

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, January 21, 1997 - 3:00 p.m.

Members present: Beach, Polovitz.

1. Public hearing on applications for funding under 1997 Beautification Program.

Chairman Beach reported that this is line item City has had in its budget for several years and equates to 1 mill; that they have received about double number of requests as have money for: allocation is \$67,250 and applications total \$142,738. He stated that committee would hear applications today in order of applica- tion number, that committee will make decisions on January 29 with recommendations to go to council on February 3 for final approval.

Chairman Beach opened the public hearing for the purpose of receiving applications and public comment on the 1997 Beautification Program.

Ap. #1 - City Planning Office - Box Elder Tree Removal - \$5,000
Meridith Richards, Planning Office, reported that this project in older parts of town where there is a problem, that this was a new project last year and everything pretty much in place; received positive comments and no problems. It was noted that last year this project in near northside, this year have included near southside. She also stated that some late applications received last year and names were kept on file.

Ap. #2 - UND Plant Services - Tree Planting-DeMers Ave. and I-29
- \$15,600.00

Paul Clark, asst. dir. UND Plant Services, stated they are looking at area between DeMers and University and between N. 42nd Street and I-29, and looking at major transportation corridor of the city, esp. once Aurora built, and is more of a City-UND project. Committee had some concerns that they don't know what going to happen in area north of tracks, and asked Mr. Clark if UND amenable to doing only part of the project - part that parallels I-29; he stated they would be.

Ap. #3 - North Valley Arts Council - Beautification of alleyway between Empire Arts Center and Lander Building - \$15,000
Kay Kjelland, NVAC, stated this not a project of NVAC but something that would enhance downtown, total cost \$35,000 but wouldn't want to do all in one year, probably request again next year; might be able to get some in-kind funds for landscaping, etc. She stated that basically pavers is what they

would do this year, that they have talked with Greg Opp and he est. figure of \$15,000. Comm. suggested possibility of funding this project under CDBG bricks and mortar projects; Mr. O'Leary reported they had done one such project behind City Center Mall, that they couldn't do this year.

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
January 21, 1997 - Page 2

Ap. #4 - GF Central Business Dist. Assn. - Celebrate the Season

-

\$3,000

Curt Siewert reported they applied last year and was funded, putting lights on spruce trees running from DeMers to South 5th Street, however, when est. cost of project last year assumed that NSP would supply power to the location of the feedpoint, but they wouldn't and there would be \$2,000 cost to run power from transformer under street to a feedpoint, and is requesting another \$3,000 in conjunction with the existing \$3,000 for a total project cost of \$6,000 to complete this project; nothing has been done. He suggested they have two options, either fund or that project too expensive.

Ap. #5 - GF Development Corporation - Industrial Park Trees - \$5,000

Pat Downs of Economic Development Foundation was not present. Mr. Siewert stated he had talked with Pat Downs, they are trying to get trees, screening behind Molstad's on 46th (spruce trees might not be trees of choice because of soil conditions, but ap. written for spruce trees). Committee asked when they are going to get sign for Industrial Park up, which was funded last year; Mr. Siewert stated that if they don't get installed, staff suggesting using money for installation.

Ap. #6 - GF Senior Citizens Center - Center Landscaping - \$3,000

Jim Bollman, rep.. Board of Directors, stated they have been looking to design and implement plan for landscaping; that landscaping had been done there before but some of that outdated, some changed because of parking lot, did put in some fill around building and some seeding this past summer, and this would all tie into same project. He reported he has talked with John Staley and they would work with Sr. Citizens on this project. Committee asked if there any chance of participation by members, and Mr. Bollman stated that people have said would like to be able to work with flower beds, etc.

Ap. #7 - GF Central Business Dist. Assn. - Avenue Banners - \$3,000

Tom Schuster stated they have existing summer banners which are ten years old and are worn out, and would like to replace them and would like to advertise ahead of time the two summer events downtown (Rollin' on the River and Forx Fest), and do on alternating basis. He stated they just replaced winter banners, spring banners okay, but fall banners not in very good shape.

Ap. #8 - GF Central Business Dist. Auth. - Bridge Lot parking monument - \$10,000

Dick Jackson, City Center Mall mgr., reported they have designed monument sign similar to sign for original marketplace for bridge lot, and might be good idea for other lots as they are improved. He stated that lot is getting more use. It was noted that they

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

January 21, 1997 - Page 3

would not be able to do this project with CDBG funds because of changes in regs. (original marketplace sign done with CDBG funds). Committee stated they didn't know if sign would create more use of that lot.

Ap. #9 - GF Street Department - 7th Ave.S. Screening - \$3,615

Mr. Siewert reported this project involves planting of trees in easement parallel to 7th Ave.S. from 20th to 26th to be used as live screening, fence would be removed in the future. It was noted that City responsible for maintaining that fence, which is quite expensive to maintain. John Staley, city forester, reported he attended meetings with Street Department and Natural Resource Conservation, that this concern and problem for street department to maintain, and cost is very high. He stated there is some problem with the site, with easement, with commitments made to neighborhood and business owners, and offered assistance in getting living fence there. He also noted that street department would clear site, prepare for planting and Natural Resource Conservation people would plant trees and maintain for 3-4 years (until 3-4 ft. high) and when trees high enough to provide some screening, remove fence. Mr. Siewert stated he thought that trees were part of the original agreement.

