



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes - Final

City Plan Commission

Monday, June 29, 2020

4:00 PM

Council Chambers

In an effort to keep members of the public, City staff and City Plan Commissioners as safe as possible from the spread of COVID-19, City Staff highly encourages the public to submit any comments, concerns, questions, or support in writing ahead of the meeting to Tim Acklin at acklint@cityoflacrosse.org.

The meeting will also be conducted through video conferencing and may be viewed and accessed with the following link:
<https://stream.lifefizecloud.com/extension/3010241/b4028f50-5227-4375-95ca-1d32c8187d40>
Members of the public will also be permitted to ask questions or provide statements via video conferencing.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:01pm.

Present: 6 - Randy Turtenwald, James Cherf, Tim Kabat, Chris Kahlow, Elaine Yager, Cassandra Woodward

Excused: 3 - Paul Medinger, Scott Neumeister, Paul Schoenfeld

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the June 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

Chris Kahlow moved to approve the minutes. Elaine Yager seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

Agenda Items:

2. [20-0808](#) Public Hearing regarding the proposed project plans, boundaries and creations of Tax Incremental Districts No. 18, 19 & 20.
Mayor Kabat asked if anyone was present from the public in the Council Chambers or via the public live stream to speak on this item. No one was present to speak on this item.
3. [20-0809](#) Resolution Creating Tax Incremental District No. 18, Approving Its Project Plan and Establishing Its Boundaries.

Andrea Trane stated that the primary impetus for creating this district is the impending expiration of the expenditure period of TID 12 in 2027 and closure by 2032. Creating a new district with new timelines allows for longer debt repayment for the development of the River Point District. Chris Kahlow moved to approve this item. Cassandra Woodward seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

4. [20-0810](#) Resolution Creating Tax Incremental District No. 19, Approving Its Project Plan and Establishing Its Boundaries.

Andrea Trane stated that the site of the former Kmart and Hardee's has been vacant since their closure in 2017 and 2019. The creation of this Tax Increment Financing District can assist with redevelopment of the site, including asbestos removal, demolition costs, etc to increase the property tax base and assist with redevelopment in this area. James Cherf moved to approve this item. Cassandra Woodward seconded. Andrea Trane stated there was a comment made on the public live stream. Kevin Hundt stated that there needs to be far more public discussion on this. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

5. [20-0811](#) Resolution Creating Tax Incremental District No. 20, Approving Its Project Plan and Establishing Its Boundaries.

Andrea Trane stated that much of this area of Bridgeview Plaza has been vacant since the closure of Shopko in January 2019, which has created a greyfield site. Currently owned by a group in Texas, there is interest from a local group in redeveloping this area. The creation of a Tax Increment Financing District can assist with redevelopment of the site to increase the property tax base and assist with redevelopment in this area. Andrea also stated that any incentives for redevelopment would need Developers Agreements and Council approval. Andrea stated there were more questions on the public live stream. Kevin Hundt asked and stated the following. 1) We as the public do not have enough information about the long term economic impact of TIDs. 2) These TIDs seem to be going to the richest and most well connected members of the Community. 3) How much of the \$15million City annual debt payment is from past TIFs/TIDs. 4) Has the City considered using eminent domain on blighted districts the private developers refused to develop and then using public money/bonds for public owned community land trust and/or cooperative developments. The Mayor requested staff to provide some answers to those questions on Thursday. The Mayor stated that no development agreements are being considered at this time, just the boundary. Any future development/expenditures would have to do through the public process. Chris Kahlow moved to approve this item. James Cherf seconded. James Cherf stated that this TID District is creating the groundwork to move quickly when redevelopment interest occurs. Mayor Kabat also stated that this TID implements an objective in the recently adopted Hwy 53 Corridor Plan. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

6. [20-0812](#) Public Hearing regarding the proposed amendments of project plans for Tax Incremental Districts No. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17.

Mayor Kabat asked if anyone was present from the public in the Council Chambers or via the public live stream to speak on this item. No one was present to speak on this item.

