

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

1

1 The meeting of the Community Development Authority of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 17, 2018. It was noted that the meeting had been announced
3 and a notice posted at City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Jim Binash, Ann
6 Brandau, Ron Johnson, Joe Bucheger, John Lyche, Mike Gargaro

7
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Joe Chilsen, Planner/Zoning Inspector
9 Katie Aspenson, Ald. Kim Smith, Ald. Diane Wulf, Bryan Harjes and Jeff Miller of Hoisington
10 Koegler Group, Inc.

11
12 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meetings**

13
14 Motion by Ald. Binash, second by Ald. Olson, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting
15 as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

16
17 On voice vote, motion carried.

18
19 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

20
21 Mike called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that portion of the
22 meeting.

23
24 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

25
26 **Item 4 – Discussion & Consideration of the Onalaska Redevelopment Project Kickoff:**

- 27
28 a. Goals & Objectives
29 b. Project Timeline
30 c. Stakeholder Engagement Approaches
31 d. Vision for State Road 16 Corridor
32 e. Vision for Downtown Corridor (Highway 35)

33
34 Bryan Harjes said he and Jeff Miller will be giving a brief presentation that outlines HKGi’s
35 process for the redevelopment planning effort, which is expected to last approximately six
36 months. Bryan said HKGi is beginning the market research piece of the process, and he shared
37 what he understands to be the broader goals and objectives of this effort:

- 38
39 • Understand the City of Onalaska and its marketplace – what are the State Road 16 and
40 Downtown corridors, what should they be, what opportunities present themselves in the
41 broader context of the La Crosse region, and what does it mean for these two specific

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

2

- 42 areas?
- 43 • Positioning – what do the corridors want to become? Do they want to become individual
44 destinations rather than “pass-through” corridors on the larger state highways? How does
45 the city attract longer stays or more commitment to spending time and money in the
46 community through that? Where are the opportunities for potential redevelopment?
 - 47 • Develop a strategy for implementation. This is a 10-year vision, perhaps longer in certain
48 areas. Where are the “low-hanging fruit” targeted areas for initial reinvestment? Over
49 time, how do the dominoes align? A key component is to take a sequential approach with
50 a phasing strategy. To do so, the CDA and the Common Council will be in a position to
51 assist with financial tools or opportunities. There also are grant opportunities and other
52 funding strategies and mechanisms.

53

54 Bryan referred to a previous meeting at which a broader scope of topics (market, master
55 planning, redevelopment studies, analysis) was outlined. These topics have been broken down
56 into three primary phases of work that take on a linear progression. Bryan said the process will
57 last six or seven months, and that HKGi likely will attend CDA meetings monthly and provide
58 updates. There also will be ongoing coordination calls with the CDA working group. The
59 process will consist of:

60

- 61 • Collecting background data and information.
- 62 • Examining any past and relevant studies.
- 63 • Understanding the future market potential and what it means for the two distinct districts.
- 64 • Examining commercial, commercial retail, residential (primarily multifamily
65 opportunities), some office, some hospitality.
- 66 • Presenting the information to the CDA and review it at the CDA’s August 28 meeting.
- 67 • Meeting with key property owners and stakeholders in both areas either in late August or
68 early September, then sharing that information with the CDA.
- 69 • Working through some redevelopment concept alternatives and establish guidelines, with
70 the goal being to present several ideas to the CDA. The presentation could include plan
71 diagrams, imagery, potential project types, and potential precedent projects.
- 72 • Gathering feedback from the CDA at its October 10 meeting, refining the concepts to
73 prepare for a second round of stakeholder engagements, and conducting a developer
74 roundtable. This information would be shared with the CDA in November.
- 75 • Creating a document to be reviewed by the CDA that includes information pertaining to
76 the analysis work, market components, exploration ideas, the full redevelopment plan and
77 recommendations, and the full implementation strategy. This would be presented to the
78 CDA either in December or January.

