VALPARAISO REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2025

The regular meeting of the Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission was called to order at 5:19 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025, Vice President Barbara Domer presided.

Members present were: Barbara Domer, Bill Durnell, Trish Sarkisian and Diana Reed. Also present were Director of Development George Douglas, City Attorney Patrick Lyp, City Administrator Bill Oeding, Planning Director Bob Thompson, Kevin Cornett, Porter County Career & Technical Education and members of the public. Rob Thorgren and Frank Dessuit were not in attendance.

ITEM #1- MINUTES: (1:23)
Mr. Durnell stated Commission members met for the Executive session.

Motion: Mr. Durnell moved to approve the June 12 2025, executive meeting minutes. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

Mr. Durnell reported copies of May 8, 2025, regular meeting minutes were distributed to members for their review prior to the meeting. After reviewing the minutes, all seemed in order.

Motion: Mr. Durnell moved to approve the May 8, 2025, meeting minutes. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #2 CLAIMS REGISTER AND FINANCIAL REPORT: (3:02)
Mr. Douglas reported that the Commission was sent the May 2025 Claims Registers and April Financial Report prior to the meeting. Mr. Douglas highlighted a few key claims and noteworthy items in the Claims Register and Financial Report.

Motion: Ms. Sarkisian motioned to approve the June Claims Register and the May Financial report. Mr. Durnell seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #3 PARKING LOT EASEMENT: (5:51)
Mr. Douglas reported the Parking Lot Agreement pertains to a parking lot easement between the developers of the Linc Apartments and the Lincoln Highway Garage, which is owned by the Redevelopment Commission. As part of the original Economic Development Agreement (EDA), the Commission agreed to provide up to 200 parking spaces in the garage for Linc residents. The easement agreement now formalizes that commitment and includes several amendments to the original EDA:

- **Parking Allocation**: 127 spaces will be designated for residential units, plus 7 ADA-compliant spaces, totaling 134 dedicated spots. This reduces the number of publicly available nested spots from 73 to 66.
- **Storage Units**: The amended agreement includes provisions for two storage units within the garage. A one-time payment of $20,000 will be made by the developer to reflect the additional construction cost associated with these units.

- **On-Site Parking Adjustment**: The original EDA included 8 on-site spaces for the development. These were not feasible due to site layout constraints and NIPSCO easements. The developer will provide a payment to reflect the loss of value to the garage, subject to the Commission's review and waiver of the original requirement.

The parties are still finalizing the language of the amended EDA and easement agreement. Once complete, the final documents will be circulated to the Commission. Mr. Douglas requested authorization for the Commission President or Vice President to sign the amended EDA and parking easement agreement once finalized.

Discussion from Commission members ensued. Questions and items of discussion included:

- Confirmation was made that 200 garage spaces remain dedicated to the Linc Apartments, with 127 available to residents 24/7, 7 designated as ADA-accessible, and that the developer will provide financial compensation in connection with these changes.
- Will the developer carry insurance for the two storage units dedicated to them?
- What time must the public vacate the nested parking spots?
- Is the allocation of maintenance costs identified in the amended Economic Development Agreement?
- What is the term of the agreement, and does the $250 permit fee include an escalator or allow for renegotiation after a certain period?

City staff answered and addressed questions and discussion items.

Motion: Mr. Durnell moved to authorize the President or Vice President to sign the both the amendments to the Easement agreement and the Economic Development Agreement subject to the city attorneys review and approval. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #4 DONATION OF PROPERTY TO PORTER COUNTY CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION: (30:56)

Mr. Douglas reported the proposed donation of property at 807 Lafayette Street to Porter County Career & Technical Education (PCCTE). The parcel, formerly part of the Regal Beloit acquisition, lies outside any environmental restrictive covenants and is zoned for residential use. Porter County Career & Technical Education plans to use the site for its Building Trades Program, in which students construct a single-family home annually as part of their curriculum. The proceeds from the sale of the home support the continuation of the program. Mr. Douglas requested authorization for the President or Vice President to sign a quitclaim deed transferring the property for this educational purpose, as allowed under Indiana statute.

Discussion from Commission members ensued. Questions and items of discussion included:

- Is there a requirement that the home constructed on the donated lot be sold to an owner-occupant, rather than an investor or non-resident buyer?
- How many bedrooms are anticipated in the home?
- Will the home be a ranch or two-story design?
- Given concerns seen in other areas with companies purchasing homes for resale or rental use, is there any mechanism in place to ensure the home built is sold to a long-term, owner-occupant rather than an investor or rental entity?

- Who will design the plans for the home?

City staff answered and addressed the questions and discussion the items.