7. [20-0813](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental

District No. 11, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Andrea Trane stated that the proposed amendment will allow surplus increment from TID 11 to be shared with TID 18, if needed. TID 18, the location of River Point District, is undergoing a major redevelopment that will unfold over the next few years. Upfront costs may be needed and with TID 18 being newly created, it does not generate enough increment to bear the totality of the anticipated costs of this effort. The amendment also allows for development incentives to be utilized within the ½ mile of the TID 11 boundary. Any development agreement requiring TID financial assistance would require approval of the Economic Development Commission and the Common Council. Cassandra Woodward stated that this effort will be able to assist with the development of affordable housing. Cassandra Woodward moved to approve this item. Elaine Yager seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

8. [20-0814](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental District No. 13, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- Mayor asked for staff to provide a recap of Items #8-12 as they were all related. Andrea Trane stated that the proposed amendments to TID's 13, 14, 15, 16, & 17 will allow surplus increment from these TIDs to be shared with TID 18, if needed. TID 18, the location of River Point District, is undergoing a major redevelopment that will unfold over the next few years. Mayor Kabat asked if anyone wanted to make a motion for Items #8-12 together. Cassandra Woodward moved to approve the amendments to the Project Plans of Tax Incremental Districts No. 13, 14, 15, 16, & 17. Elaine Yager seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.**
9. [20-0815](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental District No. 14, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
10. [20-0816](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental District No. 15, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
11. [20-0817](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental District No. 16, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
12. [20-0818](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan of Tax Incremental District No. 17, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
13. [20-0819](#) Public Hearing regarding the proposed amendment of boundaries and project plan for Tax Incremental District No. 13.
- Mayor Kabat asked if anyone was present from the public in the Council Chambers or via the public live stream to speak on this item. No one was present to speak on this item.**
14. [20-0820](#) Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Project Plan and Boundaries of Tax Incremental District No. 13, City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- Andrea Trane stated that Kwik Trip requested a parcel combination for their dairy facility. Through the approval process, the City Assessor's office recommended they add 17-10285-78 to the request. However, this parcel is currently not a part of the TID and must be to complete the combination. The City Assessor's office recommended that this parcel be a part of the**

combination request because it is inextricably intertwined with the other parcels of the dairy facility. Elaine Yager moved to approve this item. Chris Kahlow seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

15. [20-0827](#) AN ORDINANCE to amend Subsection 115-110 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse transferring certain property from the Planned Development District, Special Multiple District and Floodway District to the Public/Semi-Public District to allow combining of parcels for consistency with surrounding park lands at 410 Veterans Memorial Dr. and 201 Front St. N.

Jack Zabrowski provided an overview of the item. The Parks Department is requested a rezoning of two parcels so they can be combined into the larger parcel that makes up Riverside Park. This will help them make improvements to the existing restrooms which they are not permitted to do as a parcel/property line currently runs through them. James Cherf asked if this was also related to the proposed 2nd Street N realignment. Dan Trussoni stated that it was not. It was only to allow them to combine the Riverside Park parcels and make improvements to the restrooms to make them available for use year round. James Cherf moved to approve this item. Chris Kahlow seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

16. [20-0846](#) Review of plans for Site Improvements for Torrance Casting, located at 3131 Commerce Street, in the Interstate Industrial Park.

Lewis Kuhlman provided an overview of the project. Torrance Casting would like to shift a driveway south and add a gate to it, replace a fence with a wall and barbed wire, and do some paving. There are a few conflicts with their proposal. Barbed wired is not permitted in the covenants but had been approved on adjacent properties with slats. Since not covered in the covenants staff refers to the Fence Code. The covenants also require the wall be decorative masonry so it has a nice appearance. Concrete block is not considered decorative masonry, but may be used if it is painted and has a decorative treatment. The proposed wall will be painted and match the existing concrete block wall. Decorations or different materials may clash with the existing wall and look poor in appearance. Matt Gabel stated that the existing block wall is not painted and would prefer the new wall to match. Lewis stated that the recommendation is to match so staff has no issues. Chris Kahlow moved to approve the plans as submitted. Elaine Yager seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

17. [20-0866](#) Review of plans for the solar facility located at 3181 Berlin Dr in the International Business Park. (Habitat for Humanity)

Tim Acklin provided an overview of the project to the Commission. Habitat for Humanity is installing solar panels on the roof of their building in the International Building Park. Elaine Yager asked if snow loads have been calculated as part of project. Staff stated they thought that the Inspections Department had already checked for that. Craig Snyder confirmed to the Commission that had been done. Andrea Trane stated that public comments on the lives stream stated that snow loads had been calculated. Chris Kahlow moved to approve the plans as submitted. Cassandra Woodward seconded. The motion passed by voice vote 6-0.

