



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes - Final

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission

Monday, August 30, 2021

6:00 PM

Virtual Via Lifesize

In efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the Neighborhood Revitalization Commission meeting will be conducted through video conferencing.

You may participate in the meeting with the following links.

<https://call.lifesizecloud.com/4796124>

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United States: +1 (877) 422-8614,, 4796124#

To view and listen to the meeting only please use the following link:

<https://stream.lifesizecloud.com/extension/4796124/c7d43560-fea7-4613-9625-63af875bee87>

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order 6:00pm.

Roll Call

Present: 8 - Linda Lee, Ralph Geary, Jim Bagniewski, Nora Garland, Larry Sleznikow, Mitch Reynolds, Jessica Stanton,Michelle Staehly

Excused: 2 - Will Kratt,Janet Allen

Absent: 1 - Steve Nicolai

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the June 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

Linda Lee moved to approve the minutes. Larry Sleznikow seconded. The motion passed 8-0 by voice vote.

Agenda Items:

2. Discussion with the Director Adam Lorentz of the Municipal Transit Utility on future projects.

Adam Lorentz, Director of the MTU, stated that the biggest project going on is a pilot project to have electric buses by the end of the year. Important for La Crosse due to the size of city. Also the City will get two hybrid buses next year due to a VW Mitigation grant that the City received. MTU is also continuing with their "Paint the Bus" Program with the School District. Every school was going to submit a design. COVID paused it. Starting it back up and will create a

collage/mural on a bus of all the kids artwork. Theme is compassion. Also starting an "Adopt a Shelter" initiative with the School District. Looking for kids to submit artwork to use on bus shelters. Last project is implementing a mobile pay system. Will help make it is easier for the public to purchase a wide variety of different bus passes that will fit their schedule and budget. Transit Development Plan is being undertaken by the County. Looking to see how we should grow and serve the public. Looking for public feedback and comment on the plan. Larry Sleznikow asked if the electric currently on line or coming soon. Adam stated that they will be here this Fall. Larry also asked about climate affecting the batteries. Adam stated that they looked at Duluth to follow what they do to make sure that the buses run efficient. Will also test them prior to put them in service. Larry also asked about what the MTU is doing to promote an increase in ridership. Like free fares. Adam stated that there are no free fares in WI. This is due to how they are funded, which is different then other states who are able to do that. They have not raised fares for the past 12 years. Looking to work with the universities to provide information into their freshman orientation packet to let them know they have a free pass and that its safe. Also working with the Works Pass Program. Only have a few business as partners. Program offers a reduces rate to businesses who are a part of the program. Looking to promote the program and add more businesses. Adam also stated that we as a City need to change the car culture of La Crosse and promote share rides and other forms of transportation. Larry then asked if he has looked at other communities to see what they are doing successfully that we can bring her. Adam said they have but overall ridership is down across the state due to Uber and cheaper gas prices. Ralph Geary asked Adam if he could make the same presentation to the County. Adam said he would be willing to do that.

3. Discussion on Neighborhood & City collaboration of public streetscapes/green spaces.

Linda Lee and Nora Garland gave a presentation to the Commission. Linda Lee stated that she talked with the Parks Department and other City departments on the regulations regarding planting in the boulevards as well as other city ordinances regulating what they are proposing. Nora Garland stated that she talked with other communities about how they regulate some of the things they are proposing. Hoping to form a City Beautification Committee to help keep some of the smaller city green spaces attractive and kept up. A lot of other cities in WI have similar programs. Linda and Nora showed pictures of areas that are not attractive. They also showed pictures of areas that are currently maintained by citizens, volunteers, and neighborhood associations. Linda stated that current ordinances are not easy to find or read. Other communities have found ways to make it easier to understand what you can do and how to do it. Nora also cited recent streetscaping practices in the City that have made these areas unattractive. Some unnecessary, some due to lack of resources to maintain them, others due to lack of coordination or a plan. Larry Sleznikow confirmed that he has seen the removal of these areas due to construction projects where they could have been saved if coordinated better. Nora then went through possible solutions. These included better plans to save trees during construction and ways for citizens to use water and maybe get a discount on their water bill. Nora then stated that a committee would meet and develop best practices and provide information to those taking care of these areas. Create programs for citizens. Coordinate volunteers. Work with area organizations and businesses to help. Create an "Adopt a Spot" campaign. Linda also stated that several area businesses have their employees volunteer

in the city and give them time off for it. They could be recruited to participate in this program. Nora also provided some information on some studies that show the importance of beautifying neighborhoods in cities. Larry Sleznikow stated that this effort would no doubt be beneficial to the City. There are lots of opportunities for City staff and individuals to assist and learn and is willing to help in any way they can. Mayor Reynolds also stated that this is a great idea and will support it moving forward. Nora asked for direction on establishing a committee. Mayor suggested to refer to other communities and copy what they are doing right. Nora suggested that some next steps would be to work with the Parks Department. Mayor Reynolds stated that he would direct the Parks Department to look into this effort. Jack Zabrowski also stated that Planning and Engineering should be included as well. Linda Lee also suggested that Bernie Lenz, the Utilities Department Director, should be involved. Mayor Reynolds stated that he will direct one person at the City to take the lead on this effort. Larry Sleznikow asked if there could be future line items for these items in future construction projects.

4. [21-1267](#)

Review of draft ordinances for the elimination of off-street parking requirements.

Tim Acklin provided an update on the commercial off-street parking ordinance. Dave Reinhart stated that this would not keep any state codes from being enforced, such as requirements for ADA parking spaces. Jack Zabrowski went through the proposed amendments to the parking requirements for multi-family developments. Mayor Reynolds stated that there needs to be clarification to parking in the back yard and perhaps some definitions. Also some clarifications on types of paving. Jack asked if there were any comments on the Transportation Demand Management plan requirements. Larry Sleznikow asked about the square footage requirements that begin to require a TDM Plan. He suggested that the wording should be changed from "may" to "shall" or "required" to ensure that it is clear. Tim Acklin stated that the subcommittee will be meeting soon to discuss the ordinance and put together a final draft to bring back to the Commission. Ralph suggested that the commercial ordinance can move forward and then continue on with revisions to the multi-family ordinance.

Adjournment

Larry Sleznikow moved to adjourn the meeting. Nora Garland seconded. The motion passed 8-0 by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12pm.

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.