Motion: Mr. Durnell motioned to authorize the President or Vice President to sign a quit claim deed with the appropriate restrictions on transfer. Ms. Reed seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #5 BID AWARD FOR 357 & 359 LINCOLNWAY & 360 INDIANA AVE: (39:06)
Mr. Douglas reviewed a request to fund the demolition of three properties acquired by the City through the Board of Works as part of the Lincolnway and Campbell Street intersection improvement project. Demolition bids were previously opened and are expected to be awarded to C. Lee Construction in the amount of $154,831. The demolition is planned to occur on a tight schedule. Afterward, the Department of Public Works will seed and maintain the properties, with no cost to the Redevelopment Commission. Funding for the demolition will come from the Commission's budget as part of the local grant match, with the potential for reimbursement if project funds remain.

Discussion from Commission members ensued. Questions and items of discussion included:
- Can you clarify the category of the grant and confirm where the funding for the overall Lincolnway Campbell Roundabout Project will come from? The demolition work is just one component of a much larger project.
- This project is funded through a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant, applied for through Federal Highway Administration funds, administered by INDOT, and programmed by NIRPC. Can you confirm if that's correct? Also, what is the current total estimated cost of the full Lincolnway Campbell Roundabout Project?
- Given the recent news about federal grant freezes and ongoing uncertainty, is the funding for the Lincolnway and Campbell Roundabout Project still secure? Could there be potential delays or alternate funding scenarios? What is the confirmed construction year for the project?
- Will additional right-of-way need to be acquired in order to complete the full project?
- The environmental study public hearing was expected last summer but hasn't occurred. Could we get clarity on the project's timeline and next steps moving forward?

City staff answered and addressed the questions and discussion the items.

ITEM #6 DASH OPERATIONS FUNDING REQUEST: (45:51)
Mr. Thompson reported transit is requesting $150,000 to support the operations of DASH. Transit anticipated receiving federal funding, but the funds did not arrive as expected. INDOT has since confirmed that the funding is on its way. In the meantime, we are asking for this $150,000 to help cover DASH expenses over the next few months.

Motion: Ms. Sarkisian motioned to approve the $150,000 operational support for Chicago Dash. Ms. Reed seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

<u>ITEM #7 MASTERPLAN DISCUSSION – PARK 30 MASTERPLAN & EASTSIDE MASTERPLAN</u>: (48:03)
Mr. Douglas provided background on the City's original engagement with Browning Day to design the Sports and Recreation Campus, approximately 250 acres along Memorial Drive. Following the project's pause and subsequent consideration of a data center for the site, the City also engaged Browning Day, with RDC support, to create a master plan for the adjacent East Side area west of the original campus. This area includes land owned by St. Mary's/Powers Health and PATCO.

Due to changes in development plans and the shift in funding, the original design work for the East Side was never completed. Mr. Douglas proposed re-engaging Browning Day to update and complete the master plan, integrating both the East Side and the former Sports Campus to guide future land use, connectivity, and infrastructure planning.

There is funding available in the Professional Studies budget line. Mr. Douglas requested permission to work with Browning Day and other City departments (Planning, Utilities, and Engineering) to finalize a scope of work and return with a proposed contract and public process timeline at an upcoming meeting.

Discussion from Commission members included:

- Will the public be a part of this updated scope with Browning Day?
- Are you seeking approval to re-engage Browning Day to update the original East Side plan, now including the former Sports and Recreation Campus as well, and to structure a public process similar to what we're doing on West Street?
- Is there an existing East Side Master Plan that Browning Day has already completed, or was the work paused before a final version was produced?
- Clarification was made that there is no finalized East Side Master Plan currently on file. Browning Day has not submitted any formal plan to the City to date. Prior to discussions about a change in scope or a contract amendment, no document titled "East Side Master Plan" was completed or delivered.
- Do we know the cost to expand the scope?
- The former Sports Park project involved a significant amount of public input and suggestions for potential uses. Is that documentation still available and, if so, should it be revisited or refreshed to give the public an early opportunity to weigh in again before new ideas are presented to Browning Day? If we're asking them to expand the scope, it seems important to clarify what direction or priorities they should be responding to.

City staff answered and addressed the questions and discussion the items.

Mr. Douglas provided an overview of a potential new planning effort focused on the area south of the airport, between Division Road and Highway 30, east of Pratt Industries and the Expo Center. The area consists of roughly 400+ acres, primarily zoned heavy industrial, and mostly located within city limits and the consolidated TIF district. It includes properties owned by two major landholders, one of which recently completed development of the Pottinger's facility.

While there has been strong interest from potential developers, the area faces infrastructure challenges, particularly limited water and sewer access, and roads that are not built for industrial truck traffic. Utility extension efforts are underway (e.g., water main for the Nylea project), but there is no comprehensive plan in place to guide future investment or development.

Mr. Douglas noted that the current Comprehensive Plan (2013) is outdated and does not fully account for the City's recent annexations or growth in this area. In addition, adjacent property owners, some outside the city limits, have expressed interest in voluntary annexation.

