

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

Monday, December 14, 2015

1

1 The meeting of the Community Development Authority of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 4:05 p.m. on Monday, December 14, 2015. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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

7
8 Also Present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Land Use and Development Director Brea Grace,
9 Planner/Zoning Inspector Katie Aspenson

10
11 Excused Absences: Ald. Barry Blomquist, Mark Hansen

12
13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meetings (November 16, 2015 and**
14 **November 19, 2015)**

15
16 Motion by John, second by Ann, to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2015 and
17 November 19, 2015 meetings as printed and on file in the City Clerk's Office.

18
19 On voice vote, motion carried.

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

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

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

27
28 **Item 4 – Review and consideration of 2016 CDA meeting schedule**

29
30 Motion by John, second by Ann, to approve the 2016 CDA meeting schedule.

31
32 On voice vote, motion carried.

33
34 **Item 5 – Update and discussion on the Building the Great River Landing Project**

35
36 Brea said the Great River Landing Committee's focus is on the trailhead facility, with the goal of
37 going out for bids in February and beginning construction in the spring. The concept of the
38 building was taken to the Common Council on December 8, and the Council gave the Great
39 River Landing authorization to proceed. Brea noted the cost of Phase I is \$2,350,000, and it
40 includes a \$346,000 grant. The \$2,004,000 would be bonded utilizing room tax dollars to refund
41 it. Brea said this still must be approved through the Capital Improvements process and noted the

Reviewed 12/16/15 by Brea Grace

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

Monday, December 14, 2015

2

42 public hearing for the 2016 Capital Improvements Budget will be held at the January 5 Board of
43 Public Works meeting. The 2016 CIB will go before the Common Council for approval at its
44 January 12 meeting.

45

46 Brea began a PowerPoint presentation and showed the CDA the building design during the
47 charrette process. One of the goals was to draw inspiration from the train depot that used to be
48 on the site. Brea said the trailhead facility has been broken into two buildings and there now is
49 an atrium between the two. The restrooms are in one building, and there also are shower
50 facilities. The other building includes the welcome center office, a sink, and a counter. There
51 also is a storage room for supplies. Brea said visitors either may make purchases at the window
52 or enter into the office. The covered atrium will include benches and possibly vending
53 machines. There also will be a covered platform facing the river. Brea said the building will
54 mix the railroad theme with a modern look, including brick that matches City Hall. The clock
55 will face State Trunk Highway 35.

56

57 John suggested perhaps raising the center section another one to two stories and constructing a
58 four-sided clock tower.

59

60 Mayor Chilsen noted that former Third District Alderperson Jack Pogreba had met with him on
61 December 11 and told him he does not approve of the separation of the showers in the bathroom.

62

63 Ann noted she has been in parks where this option was available and said she likes it.

64

65 Brea said the design was changed due to a recommendation by the Wisconsin Department of
66 Natural Resources. Brea also said there are plans to install time-controlled locks on the
67 bathrooms and shower rooms.

68

69 Ann said she assumes that the center section, as it is designed, will provide shelter in inclement
70 weather and noted this feature will diminished if the center section is raised two stories.

71

72 John suggested perhaps raising a clock tower on timbers and mounting the gable higher. John
73 also inquired about the construction costs for the building.

74

75 Brea estimated up to \$250,000 was budgeted.

76

77 Ann said she does not think constructing a clock tower would fit with the building if it is
78 designed to resemble an old-fashioned train depot.

79

80 Mayor Chilsen said raising it would open up the view to the water on the other side.

81

82 Mike asked what is being done under the open areas to deter birds from congregating there.

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

Monday, December 14, 2015

3

83

84 Brea promised to speak to Short Elliott Hendrickson and said it will be important to balance the
85 cost of the trailhead facility with the rest of the site. Brea noted that \$200,000 budgeted for a
86 splash pad had been removed and said, "It's getting to be a tighter budget." Brea said the plaza
87 is currently being designed in the lawn space, and she said the Great River Landing Committee
88 had discussed how to make the Great River Landing "a very distinguishable place." Brea said
89 the Great River Landing can have a literal interpretation of eagles and fish, or it can have a more
90 abstract interpretation of eagles and fish. Brea showed the CDA pictures of a swan feature and
91 water ingrained in the concrete. Brea said it would be possible to bring active recreation to the
92 site, referring to photographs of children standing on wooden blocks. There also could be
93 program-active spaces for a Christmas tree, yoga, and arts and recreation events. The block
94 features could be utilized for outdoor classroom space. Brea noted there currently is significant
95 concrete space for an overlook and said SEH likely will reduce the concrete footprint and put in
96 grass for a future use if a fountain or other large feature is not planned for this phase. Brea said
97 passive spaces could include a maze, benches that could serve as a play area, a fire pit, and a
98 terrace plaza area.

99

100 Brea addressed the possibility of including a water feature, noting it has been made clear it must
101 not be a place for children to play. Brea referred to a picture of a water feature at night that
102 includes lights to illuminate the spray coming up from the fountain. Brea said the Great River
103 Landing Committee has discussed how to create an attractive water feature that also is safe.
104 Brea said SEH is sketching a couple of concept designs of the plaza – one with a water feature,
105 and one without – and these concepts will be presented to the Great River Landing Committee at
106 its meeting on Monday December 21st. The Great River Landing Committee also has another
107 meeting scheduled for Monday, January 4, at which time the committee will need to make a
108 recommendation to the Common Council on how to proceed with the plaza. This
109 recommendation will go before the Council on January 12. Brea said the Great River Landing
110 Committee would like to include a water feature in the design. Brea said the committee also
111 discussed incorporating different nodes into the site. Brea said there is an opportunity along the
112 trail to install stations that share the history of the site, the railroad, the ecology, and the
113 archaeological historical significance.

114

115 **Item 6 – Closed Session:**

116

117 To consider a motion to convene in Closed Session under Section 19.85(1)(e) of the Wisconsin
118 Statutes for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the
119 investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or
120 bargaining reasons require a closed session:

121

- 122 • Consideration of property purchase adjacent to waterfront project.
- 123 • Discussion related to development and refinement of negotiating and development

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

Monday, December 14, 2015

4

124 strategies as well as review of development proposals for TIF 4 District.

125

126 If any action is required in Open Session, as the result of the Closed Session, the CDA will
127 reconvene in Open Session to take the necessary action and/or continue on with the printed
128 agenda.

129

130 Motion by Ann, second by Ron, to convene in Closed Session.

131

132 On roll call vote: Ann Brandau – aye, Ron Johnson – aye, John Lyche – aye, Ald. Jim Olson –
133 aye, Mike Gargaro – aye. In Closed Session at 4:36 p.m.

134

135

136 Motion by Ann Brandau, second by Ron Johnson, to adjourn from Closed Session.

137

138 On roll call vote: Ann Brandau – aye, Ron Johnson – aye, John Lyche – aye, Ald. Jim Olson –
139 aye, Mike Gargaro – aye. Adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

140

141

142

143 Recorded By:

144

145 Kirk Bey