18. [20-0681](#) Amended Resolution approving 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program Budget.

Mayor Kabat provided a memo to the Commission updating items on the proposed Capital Budget. He stated that the budget has a strong effort for capital investments. It's the City's duty to still invest and take care of our facilities even though are facing a budget shortfall, the COVID-19 pandemic, and race issues. The proposed budget is leveraging significant funds from new borrowing, TID Districts, Utilities, and borrowing from the Redevelopment Authority. The Mayor stated that a couple of highlights to the budget includes funding for restructuring the first floor of City Hall so all customer service facilities can be located there. This includes a remodel of the Council Chambers and asbestos abatement. Considerable funding is also being allocated for the riverfront and levy improvements, marsh hydrological studies, improving waterflow, maintaining Pammel Creek, and planning for a new law enforcement center. Mayor Kabat then stated that the law enforcement center is not a new project. It was first proposed back in 2017 based on the need for additional space for employees and evidence facilities. This center was a recommendation from a task force that was created in 2017 and a Council Resolution from 2018 with the recommendation that a new facility be constructed in the same vicinity as Fire Station #1. Other items to highlight is the continued investment in our streets. The City has 5.5 miles of proposed paved roads including Jackson Street/State Rd 33 from 3rd St to Losey Blvd, Airport Rd, Bliss Road, Gillette St, Main St, and some repairs to some bridges over the La Crosse River. The Mayor then stated that the final piece to highlight is a much needed and planned addition/improvements to our Wastewater Treatment Plant. This is a project that has been in the planning process for several years.

Elaine Yager thanked everyone for recognizing the ongoing need for our life and safety departments. They do an outstanding job with limited resources. Anything we can do to make improvements for them we should be moving in that direction. Elaine also stated that she has also heard from several businesses that they support any action that is taken with those life and safety departments to improve their facilities.

Cassandra Woodward asked how much of the block the proposed law enforcement Center was taking long term. Concerned about the loss of homes. Mayor Kabat stated that the final plan has not been determined as the City is trying to work with willing sellers. Final design is yet to be determined. Mayor Kabat also stated that he is sensitive to the loss of tax base and supports the effort for the development of more quality, affordable housing. Think there is a lot of benefit to the neighborhood to have the center at this location.

James Cherf moved to adopt the budget/plan. Elaine Yager seconded. Mayor Kabat asked for any amendments.

Chris Kahlow moved to move Item #443 Weigent Park Shelter back into 2021 from 2022 with an amount \$300,000. James Cherf seconded. CM Gary Padesky stated that this includes \$100,000 from the Weigent-Hogan Neighborhood Association and will support putting this item back in the budget. CM Jessica Olson thanked Chris for requesting to put the item back in the budget. Jessica stated that she has a lot of support from her constituents for this item. She also stated that fundraising to assist with funding of this project would be tough do right now. People and organizations do not have the income or resources to donate right now. The urgency is the lack of bathrooms. Weigent park is widely used and this facility is in bad condition. People should not have to