Ap. #10 - GF Park District - Adopt-An-Area Program - \$7,500

John Staley, Park District, reviewed program which incorporates citizen groups into maintaining and caring for shrubs and flower beds along major thoroughfares of the city. He stated they also use some of this money to revamp existing shrub beds.

Ap. #11 - GF Park District - South 34th St. Tree Planting - \$5,400

Mr. Staley reviewed these projects: that Ap. #11, plant trees along the new development along 34th Street for section of street from 17th north to 11th Ave.S., and would help Park Dist. plant larger trees, not a major arterial but collector street and no houses that front on that street, that along this street Park Dist. would pay for 50% of materials as well as labor and maintenance. He stated they are getting lot of calls. (He noted that this project wouldn't be special assessed.)

Ap. #12 - GF Park District - Gateway Dr. West Tree Planting II - \$8,760

Mr. Staley reported this would be second installment on that project, west of I-29 to 53rd Street; funded last year and they did plant some trees (spruce and ornamentals), and are requesting funds to finish that project.

Ap. #13 - GF Park District - West 32nd Ave.S. Tree Planting - \$5,280

Mr. Staley reported this is similar type request, on 32nd Ave.S. west of I-29 to GF Foods building, plant trees on boulevards on

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
January 21, 1997 - Page 4

both sides of street, plant shade trees on major arterial street.

Committee asked Mr. Staley to rank his 4 applications: he stated #10 Adopt-an-Area Program and they may want to adjust the \$7,000 amount, which is their estimate; #12 Gateway Drive project; the other two a tie.

Ap. #14 - GF Central Business Dist. Assn. - City Hall art - \$20,000

Meridith Richards reviewed request, that need is there to fill the blank spaces, but no artist and not even vaguest design at this time; prime locations are council chambers and main floor lobby (opposite water utility window), that spaces within

building with nice gallery feel; felt that they could find someone who would be interested in doing something. She stated that an informal art interest group has been meeting so if committee disposed to find money for this, they could come up with something.

Ap. #15 - GF Historic Preservation Commission - Historic Pavers/

Downtown Sidewalks - \$3,333

Mr. Siewert reported this originally submitted as promotional application and was desire of this committee to re-submit as beautification application; the project would consist of doing some type of plaques (bronze, concrete, marble) to put into sidewalks in central business district with historic data; idea was to come up with design and possibly show them in empty storefronts until sidewalks are replaced; because when sidewalks replaced will not have time to start planning something of this calibre. Chairman Beach stated this was his idea and turned over to Historic Preservation Comm., his vision was to have granite or marble plaques flush with the sidewalk commemorate certain people who have played part in the history of the community. He stated there is lot of information resources available for this, and make a part of the downtown street replacement project when that happens. Mr. O'Leary suggested that individual, family or group may want to sponsor an individual.

Ap. #16 - ND Museum of Art - Public Art - \$20,000

Mr. O'Leary reported this not a different project in concept than #14, City Hall Art, but to annually promote public art; that there are some quite acceptable to the general public; and this project deals with process and long-term commitment from the City and sets up that process, how review and fund. He stated they are asking City to obligate \$20,000 to initiate process to put public art somewhere in the city of Grand Forks.

The committee stated that when beautification allocation program first started was assumption that it would be for outside beautification, would be good idea to answer that question. Mr. O'Leary suggested that if it's committee's wishes they might consider putting something in CIP budget, etc., that he thinks

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
January 21, 1997 - Page 5

there is lot if support for doing something in this building.

He also suggested that committee might want to consider combining items #14 and 16 into some kind of public art program. It was noted that City has made fairly heavy commitment to the fine arts by giving fairly generous subsidy to the renovation of the Empire Theatre. Mr. Beach suggested that perhaps timing would be better if that project out of the way.

Ap. #17 - Grand Forks Homes, Inc. - Grand Forks Homes Elderly Park - \$5,000

Joel Manske, Grand Forks Housing Authority, stated that this project would be in large green space between two elderly housing complexes, would like to commission summer youth employment training program with the kids, landscape architect and Curt to look at master planning that site (gazebo, pathway, etc.) to encourage elderly population out of the buildings and give them space outside. He stated they will do project with or without these monies but would like City involvement to make more of a community space rather than private apartment space.

The following two applications were received this date:

Ap. #18 - GF Beautification Committee - Spring Clean Up Day - \$2,000

Mr. Staley stated that as member of the CC Beautification Committee and at their last meeting there was considerable discussion that over past few years they haven't had a specific day for clean up; that sanitation department was leader in doing that. He stated they are requesting to put together public relations campaign, re-initiate single day or weekend in the spring for cleanup. Mr. O'Leary suggested that perhaps this ap. should go to promotion; not a project per se. Mr. Siewert reported that a few years ago there were funds for volunteer groups to do litter pickup (plastic bags, signs, etc.), that there is still a balance in that account of about \$2,000.