79

80 Bryan said the process will include keeping an open line of communication with stakeholders
81 and the CDA. Bryan said he and Jeff want to schedule sit-down meetings with property owners
82 in the coming weeks, and another HKGi staff member also will be doing some outreach

Reviewed 7/23/18 by Katie Aspenson

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

3

83 pertaining to the market side via telephone. Bryan said HKGi wants CDA members to share
84 who they believe are the key property owners in both districts, who possibly could participate in
85 the face-to-face meetings, and who could be contacted by telephone. Bryan asked if there are
86 dominant real-estate development groups in the La Crosse area, and also if other developers from
87 Chicago, the Twin Cities, or Milwaukee are showing interest. Bryan suggested that the process
88 begin by contacting local property owners and speaking with them, also suggesting that the CDA
89 begin with the State Road 16 corridor – the quadrants in particular.

90
91 Katie said city staff has contacts with the management company of the southern western
92 quadrant; specifically, for at least half the area. Katie noted that Harry Dahl is in charge of
93 Valley Plaza, and she said she believes staff also has contact information for some of the smaller
94 outlots in this area. Katie told Bryan and Jeff she possibly could obtain contact information for
95 Shopko, and that she could provide them with contact information for the owner of the strip mall.
96 Katie also told Bryan and Jeff the owners of Blain’s Farm and Fleet and Best Buy should be
97 contacted, as should Mark Hansen, a former CDA member who owns the Burrachos Fresh
98 Mexican Grill and Starbucks property. Katie also identified Perkins Family Restaurant, Kohl’s,
99 Target, Kwik Trip, the now-closed Old Country Buffet, Holiday Inn Express, and Olive Garden
100 as businesses whose owners should be contacted.

101
102 Ald. Binash said it is his understanding Holiday Inn Express will become a La Quinta.

103
104 Katie noted the former Old Country Buffet likely will be razed.

105
106 A discussion ensued regarding the properties along the State Road 16 corridor.

107
108 Bryan inquired about past conversations the City of Onalaska has had with the City of La Crosse
109 regarding Valley View Mall, asking if the City of La Crosse has targeted that area for
110 redevelopment.

111
112 Katie said to the best of her knowledge there have not been any cross conversations regarding
113 that topic.

114
115 Jeff said he believes it would be prudent to have a conversation with the City of La Crosse.

116
117 Bryan inquired about the City of La Crosse’s Comprehensive Plan.

118
119 Katie noted the City of Onalaska’s Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2015 and said she
120 believes the City of La Crosse is currently working on redoing its Comprehensive Plan.

121
122 John suggested also speaking to Gundersen Health System about its campus as there is a
123 significant amount of vacant land present. John said there had been discussions pertaining to

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

4

124 utilizing that land for Mixed Use and Residential properties.

125

126 Bryan asked if any other landowners currently in the district are actively doing redevelopment in
127 other areas of the City of Onalaska or the City of La Crosse.

128

129 Katie said she does not believe so.

130

131 John noted Don Weber is involved with redevelopment in downtown La Crosse.

132

133 Katie noted Don Weber is not in the study area.

134

135 Ald. Binash asked if the discussion includes areas located north of Interstate 90.

136

137 Katie said that area is the city's remaining greenfield property and noted those property owners
138 are different than the individuals in the study area.

139

140 Bryan noted the predominance of the stakeholder meetings will be with the area located along
141 State Road 16. However, Bryan also said it might be logical to speak with stakeholders located
142 along the Downtown Corridor who have recently been active with redevelopment or who have
143 been contemplating the assembly process. Bryan said he had heard about a potential residential
144 redevelopment project, and he asked, "Are there any other of the smaller scale ones that would
145 make sense? Or is it more about those who have done it [and] those who are interested in doing
146 it in the downtown area?"

147

148 City Administrator Rindfleisch cited the example of Fossum Funeral Home, which is located
149 along State Road 35 and is not interested in development. City Administrative Rindfleisch noted
150 Dave Skogen owns property a block off State Road 35 as well as a block away.

151

152 John mentioned local developer Marvin Wanders.

153

154 Ald. Binash and Katie both mentioned local developer Terry Weiland, who is proposing to
155 construct a bar and a residential dwelling unit just off State Road 35, on Elm Street.

156

157 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the Onalaska School District had purchased the former
158 Festival Foods Support Center, which includes a parking lot and is located along State Road 35.
159 The Onalaska School District utilizes the building as its central office. City Administrator
160 Rindfleisch said the parking lot might be able to be combined or utilized.