continually use portable restrooms especially when outdoor spaces are becoming the norm. CM Barb Janssen asked where the money would come from and if the \$300,000 includes the \$100,000 from the neighborhood. Chris Kahlow stated it would be funded through the borrowing of funds. Mayor Kabat also stated that this would add \$300,000 of new borrowing to the budget. Jay Odegaard stated that the project is estimated at about \$400,000 with \$100,000 from the Weigent Hogan Neighborhood Association. Jay also stated that this is a shovel ready project and ready to move forward. CM Barb Janssen stated that she was concerned about putting this item back in when there are other parks that have equipment that is becoming more and more dangerous. Fundraising was an expectation of Kids Coulee in Myrick Park and other organizations have been fundraising. That expectation should remain. Cassandra Woodward stated that she echoes CM Janssen's concerns. She asked where would the money come from? She also stated that she does not want to play favorites with some of these parks and that we should make all parks safe before we expand them. CM Gary Padesky stated that he did not think we are playing favorites. This is a project that keeps getting pushed off. It is a project that is ready to go and is concerned about it continually getting kicked back each year. Elaine Yager stated that she did not think anyone was trying to be unfair, She stated that given the constraints of the year and budget shortfalls the City has to prioritize life and safety projects. CM Chris Kahlow stated that the City needs to be putting the money in the community, which includes outdoor space and projects. Parks serves many neighborhoods. CM Jessica Olson stated that she appreciates CM Janssen's comments but that she feels it is just hard to fundraise at this time nor do many of the association's members are familiar with how to use technology to assist them. Jessica stated that she finds it hard to understand how the City seemed to find money to recently purchase a building with no plan but can't fund public restrooms in a widely used park. The motion fails 3-3. Yager, Turtenwald, Woodward voting NO.

CM Chris Kahlow moved to move Item #8 Law Enforcement Center \$1,000,000 from 2021 to 2022. Cassandra Woodward seconded. Chris Kahlow stated that right now the timing of this project should be looked at. She appreciates the project but feels that real estate purchases will still be available in a year. She was also concerned that there was little to no opportunity for a public hearing as it was added late to the process. Cassandra Woodward stated that she was shocked to see it in the budget and is concerned about the continued elimination of residential properties. She also stated that it seems like the burden is falling on this neighborhood and there is no support for residential. Chief Ken Gilliam stated that the item was in the budget a month ago. Looking to take some existing capital and move it to this project to capitalize on some opportunities. Working with the Planning Department to look at opportunities to work affordable housing into these developments. Northside facility looking to merge several City properties into one. Mayor Kabat stated that this is first step in the planning process. Its possible that it could be a mixed-use development that could include residential. Elaine Yager stated that now, more than ever, it is crucial to make sure that we are funding our life and safety departments. She also stated that they do a great for us and important that the groundwork is provided to them so they can continue to provide great services over the long run. Police Chief Shawn Kudron also stated that this is one step in the process. Trying to have a presence in the neighborhood. Does not want to have it looked at as a burden in the neighborhood. Hoping it would be viewed as an asset. Chris Kahlow stated that the Committee had earlier

denied an funding for an asset to community park but now, with no real plan in place, approving \$1,000,000 for a facility where the properties will be available in a year. She also stated she was not against the project, just that it should wait a year and determine if it is a project the community really wants. Might not be the right time. James Cherf echoes CM Kahlow's sentiment that more public input is needed. James also states that he disagrees with her stance on the funding James stated they should go ahead with this funding and acquisition with property is available. City can sell it off at a later date if determined it is not needed. Urges Committee to deny this motion. CM Jessica Olson asked why the project could not use the State's Land Acquisition Loan Program that the City was going to use for another property. Why does it have to under general obligation borrowing. Mayor Kabat stated that they could look into that for Thursday but is confident that every source has already been looked into and that general obligation borrowing is currently the proposed option. The motion fails 2-4. Turtenwald, Yager, Cherf, Kabat voting NO.

Cassandra Woodward asked Andrea Schnick if there was any possibility to move Item #638 Riverside Festival Site Plan into TIF funding. This inst just for the public market it is also to connect Riverside Park with RiverPoint District. Mayor Kabat stated that he though that there is TIF monies available and that recommendations coming from the Public Market shall be made available soon. Cassandra Woodward moved to have Item #638 Riverside Festiaval Site Plan \$50,000 funded under TIF 17 and moved from 2022 to 2021. Chris Kahlow seconded. The motion passed 4-2 by voice vote. Turtenwald, Cherf voting NO.

James Cherf moved to adopt the budget as amended. Elaine Yager seconded. The motion passed 5-1 by voice vote. Kahlow voting NO.

Adjournment

James Cherf moved to adjourn the meeting. Chris Kahlow seconded. The motion passed 6-0 by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.