Mr. Douglas intends to draft a scope of services and issue an RFQ to identify a consultant team that can lead a master planning process for this area. The plan would address land use, utility and road infrastructure needs, annexation opportunities, and long-term development strategy. Planning, Engineering, Utilities, and Storm Water departments will be directly involved. A formal proposal and budget will be brought to the Commission once a draft RFQ is completed.

Mr. Douglas informed the Commission of plans to begin preparing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to engage a consultant for a master planning effort in the area south of the airport, between Division Road and Highway 30. While most of the land is already zoned industrial, adjacent areas, including properties with potential voluntary annexation, warrant a broader planning approach.

The proposed scope would address land use, utility extension needs, infrastructure costs, and necessary roadway improvements to support future development. This effort will involve coordination with Planning, Engineering, Utilities, and Storm Water departments.

No action was necessary at this time. Mr. Douglas will return with a draft RFQ and scope of services for Commission input before issuing the request to firms.

Discussion from Commission members included:

- Given that changing allocation areas is a multi-step process, typically involving five steps and taking several months, is there any reason to wait before initiating the process to add this area?
- Suggestion was made that pricing is included as part of the request. Since this is not a grant-funded project. Using a competitive bidding process will help ensure we get the best value.

City staff answered and addressed the questions and discussion the items.

ITEM #8 PROJECT SPREADSHEET UPDATE: (74:26)

Mr. Douglas presented the updated project spreadsheet, which is reviewed and distributed quarterly. The document includes year-to-date and life-to-date financials for active projects. While not reviewed in detail during the meeting, members were encouraged to review the spreadsheet and reach out with any questions.

One new project to be added is the Silhavy Road–Canadian National crossing, which is being funded through LIT. Although it does not involve Redevelopment Commission match funds, it will be included for tracking purposes.

Most projects on the list involve grant matches, with the notable exception of the INDOT relinquishment funds received for State Road 130. Debbie and the Engineering Department are actively involved in maintaining the accuracy of the spreadsheet.

ITEM #9 OTHER BUSINESS : (76:08)

Mr. Douglas acknowledged that this meeting would be Patrick's final appearance before the Redevelopment Commission, as he will be moving on to new professional opportunities outside of city government. While he will remain local, his departure marks the end of his formal role with the Commission.

Mr. Douglas expressed his deep appreciation for Patrick's many contributions—not only in his official capacity, but also as a trusted colleague and friend. Patrick has played a vital role in supporting the work of the Commission and has contributed significantly to economic development efforts, city projects, and overall community advancement.

In addition to his professional expertise, Patrick has been a mentor and an invaluable resource, frequently relied upon for historical context, strategic insight, and guidance. His presence and partnership will be deeply missed.

Mr. Douglas, speaking both as staff and a fellow Commission member, extended heartfelt thanks and best wishes to Patrick on behalf of the entire Commission. "Patrick, you've been outstanding at what you've done. You've meant a lot to me, you've mentored me, and you've made these projects and this community better. You'll be sorely missed here beside me, and beside us on the dais"

Ms. Sarkisian recognized Patrick for his years of dedicated service, his leadership, professionalism, and contributions to key projects, including The Linc, Regal Beloit, and Journeyman. Ms. Sarkisian acknowledged his deep institutional knowledge, strong negotiating skills, and the lasting impact of his work.

Ms. Reed thanked Patrick for his outstanding legal advice, guidance, and availability, including support during weekends. His professionalism, friendship, and lasting contributions to the community were recognized, with members noting that his role will be hard to fill.

Ms. Domer thanked Patrick for his support and guidance on both the City Council and Redevelopment Commission, recognizing his impact on the city's growth, and wishing him the best in his next steps. Patrick has certainly made a difference in Valparaiso.

Mr. Durnell reflected on knowing Patrick for nearly a decade, recalling past discussions on RDC matters. Mr. Durnell acknowledged Patrick's strong legal expertise and expressed gratitude for his service, wishing him the best in his future endeavors.

Patrick reflected on his long tenure since 2004, recalling early projects such as the extension of Vale Park and collaboration with former city engineers and officials. He emphasized the Redevelopment Commission's lasting impact on many local projects, from connector roads to prominent developments like Journeyman, The Linc, and Indiana Beverage. Patrick noted that while the origins of these projects may fade over time, their effects endure, highlighting

Valparaiso's reputation for follow-through on commitments. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve alongside many dedicated predecessors and thanked the group.

Patrick was thanked sincerely for his service and will be greatly missed.

ITEM #10 PUBLIC COMMENT: (82:28)
None.

ITEM #11 ADJOURNMENT: (82:35)
Staff said they had no further items for the Commission's consideration. Ms. Reed motioned to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Durnell seconding. A voice vote was unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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Bill Durnell, Secretary