161

162 Ald. Binash said the substation located along State Road 35 eventually might be relocated.

163

164 John said there is opportunity for redevelopment along 3rd Avenue.

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

5

165
166 Mayor Chilsen mentioned Omni Auto, which is located along State Road 35 North.
167
168 Katie said she believes the area to which Mayor Chilsen had referred is outside the study area,
169 noting that Main Street is considered the northern boundary.
170
171 A discussion ensued regarding properties along the Downtown Corridor.
172
173 Katie said she believes the CDA working group will be able to decide which individuals to meet
174 with in person compared to who can be contacted by telephone.
175
176 City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed improving downtown parking, which he said could
177 “jumpstart” additional redevelopment.
178
179 Katie said she believes one of the goals for the downtown area was to address parking and
180 determine if there are any creative solutions that can be devised.
181
182 John said underground parking could be a solution.
183
184 Bryan returned to the topic of the State Road 16 corridor, showing CDA members a slide he and
185 Jeff had presented during HKGi’s interview. Bryan said Valley View Mall, which is located on
186 the opposite side of State Road 16 in the City of La Crosse, presents a challenge, as do zoning
187 and land use issues. Bryan said he believes some of the land appears to be underdeveloped,
188 noting there are some locations with a significant amount of surface parking. Other challenges
189 include the transitions of uses, the relationship north and south of Interstate 90 between new
190 development and greenfield with development, and access and circulation. Bryan said this can
191 include access management, noting the State of Wisconsin has its principles for where
192 intersections and signals are located. Bryan said, “How do we bleed across that corridor to get
193 better access? Obviously, we discovered Theater Road was a tremendously important
194 connection to this community, so how else do we think about that? Maybe other streets that add
195 to better connectivity where it could make sense, but how does that interface with the potential
196 for development in those areas?”
197
198 John suggested perhaps the city should have a discussion with Jason Gilman, who serves as the
199 City of La Crosse’s Director of Planning and Development, and who used to serve as the City of
200 Onalaska’s Land Use and Development Director.
201
202 Katie said it was the Planning Department’s intent to attempt to either speak with Jason Gilman
203 or another City of La Crosse representative.
204
205 Bryan referred to areas shaded in blue and said the focus will be on redevelopment efforts in

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

6

206 those areas and how it relates to larger areas within the community or outside the community.
207 Bryan noted Jeff is taking the lead on updating the city's Zoning Code, and he said he believes
208 discussing how the two projects interrelate to each other will be a worthwhile conversation.
209

210 Bryan said he wanted to spend approximately 30 minutes discussing the State Road 16 corridor,
211 and then 15 minutes discussing the Downtown Corridor. Bryan said he and Jeff have two slides
212 to show to the CDA regarding its members' vision. Bryan also noted the CDA had initiated this
213 project because its members "wanted to have something happen out there," and he said HKGi
214 wants to understand the rationale behind this wish. Bryan addressed the following topics
215 regarding the State Road 16 corridor:
216

217 **Assets and Liabilities:** What type of turnover has occurred over the last decade? What and
218 where are the major competitors for this corridor? What is the broader trade area? What has
219 been the community's experience and approach to redevelopment?
220

221 CDA members and others present identified the following assets associated with the State Road
222 16 corridor:
223

- 224 • Its proximity to Interstate 90
- 225 • The tax base
- 226 • Greenfield development that could spur activity near Midwest Security Insurance
227 Companies
- 228 • Traffic flow
- 229 • Average Daily Traffic (ADT)/Trips Per Day, which is likely to increase
- 230 • It is a dense population center that attracts people from smaller communities.
- 231 • The mix of businesses present (retail, restaurants), and the fact people know to come to
232 this area for their shopping and dining needs.
- 233 • There has been stability, and there has been very little turnover the last five years.
- 234 • The City of Onalaska is considered to be the affluent community in this area, meaning
235 there is "purchase power."
- 236 • The City of Onalaska has "live to work" possibilities the Village of Holmen does not
237 have.
- 238 • The closest major population centers are Rochester, Minnesota (70 miles away); Eau
239 Claire, Wisconsin (90 miles away); and Madison, Wisconsin (120 miles away).
240

241 CDA members and others present identified the following liabilities associated with the State
242 Road 16 corridor:
243

