

RUTLAND CITY CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES – February 6, 2018

Present: David Cooper (DC), Brennan Duffy (BD), Chris Etori (CE), Tara Kelly (TK), William Notte (WN), Mary Markowski (MM) and Mayor Allaire (DA)

TK, Chair, called the meet to order at 8:15 am

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA - none

APPROVE MINUTES OF DEC 5, 2017

Minutes were approved without any changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT – none

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Applications

TK provided a re-cap of the efforts to publicize the availability of the four properties for sale. She noted that multiple people attended the open houses and there seemed to be interest. However, only 2 applications were received. Both are for 114 Gibson Avenue. Both applicants are in good standing with the City in terms of taxes and utility bills. The Committee reviewed the two applications.

- One was from a neighbor seeking to purchase the property, demolish the existing house, and extend their land with a longer term plan to add a garage. The committee was informed that the neighbor from 108 Gibson called to speak in favor of this plan. The offer is for \$10,000.
- The second was from a person seeking to purchase the house and rehabilitate it. He would retain the two units as a rental property. He has redeveloped another duplex in town (112 Maple St). Before and after photos were shared with the committee. The offer is for \$21,000.

The committee discussed the merits of each proposal. Several members spoke in favor of the need to support an increase in the grand list. They felt that a responsible redevelopment of the property would support that goal in a stronger way than tearing down the building and absorbing it into the adjacent residential property.

BD made a motion to accept the offer of Rudolfo Jacobson for \$21,000 for the property and his plan to rehabilitate the two units in the building. CE seconded the motion. Motion passed (5) – (0). The recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Aldermen for their approval of the sale.

Next Steps for Remaining Properties

The committee discussed additional steps that can be taken with the 3 properties that did not receive applications as well as the remaining properties. Those actions (and person to follow up) include:

- Reach out to people who had expressed interest to find out why they did not submit an application to purchase (TK)

- Include past applicants in the list of people who are informed of additional properties (TK)
- Clarify the issue with the 3-year “clouded” title and be explicit about its relevance (TK and BD)
- Create press releases for publication in Mountain Times, The Eagle and other weeklies (TK)
- Use PEG TV to promote the sale – including a segment about successes and opportunities (BD)
- Create promotional materials aimed at young professionals – including possibilities for purchasing duplexes and using 2nd units for short-term rentals
- Remove “asking price” and play down the aspect of amount owed so it doesn’t appear that a full offer needs to be made; emphasize other key qualities of a good proposal (TK)
- Promote the availability of the tax stabilization program as a possibility for purchasers (BD)

The committee directed TK to enhance the marketing strategy, re-post the available properties, and select some additional properties to be reviewed by RRA in preparation for putting them out to sale.

Suggestions include:

- 129 Robbins St
- 80 Crescent St

Properties will be reviewed by RRA Board at their 2/13/18 meeting and then the Board of Finance at their 2/14/18 meeting. Once the properties are approved for sale they will be marketed to the public in the same manner as above.

OLD BUSINESS

Review status of 46 Kingsley Ave and 118 Gibson Ave

Barbara Wood (representative for purchase Robert Chanan) was in town the week of January 15th. She was in town to attend the Public Hearing regarding the request for a Zoning Variance at 46 Kingsley to permit the continuation of two units in that building. The closing was also scheduled for that week. The City agreed to delay the closing pending the results of the Variance decision by the Development Review Board.

In addition, Ms. Wood met with some realtors and contractors and expressed that the both buildings need more work than she had realized. In addition, local realtors have cast doubt upon the ability to recoup that investment given what they see as the market value of duplexes. This led to some discussion about the idea of a market analysis of duplexes in the City and the possibility of an RRA program to help promote successful ownership of these properties.

Based on the new information, Ms. Wood (on behalf of Mr. Chanan) suggested that they would like the City to consider reducing their purchase offer to the amount of the 10% deposit already submitted to the City. The Committee discussed this issue and felt it was not acceptable to do this since the application is clear about the purchaser’s responsibility to conduct due diligence. If Mr. Chanan withdraws his offer to purchase, the deposit is non-refundable and the properties will be re-marketed.

Next meeting of this committee will be at the point that applications are ready to be reviewed, unless otherwise notified.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:50 AM