

During the July 9 meeting, Auburn City Council passed an ordinance governing the preservation of landmarks and historical districts within the corporate city limits. This action is one of the steps necessary in getting a historical district established here.

Councilwoman Katy Billings voiced her concerns that creating a board to oversee the establishment of a historical district would create another layer of bureaucracy for property owners to deal with when they want to make changes to their property.

Mayor Scott Kudrna said the establishment of a historical district could open up the possibility of making more grant funds available to the city.

The vote to approve the Historical Preservation Board of the City of Auburn passed 5-1, with Councilwoman Billings dissenting.

The council then unanimously approved the appointments of Bob Hemmingsen, Peggy Kuser, Shane Charbonnet, Kris Gill and Sue Remmers to the Historical Preservation Board. All are property owners in the proposed historic district.

Other Appointments/Reappointments

Other council appointments/reappointments approved that Monday night were David Pippert to the Auburn Memorial Library Board; Doug Jones and Micki Willis to the Planning Commission; Glenna Miller to the Auburn Housing Authority; and Councilman Frank Critser to the Budget/Finance Committee. The above action was all unanimous, with the exception of Critser abstaining from his appointment to the Budget/Finance Committee.

Kudrna's recommended appointment of Councilwoman Mary Kruger to the Budget/Finance Committee failed. Councilmen Larry Holtzman, Mitch Bishop and Critser cast the three yes votes for Kruger's appointment, while Shawn Clark and Billings dissented. Kruger abstained from the vote. City Attorney Angelo Ligouri reported that the appointment failed due to not attaining a majority vote of those present.

Public Hearings Held

A public hearing was held concerning an application to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development for a Nebraska Affordable Housing Program grant. The city is in the process of seeking a \$250,000 Community Development Block Grant housing grant. Auburn has received a grant like this previously, most recently for \$250,000 to assist homeowners make improvements to their residences with some of the financing being provided through CDBG monies. The council passed a resolution authorizing the mayor to sign a 2012 Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Application with administrative duties to be handled by representatives with Southeast Nebraska Development District.

A second hearing concerned a notice to re-lend \$17,000 in CDBG Economic Development Reuse funds to owners Rick and Amy Clark of Arbor Manor Steakhouse to assist with putting a new roof on the establishment. Arbor Manor's owners have inquired previously if they would be eligible for Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) or CDBG revitalization grant funding, however, they are located outside of the previously designated area. It was noted that the Clarks had received a bid of \$24,000 for re-roofing their establishment and they will need to put in \$7,000 of their own funds up front. The proposed terms are for the Clarks to have 10 years to make 120

monthly payments at zero percent interest. The council approved the request with SENDD to again provide the required paperwork.

CDBG-Related Issues

The council approved two drawdowns involving CDBG #10-DTR-105 (Downtown Revitalization Phase II Commercial Rehabilitation) projects. Both projects approved called for the CDBG portion to be a 50/50 split between loan and grant funds, and for the owners to provide a 20 percent match.

Susan Remmers' \$26,095 project calling for foam roofing, replacing windows and doors, and replacing the awning at 1222 J Street was approved (\$19,571 in CDBG funds and \$6,524 owner match). Also, Peggy Kuser's \$5,800 project for a foam coating roof at 916 Central Avenue was okayed (\$4,350 in CDBG funds and \$1,450 owner match).

The council approved revising the City's Program Income ReUse Plan for Housing Rehabilitation from documents drawn up in 2005 and updating them to conform with Auburn's 2012 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Grant application.

Two Property Gifts Accepted

After considerable discussion, the council approved real estate proposed to be gifted to the City of Auburn at 716 10th Street and 721 11th Street. The two properties described as Minner and Kite are also the same which the city has had extensive issues regarding their appearance and most recently being designated as possibly dangerous to the public. The property owners were issued a notice to demolish structure letter from the City Attorney as per the City's Board of Health procedures. Neither property owner has indicated having the resources available to pay for a demolition and they both signed documents agreeing to instead give them to the City of Auburn.

These properties were among those mentioned in a recent letter to the city signed by residents of Valley View (High Rise) Apartments encouraging the city to take some action to clean up or deal with certain properties in the neighborhood. The city would likely either clean up the properties if possible or have them demolished and create open lots for building new homes. These lots could then be sold by the city at a future option to return the properties to the tax rolls.

Councilman Holtzman commented, "These projects keep taking money from the city's taxpayers."

Other council members questioned where either or both of the parcels had liens or back taxes against them. No one was able to answer that question with any definite knowledge.

Ligouri explained that the Minner and Kite properties were among about six whose owners received "demolish or clean them up letters."

The council voted 4-2 to table the property gift item to allow time to see what if any liens or back taxes exist on the property. Clark and Bishop voted no.

Other Business

Council members granted an extension of 120 construction days for a \$10,000 Infill Housing Grant approved previously for Terry Fulton/TCB Contracting. Fulton sought the extension citing delays which he had encountered in taking possession of the property 1208 11th Street so he could begin work. He hopes to have the property available for occupants by the time Cooper Nuclear Station's next refueling outage begins this fall. The total project involves an investment of \$64,680 to construct a small residential property.

Auburn Council Approved Ordinance Creating Historic District, Appointed Five Preservation Board Members

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