

VALPARAISO REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2021

The regular meeting of the Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission was called to order at 4:42 p.m. on Thursday, February 11, 2021. President Rob Thorgren presided.

Members present were: Rob Thorgren, Evan Costas, George Douglas, Trish Sarkisian, Tim Bucher and Ethan Lowe. Also present were City Attorney Patrick Lyp, Redevelopment Director, Brandon Dickinson, City Administrator, Michael Jessen, Engineering Director Michael Jabo, Chamber member Kurt Gillins and Ed Kruschka, Rodrigo d'Escoto and Joel Phelps from EKOS Windows + Wall. Members of the public watched remotely.

ITEM #1-MINUTES:

Mr. Lowe reported copies of the January 14, 2021 regular meeting minutes were distributed to members for their review prior to the meeting. After reviewing the minutes, all seemed in order. Mr. Lowe recommended their approval.

Motion: Mr. Lowe motioned to approve the January 14, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Douglas seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #2 -CLAIMS REGISTER AND FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Dickinson reported that the Commission was sent the February 11, 2021 Claims Register and January 2021 Financial Report prior to the meeting. Mr. Dickinson recommended approval.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the February Claims Register and the January Financial Report. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #3-APPROVAL OF DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND REAL ESTATE PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH EKOS WINDOW + WALL:

The Redevelopment Commission put out an RFP seeking proposals of development of land that is owned at the East Port Business Park. The Redevelopment Commission received a proposal from this group and negotiated additional details to improve the proposal. The Commission was provided a Development Agreement and Real Estate Purchase Agreement with EKOS for review. EKOS presented their development plans and why they chose Valparaiso.

Mr. Kruschka made presentation.

Mr. Dickinson worked with the IEDC (Indiana Economic Development Corporation) to attract EKOS to Indiana. EKOS will purchase 14 acres from the RDC for approximately \$305,000.00 & RDC will provide a \$50,000.00 utility grant. Mr. Dickinson respectfully requests that the Commission approve the Economic Development Agreement and Real Estate Purchase Agreement with EKOS Window + Wall.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the Development Agreement and Real Estate Purchase Agreement with EKOS Window + Wall. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #4-RATIFYING DOCUMENT RELATED TO 2200 MEMORIAL PARKWAY:

Mr. Dickinson reported the 2200 Memorial Parkway Building is under contract for sale. There is a lease between the Redevelopment Commission and the Economic Development Commission. He requested ratification of Mr. Thorgren's ability to sign off on release of that lease as we no longer need the building as it is being sold to a third party.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #5-APPROVAL OF REAL ESTATE PURCHASE AGREEMENT:

Redevelopment Commission drafted a real estate purchase agreement for 304 Lincolnway. This would be an approval of the purchase agreement in similar form. Mr. Dickinson respectfully requests a motion to approve the agreement. Mr. Dickinson will provide updates to the Redevelopment Commission if there are changes. In accordance with Indiana Law the purchase price is less than or equal to the two independent appraisals.

Motion: Ms. Sarkisian motioned to approve Real Estate Purchase Agreement. Mr. Costas seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #6-APPROVAL OF REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MATCH FOR OCRA GRANT:

Mr. Dickinson reported that OCRA put out a \$250,000.00 Grant. It is highly competitive across the State. It required the Chamber of Commerce and small businesses to sign on, and state the need and demand for the grant. To make Valparaiso's bid more competitive a \$50,000.00 match to the grant was provided in an effort to aid our small businesses here in Valparaiso. This was discussed at the Board of Public Works last week. The \$50,000.00 would come out of the Initiatives money that we have set aside for businesses and projects in Valparaiso.

Motion: Mr. Thorgren motioned to approve the \$50,000.00 match. Mr. Douglas seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #7-REQUEST OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING OF DLZ SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT #4:

Mr. Jabo reported near the tail end of the project the utilities were so immense to move, it took an entire construction season to get it out of the way. That required DLZ to put more work in. DLZ's request is for an additional \$15,000.00. Their original contract had \$16,000.00 and considering they went through a season already and expended \$14,000.00, Engineering recommends we grant the funds to be available so Board of Works can execute it at their next meeting.

Mr. Thorgren asked about the timeline for the project. Mr. Jabo stated it was let at this time last year. Utilities got the go ahead to start immediately, it is not completed. The contractor will start in April if not in March and it will be finished this season.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve additional funding of DLZ Supplemental Agreement. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

ITEM #8-APPROVAL OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR STORM WATER IMPROVEMENTS AT CALKINS HILL:

Mr. Jabo reported that Engineering worked with the engineers at Calkins Hill to build a better underground detention which is a benefit to the neighborhood and combined sewer system. Their cost is \$197,846.00; the Redevelopment Commission agreed to pay up to \$95,000.00. Engineering as well as VCU inspected the work and it was built in accordance with how it was presented. Mr. Jabo recommends approval of the reimbursement for \$95,000.00.

Motion: Mr. Douglas made motion to approve the reimbursement for storm water improvements at Calkins Hill. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously approved.

ITEM #9-PUBLIC ART PRESENTATION:

Mr. Gillins reported that we are in the 11th cycle of art at the Cumberland Art Walk. We have done chalk boards, wrapped utility boxes, sponsored arts in school days and purchased 6 pieces that are currently at various locations. Cumberland Art Walk can be continued with MSI. That cycle will end in April, and in early May the current pieces will go. The pieces are \$25-30k per year. Utility wraps can still be done which are \$1000 each for the artist fee, installation and fabrication done through Digital Graphics. Another idea was “Vikings” throughout the City. Icon Poly is a company out of Nebraska that specializes in this type of project. They offer a variety of designs and it could be done this year. The price varies on size and design. Concrete pads would be needed for the Vikings to be anchored to and a body shop would need to clear coat them. Icon Poly requires a deposit of 50% of the total amount to start the order. It is an 8–12-week process from the time we say to do this to the time they are delivered.

Mr. Thorgren suggested to keep the art walk at Cumberland, but that more information was needed regarding the Vikings before any decisions could be made regarding them. Mr. Thorgren states that the Redevelopment Commission is all for funding different artistic opportunities and giving local artist the spotlight.

Mr. Dickinson questioned if there are more utility boxes that could be wrapped? Mr. Gillins stated there are more that could be wrapped. Mr. Dickinson stated that Mr. Gillins could begin selecting art walk pieces for 2021. Mr. Dickinson will check with utilities and project management to find out what other utility boxes are available to be designed and wrapped.

Redevelopment Commission agrees to move forward with the Art at Cumberland and then explore another art project.

Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Gillins, Maggie, and the Committee will gather more information and report back to the Redevelopment Commission.

ITEM #10-APPROVAL OF CHALLENGE GRANTS APPROPRIATION:

Mr. Dickinson reported the RDC annually provides \$600,000 to East Porter and Valparaiso school districts. Valparaiso did not spend down all of their 2020 grant money due to back orders because of Covid. Mr. Dickinson requested the RDC appropriate the balance of \$444,837.00 from 2020 forward to the 2021 budget. This amount does not count against the annual 2021 Challenge Grant sum.

Motion: Mr. Douglas made motion to approve the Challenge Grants Appropriation. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously approved.

ITEM #11-PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ITEM #13-ADJOURNMENT:

Staff said they had no further items for the Commission's consideration. Ms. Sarkisian motioned to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Lowe seconding. A voice vote was unanimously carried. The February 11, 2021 Redevelopment Commission meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Ethan Lowe, Secretary