the
70 designation from Residential to the PUD if you own all the property. There’s a public hearing,
71 and you notify the neighbors and tell them what it is you would like to do. The intent is that this
72 is not set in stone and it allows the boundaries to fluctuate.”

73

74 Ald. Bertrand asked Katie to summarize two or three key provisions “that indicate our relaxing
75 standards to invite more development.”

76

77 Katie said she believes the best part of that begins with Section 13-3-17 (Downtown – Planned
78 Unit Development) and runs through Section 13-3-20, “where we’re taking what we would
79 typically allow you to do only if you have a very large amount of acreage to work with elsewhere
80 in the city, we’re letting you do larger development on a very small area.” Katie said the
81 ultimate approval still lies with the Plan Commission and the Common Council to ensure it is in
82 taste with the neighborhood, adding a public hearing is part of the process. Katie cited the

**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, January 10, 2018

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83 example of additional development on City of Onalaska land, such as land adjacent to the Great
84 River Landing. Katie said it is possible a developer would not have to do the open space amount
85 or the 40 percent green space because the Great River Landing and Dash-Park are in close
86 proximity. Katie said this would be a way for the city to relax its standards to take in what is the
87 context of the neighborhood.

88

89 Ald. Bertrand asked, “Do we have anything like Eminent Domain?”

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91 Katie said the city always has the ability to Eminent Domain.

92

93 Ald. Bertrand asked if this ever has occurred.

94

95 Mayor Chilsen said he believes Eminent Domain only should be used “in very extreme
96 instances.”

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98 Mike noted some of the areas shaded in blue on the map, representing Downtown – PUD, are
99 Residential, and he said it is his understanding they can be “easily converted.”

100

101 Katie told Mike he is correct and said, “I tried to stick with the Downtown – PUD is when it’s
102 Commercially zoned, and Downtown Residential with properties that are already zoned
103 Residential. There are homes that are zoned Commercial today, so this is an attempt to stay in
104 line with that.”

105

106 Mike asked, “Have there been people who have been paying very close attention to this because
107 they’re planning on anything?”

108

109 Katie said, “There have been people who are waiting for the city to adopt this ordinance.”

110

111 Ald. Bertrand asked, “This doesn’t really imply anything relative to 360’s development, does it?”

112

113 Katie said, “It would allow any property that’s greater than a quarter-acre to utilize this anywhere
114 in that district, so it could be used.”

115

116 **Item 5 – Acknowledgement of 2018 CDA Meeting Schedule**

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118 A copy of the 2018 CDA meeting schedule was included in CDA members’ packets. Katie said
119 the CDA is scheduled to meet at 4 p.m. the Wednesday after the Common Council meeting.

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121 Mike asked Katie to return to providing the CDA with building permit updates and projects
122 occurring in the city.

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**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, January 10, 2018

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124 Katie said she intends to provide a financial report for 2017 at the February 14 CDA meeting.

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126 **Adjournment**

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128 Motion by Ann, second by Ald. Olson, to adjourn at 4:18 p.m.

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130 On voice vote, motion carried.

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133 Recorded by:

134

135 Kirk Bey