- 244 • The city is only drawing individuals from smaller communities.
- 245 • The City of Onalaska is in competition with the Village of Holmen, which has enjoyed

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

7

- 246 considerable growth and development recently, and still has room to expand.
- 247 • There is no room for expansion or growth due to the presence of the La Crosse River
 - 248 Valley.
 - 249 • The City of Onalaska does not control the entire State Road 16 corridor – the City of La
 - 250 Crosse does – and the City of La Crosse is currently unable to finance any additional
 - 251 development through Tax Incremental Financing (TIF).
 - 252 • The predominance of big-box stores
 - 253 • There is no frontage road, and therefore no connectivity.
 - 254 • There is no “charismatic design structure.”

255

256 Ald. Binash asked if the Town of Medary owns any land in that area that the City of Onalaska
257 possibly could annex in the future.

258

259 Katie said there is no such land along this corridor.

260

261 Bryan noted the State of Minnesota does not levy a sales tax on clothing sold, whereas the State
262 of Wisconsin does, and he asked if this is a noticeable factor.

263

264 Ann noted she has shopped for clothes in Rochester.

265

266 Ald. Binash said he heard a waterpark might be opening in the former La Crosse Rubber Mills
267 building on the north side of La Crosse, and he asked if perhaps there is something compatible
268 that could be created so that a destination area also is created.

269

270 Bryan said hospitality or other aspects might be beneficial if the waterpark is a regional
271 recreational destination. Bryan also noted the city already has leverage because the State Road
272 16 corridor has an abundance of restaurants.

273

274 Ann said she has a friend who resides in St. Cloud, Minnesota and enjoys visiting this area
275 because there are restaurants are not chain restaurants. Ann said she fears seeing several chain
276 restaurants in this area, adding she likes the fact there are several privately owned restaurants that
277 are unique to the City of Onalaska.

278

279 **Identity or Brand:** What will it be in 10 years? What could Valley View Mall become? How
280 does the City of Onalaska get out in front of efforts by the City of La Crosse to revitalize Valley
281 View Mall? What areas have CDA members been to that capture the essence of what the City of
282 Onalaska wishes to be?

283

284 Mayor Chilsen offered to conduct a branding exercise and provide HKGi with the results.

285

286 Bryan said he believes branding will come out of the planning process.

Reviewed 7/23/18 by Katie Aspenson

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

8

287
288 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “To me, it’s almost a city center. It’s almost the
289 opportunity to be a commercial/residential downtown separate from our existing downtown.
290 Entertainment, arts, culture – I think it’s missing that. It could be something.”

291
292 John complimented Denver, Colorado for what it has done in terms of rebranding and
293 reconfiguring. John noted there is a significant focus on entertainment in Denver and said, “I
294 think we have the ability to do something like that in Onalaska.” John said that while a majority
295 of the entertainment occurs in the city’s downtown district, it would be possible to move it out to
296 the State Road 16 corridor. John cited the example of 51st Street and France Avenue in the City
297 of Minneapolis, noting it has enjoyed revitalization after once being considered a blighted area.

298
299 Bryan noted the City of Woodbury, Minnesota has the benefit of four or five interchanges on two
300 major freeways. Bryan also noted there are three or four uniquely different shopping,
301 entertainment and outdoor recreation districts within Woodbury, which is an affluent suburb near
302 the Twin Cities. Bryan suggested that perhaps each one of the State Road 16 quadrants that has
303 been identified could offer similar opportunities.

304
305 John referred to a past meeting at which there was a discussion about creating a boutique-type
306 atmosphere in this area.

307
308 Mayor Chilsen said that as the branding exercise proceeds the CDA can develop a brand “as to
309 what we want to be.” Mayor Chilsen also said that while the city currently does not have a
310 brand, one can be built.

311
312 John told CDA members about The Woodlands, a master planned community located in the
313 Houston/The Woodlands/Sugar Land metropolitan area in Texas. John noted The Woodlands is
314 a combination of high-density residential, shopping, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

315
316 Jeff asked if there has been significant redevelopment along State Road 16.

317
318 Mike said that with the exception of a couple facades, redevelopment has been nearly
319 nonexistent.

