

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
CITY OF WILLMAR, MINNESOTA
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2013**

MINUTES

The Community Development Committee of the Willmar City Council met on Thursday, September 12, 2013, in Conference Room No.1 at the City Office Building. Chair Fagerlie called the meeting to order at 4:45pm.

Present:

Rick Fagerlie	Chair
Audrey Nelsen	Council Member
Tim Johnson	Council Member
Bruce DeBlieck	Council Member
Bruce Peterson	Director of Planning and Development Services

Others present: Mary Lou Arne, Clint Schwitters, Steve Renquist – EDC Director

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Clint Schwitters, rental property owner, appeared to complain about citations he received for violations of the exterior storage and rental ordinances. Most of his concerns were addressed by staff and the Committee. Many of the issues raised were related to tenant behavior and were ultimately the responsibility of the property owner.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT GROUPS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Mary Lou Arne, presented an idea to create neighborhood improvement groups to oversee exterior property conditions in the City of Willmar. Her primary concern was the downtown area and the City core, but the concept could be implemented City-wide. She expressed concern that the deteriorating conditions were contagious and that they stemmed from a lack of education and respect for property. She suggested that neighborhood groups could select leaders, who could distribute pamphlets outlining issues and expectations for property maintenance. The contacts made as part of the program would encourage communication among neighbors and would direct property owners to maintain their properties, thereby reducing the enforcement burden on City staff.

The Committee thought the idea had merit, and Mrs. Arne asked them to take the lead in creating a structure within which such neighborhood groups could operate.

3. **INDUSTRIAL PARK LAND PRICING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**

Staff informed the Committee that, with the additional expansion to the Industrial Park planned for 2014, a program for land pricing was being developed. Initially, the market is being analyzed to determine a starting point for pricing. The pricing system to be proposed by staff will include a process to write down the price of land based on tax base enhancement, job creation, and the provision of community benefits by property purchasers.

Steve Renquist, EDC Director, presented information from several other states that showed the impact of job creation on the local economy. Another handout dealt with economic multipliers and their use in economic development planning (See Attachments).

4. **FAIRGROUND NOISE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**

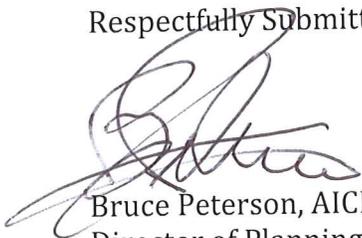
As requested by Council Member DeBlieck, the Committee reviewed past Council action relative to activities at the fairgrounds. Past noise issues have primarily come from automobile racing and, to a lesser extent, from snowmobile racing. The most recent complaints about noise were the result of a concert that was held at the fairgrounds in late August. A letter from Fred Cogelow was distributed (See Attachment). Prior to the next racing season, fair board representatives will be invited to a Community Development meeting to discuss the noise issue once again.

5. **GOING GREEN (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**

The "Going Green" waste collection and recycling activities scheduled for September 14th were discussed by the Committee. Staff reminded them that the City had contributed \$6,000 to the effort. Past collection efforts have been very successful and have benefited the City by reducing the accumulation of unlawful products in residential areas, and by offering the citizens a low cost means of disposal for electronic items, appliances, metals, and hazardous materials.

6. There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bruce Peterson, AICP
Director of Planning and Development Services