

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2025, JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEES, 5:15 p.m., City Council Chamber, Members present: Christianson Sr., S. Delasky, J. Hoover, N. Johnson J. Kenyon. Others present: A. Christianson Jr., Mayor Grotzinger.

Call to Order: Christianson Sr. called the meeting to order.

Housing Proposal:

Winfield Village:

Discussion resumed on a proposal to construct public water and sanitary utilities to serve two twin homes on what was once the Highway 8 Trailer Court. A potential layout for the homes was distributed at a previous meeting. It was reported that Morgan and Parmley estimates that it could cost around \$5,000 each to extend water laterals and \$3,000 each to extend sanitary laterals to serve these four units; a total of \$32,000. If the City can assist with this cost the project is likely to be viable and without such assistance it may not be according to developer Wayne Stoll. It was noted that the proposed project is located within the halo zone of TIFD #11, which could provide the assistance.

One of these twin homes is proposed to face E. 6th St. S. The west end of another faces that same street, such that laterals could be installed to them without necessity of costly main construction. If these two homes work out for all entities that may become involved consideration could then be given later to extending mains to serve up to four more twin homes.

Residential TIDS:

Reading of proposed State legislation to create so-called "residential TIDS" indicates that these would have their own cap of 3% of the City's valuation aside from the 12% cap on standard TIDS, which cap the City has already exceeded. Rather than just wait to see if the rules are adopted, it was suggested that the City be forward thinking and consider how it might utilize such tool. To that end the following potential efforts were discussed.

Gerard Hotel Investigation

Attention turned to the condition of the Gerard Hotel along with projections of costs to first stabilize it and, then, to rehabilitate it recreating 12-14 needed housing units. The Council has expressed interest in encouraging this as the Hotel is among the City's most notable historic structures. It may have a negative value at present, which makes it difficult to consider investing City dollars unless augmented by grant funds or tax credits. The conventional wisdom seems to be that if the foundation isn't rebuilt in the "next couple years" it may cause further deterioration of the structure above such that saving it isn't feasible.

Mobile Home Park

It was mentioned that a mobile home park could be one way to provide considerable affordable housing, the need for which is documented in most rural areas including ours.

Tiny Homes Project

A similar project to a mobile home park expansion could entail development of a tiny homes subdivision. And, perhaps, placement of one model tiny home on such site. Maybe another community objective could be achieved by acquiring a distressed property and upgrading it for this purpose.

Subdivision

Development of another subdivision with sale of its lots at a discounted price would be another way to create affordable housing. Adm. Christianson reviewed a program of this sort undertaken in Colfax, where the lots were given free with binding commitments to build homes on them. Ladysmith did something similar here in the 1980s, although the motivation seemed to be more to get rid of a half dozen lots to get away from having to maintain them.

Pedestrian Crossing:

Christianson Sr. stated that a constituent had asked him to look into creating a pathway from near the intersection of Highway 27 and Falge Park Drive running SW to Wal Mart. It was noted that North Cedar Academy students and others, some pulling handcarts, already use this unmarked and unofficial route. As the Rusk Co. Highway Dept. site plan will come before the Planning Commission for consideration on November 6, it was suggested that this committee recommend Planning Commission approval of a motion requiring a solution to this safety concern as part of its consideration of site approval for the planned new Highway Dept. garage and related improvements.

A sample motion was reviewed along with a proposed route map. Those present felt the preferred route should not cross Highway 27 from the south driveway into the Highway shop but, rather that the route should turn north from the south driveway to a point west across the Highway 27 from its intersection with Falge Park Drive where users could use that route through Falge Park with its lighter traffic. Motion was made by Kenyon, seconded by Johnson and carried by voice vote to recommend this motion be made at the November 6, Planning Commission meeting.

Remote Control Vehicle Park:

Adm. Christianson reviewed a request for location of a remoted control vehicle play area on City recreational land. He noted that an area just north of the industrial area ballfields has advantages. General support was expressed for allowing enthusiast to use that area.

Phillips Ave. Development:

Discussion then turned to 3 lots under City control along newly paved Chester Ave. and how these lots might also be developed sooner than later. If the City doesn't sell them within a 3-year window, ownership reverts to the developer (J. Kenyon). It is anticipated these lots will be used for single family homes. These, too, could be sold at a discounted price to encourage use sooner.

Adjourn:

Shortly after 6 p.m. motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Kenyon, and carried by voice vote to adjourn.