320
321 Bryan said that perhaps a district parking component could be part of the State Road 16 corridor,
322 suggesting that perhaps a deck could be an efficient way to get motorists off the road and into a
323 location. That way, individuals could park their vehicles and patronize multiple locations.

324
325 Joe asked Bryan and Jeff if this is the type of conversation they have with potential stakeholders.
326 Joe also said, “Some of them might be that close-minded that they haven’t even thought about it
327 that way. Is that a possibility in today’s world?”

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

9

328
329 Bryan said, “I think part of it is walking them through the progression of, ‘We understand your
330 site and some of the limitations that may come with the size of it relative to a number of things
331 like market potential and potential users of the site.’ But we’re open-minded into looking at mix
332 of uses where you could add an additional program or capacity to your site. It could be
333 residential. It could be residential on top of retail. It could be office. It could be even higher
334 intensity uses with the use of structured parking to help offset the parking challenges on a more
335 traditional suburban patterns. ... I feel they’ll get a pulse of the order of the magnitude on the
336 development summary that could be extracted through different scenarios, like a reinvestment
337 scenario or maybe a suburban redevelopment or maybe a more urban redevelopment.”

338
339 Ann asked how walking is taken into consideration in a northern climate, particularly during the
340 winter months.

341
342 Bryan said that while the experience changes slightly over the winter months, “but I still think
343 they look at programming public spaces with things like skating rinks, fire pits, fire rings,
344 outdoor heaters for outdoor entertainment, live music, food and drink.”

345
346 John noted all of The Woodlands’ medical centers surround the city, and he said the city has
347 attracted all the medical personnel. John also noted Gundersen Health System is located along
348 the State Road 16 corridor and said this is to the City of Onalaska’s advantage.

349
350 Mayor Chilsen touted the city’s educational system.

351
352 Mike noted that United States Highway 53 is the third corridor that runs through the City of
353 Onalaska, and he asked if the city’s brand is the downtown area or if it is the Valley View Mall
354 area. Mike asked if there is way to fit multifamily housing near stores such as Best Buy and
355 Blain’s Farm and Fleet so that residents may walk to retail outlets. Mike also asked if City of
356 Onalaska signage could be placed on a walking bridge over Interstate 90.

357
358 Bryan cautioned against “put[ting] all [the] eggs in one basket for a brand,” adding, “Maybe
359 that’s not what the community is. Part of what you have going for you is a very vibrant
360 opportunity for a commercial district. There’s kind of a unique niche downtown spot. There are
361 great schools. There are great demographics. ... Then you tell the story to really highlight these
362 areas within the community.”

363
364 Bryan next addressed the Downtown Corridor and discussed the following topics:

365
366 **Desired Uses:** What is the downtown district? Is it the two blocks that lead to Dash-Park?
367 Does it include the State Road 35 corridor? How can the great assets that are present (Great
368 River Landing, Dash-Park) be leveraged? How should parking be addressed? Should there be

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

10

369 renovation compared to wholesale redevelopment regarding businesses?

370
371 Bryan noted there had been discussions regarding the park amenities, the historic frontage on
372 some of the buildings, and State Road 35 as it runs from Kwik Trip to Dash-Park. Bryan said,
373 “This is where we’re looking at how those uses fit in. You can start to see that gradation
374 between, what do you see as business? What do you see as residential? Is it the whole block? Is
375 it a half-block? We’ve already looked at calling some of that city-owned land ‘Public/Semi-
376 Public’ on that side. Do we relook at that and introduce different uses in those areas if it makes
377 sense? I think that’s what we’ll explore as we go through this piece.”

378
379 **Assets and Liabilities:** Has property ownership changed over time in this area? What does this
380 area compete with? Is it a local spot? Is it a tourist draw due to the Great River State Bike Trail?

381
382 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the downtown district likely is not yet a destination.

383
384 Bryan asked if it is local citizens who are coming downtown.

385
386 Ald. Binash noted more than 500 people from outside the area have come into the Great River
387 Landing since it opened.

388
389 Ann asked Ald. Binash if the individuals are bicyclists or people who simply are stopping at the
390 Great River Landing.