Ap. #19 - Office of Urban Development - Sorlie Bridge flags - \$2,250

Mr. Siewert reported that this was another project that was requested to go from Promotions to Beautification, that he didn't write an application as he couldn't get any specifics from Mayor Stauss or the River Forks Commission, but is something that would be worked out between the two cities this summer (State flags on opposite sides, city flag, Canadian flag)

Chairman Beach asked for any comments; there were none, and the

public hearing was closed. He reported that this committee will finalize recommendations on January 29, which will go to council on February 3.

2. Matter of 501 Cherry Street.

Mr. O'Leary reported that in 1984 they rehabbed the house at

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

January 21, 1997 - Page 6

501 Cherry Street (about \$8,000 - insulation, new furnace, roof), which is owned by Alfred Hagen who maintains that house insulated with fiberglass insulation and he is allergic to that. He maintains that he told staff person not to install because of his allergies. Mr. O'Leary stated they have discussed this matter with Mr. Hagen but need more factual information. He reported that Mr. Siewert contacted Mr. Hagen for authorization to place detector devices in house for testing of air quality, but Mr. Hagen declined. He stated he is not sure there is much more they can do to resolve issue, if it exists, if no way to document that fiberglass suspended in the air or no justification. It was suggested that they could negotiate purchase price on the house, which is what Mr. Hagen looking for, but doesn't see much sense in pursuing that unless have lot more information and lot more cooperation from Mr. Hagen. He stated this issue 13 years old and surfaces every couple years. He also noted that the house is empty as Mr. Hagen living with is mother because of this. He also reported that Mr. Hagen collects stamps, goes to post office and brings home old envelopes and his house is full of boxes of envelopes with stamps. Committee suggested that they ask for medical verification. It was also noted that the house is valued at about \$22-26,000. Info. only.

3. Matter of 1996 HOME funds.

Mr. O'Leary reported that in 1996 they received \$256,227.00 in HOME funds for the city of Grand Forks. He reported that Mr. Swanson, city attorney, believes that the new legislation passed at last legislative session creates some significant problems for the City in terms of indemnification; that for nine months they have been talking back and forth with Insurance Commissioner, that Mr. Swanson protecting interests of the City, Office of Governmental Assistance is protecting State's interest, and in the meantime they have not been able to proceed in obligating the \$256,000 and in addition have another \$95,000 in McKinney Act funds which needs to be

expended. He stated that last week they got letter back from their insurance agent which states that they can buy an insurance policy to protect the City from any lawsuits that may come as a result of passing this money through or expending it themselves for a nominal amount of money. He stated they can take the money out of the grant to pay the insurance premium, that Mr. Swanson will probably recommend to council that they not do that because set precedence with other State agencies; so far other State agencies have negotiated out a settlement whereby they are not required to pay this insurance premium, that the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance doesn't agree and are standing fast on their position that they want to pass the liability through to the recipients. He stated there are lot of other issues, but last week at the legislative forum he talked with Rep. Stenehjem who knows the new director of OIA and Mr. Stenehjem has agreed to talk with her and see if he couldn't encourage her to waive the insurance requirements for

MINUTES/URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

January 21, 1997 - Page 7

this, which would put Mr. Swanson at ease. He stated that the real problem now is that while all this negotiation has been going on, they are in position where if don't obligate these funds, the State is going to say no funds next year, because allocation based on ability to obligate money and to expend funds in the previous year. He stated they need to obligate these funds, as they are going to make obligation on 1997 funds the middle of February.

Mr. O'Leary reported that Continental Homes the owner of these projects: Phase A (Cherry Heights) Project is requesting \$65,000; Continental Homes renovation project requesting \$150,000.

Joel Manske reviewed the projects with the committee; that as part of the Continental Homes project they would build learning center, (it was noted that area of building that was damaged by rain, etc. and third floor renovations covered by insurance); Phase A at 110 Cherry Street, that building been substantially renovated - would like to finish mechanical work (air to air system).

It was noted that the third project is Affordable rental housing, \$141,227. Mr. O'Leary reported this is balance of funds available to develop affordable rental housing; there are couple options that Housing Authority could pursue - acquire existing housing and rehab, or construction of new housing

units but construction costs an issue. Mr. Manske reported that HUD foreclosed on multi-family housing complex for the elderly in Michigan, ND, they are offering to Housing Authority if willing to set up in Grand Forks. Mr. O'Leary reported that HUD doesn't want to leave in Michigan, because they have been unable to fill the units.

After further discussion it was moved by Polovitz and Beach to recommend allocation of \$356,227.00 to the following projects: Phase A (Cherry Heights) Project, \$65,000; Continental Homes Renovation, \$150,000; and Affordable rental housing, \$141,227. Motion carried.

Mr. O'Leary reported that if insurance requirements not waived, he will be back with request to take funds out of the granted amount to pay the insurance premium.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Alice Fontaine
City Clerk

Dated: 01/27/97.