391
392 Ald. Binash said he does not know, telling Ann he believes it is a combination of different
393 things. Ald. Binash also addressed an apartment complex near the Great River Landing and said
394 it is his understanding the goal is to target younger individuals due to the presence of the Great
395 River State Bike Trail, the Great River Landing, restaurants, and the river nearby.

396
397 Katie noted the Great River State Bike Trail runs along 3rd Avenue South, with the crossing
398 being located at the Great River Landing. Katie also noted bicycle riders are being funneled past
399 the city’s restaurants located in that area.

400
401 John said he believes the City of Onalaska can mirror what is being done in Geneva, Illinois,
402 where older houses have been converted into shops. John said Geneva, Illinois has been cited by
403 niche.com as one of the best communities in which to live, adding there while there are no
404 national franchises present, there are small shops and ample outdoor recreation, including
405 bicycles and kayaks. John said, “It’s all the things we have. We just don’t know it yet.”

406
407 Katie said the Tuesday evening concerts in Dash-Park have been drawing a significant number of
408 spectators. Katie said she does not know if there is a way to do pocket parking in the downtown
409 district, or if there is a way to seek out shared resources. Katie also said there have been

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

11

410 discussions about possibly having two or three parking stalls at downtown businesses being
411 designated as public.

412

413 Ald. Olson told Katie it is not possible to do that on private property.

414

415 John said he has visited towns where old trolleys are utilized, and he told CDA members they
416 need to be aware that parking is “a stretch” for the city in the downtown district.

417

418 City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed branding, noting that the term “downtown” means
419 downtown La Crosse to many people who know they can park their automobiles in downtown
420 La Crosse and walk to many different establishments. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he
421 believes any branding in terms of the City of Onalaska must explain why someone should come
422 here for the Great River Landing or cottages that are part of a proposed TID District.

423

424 Ann noted the individuals who are coming for the Tuesday evening concerts at Dash-Park are
425 not staying once the concerts end because they are not thinking in terms of what else they want
426 to see while they are here.

427

428 John said people tend to look at the Black River as a liability and not an asset during the winter
429 months, and he suggested utilizing a Zamboni to create a skating loop that would run from the
430 Black River to downtown La Crosse.

431

432 Mayor Chilsen said he is working on a project that involves utilizing children’s artwork and
433 wrapping it around the electrical boxes in the city.

434

435 John suggested perhaps creating a statuary park near the Black River, and he cited the example
436 of Grand Forks, North Dakota, which had the goal of attracting people to the downtown district.
437 John said the city rented bronzes, and they attracted people to the downtown district not only to
438 examine the artwork, but also to patronize the local businesses.

439

440 Bryan said art is a big draw for purchasing, window shopping, and taking classes in “quaint”
441 downtown areas.

442

443 **Identity or Brand:** Katie said she believes it is common for people to refer to the downtown
444 area as “downtown” or “waterfront,” or pulling out one of the big parks.

445

446 Ald. Binash said the concept behind the Great River Landing was to make the landing resemble a
447 train depot and suggested the city utilize the railroad when branding.

448

449 Ald. Olson noted he had attended the Three Rivers Roleo this past weekend at the Great River
450 Landing and said he had told a couple that had just moved to the city to walk to the wetlands that

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

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

12

451 are there, and also to view the eagles nest located near the river. Ald. Olson said, “There are a
452 lot of assets here that we could be using for very quiet recreational things that are beautiful.
453 They’re beautiful things that are inherent to our community.”

454

455 Ald. Binash said there have been discussions regarding refurbishing the building located to the
456 west of the railroad tracks and making it available to the public. Ald. Binash noted insurance for
457 the building has been secured and said the next step would be for the Buildings Inspector to
458 examine it. Ald. Binash said it is possible campsites could be opened there.

459

460 John said he believes the CDA and the Common Council can serve as “vision-casters” so that the
461 public understands “what it can become, as opposed to doing it. ... I’m convinced that most
462 people, it’s hard for them to envision what it can be until it’s already there. As I see it, our job is
463 to cast that vision that people can buy into and say, ‘I can see that.’ It’s my impression the vision
464 that we have for downtown and the vision we have for the Highway 16 corridor are two totally
465 different visions.”

466

467 **Adjournment**

468

469 Mike adjourned the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

470

471

472 Recorded by:

473

474 Kirk Bey