



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

November 19, 2007

Agenda Item No. 17
Roll Call No. 07-
Communication No. 07-698
Submitted by: Larry Hulse, Community
Development Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Adoption of the Waterbury Neighborhood Strategic Plan.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of this proposal to adopt the Waterbury Neighborhood Strategic Plan as developed through participation in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$682,500 to be used for infrastructure repairs as follows:

- Street Hot Mix Asphalt Overlay \$70,400
- Curb Repair \$161,380
- Sidewalk Repair \$450,720

Funding Source: Fiscal Year 2007-08 Capital Improvement Program, Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP), Street Improvements – Page 29, STR205, G. O. Bonds.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Waterbury Neighborhood Association (WNA) was one of five neighborhoods selected by the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisor's to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in July 2006. The other neighborhoods selected were Drake, Douglas Acres, Merle Hay, and South Park. Waterbury was selected as a "Stable Neighborhood," while the other neighborhoods were selected as "Transitional Neighborhoods."

Following their selection, the WNA formed a planning committee in August 2006 to work with City staff to formulate a neighborhood action plan. This group met every 3-4 weeks during the planning process for a total of 12 meetings. The planning process began on September 28, 2006, when the planning committee and staff held a neighborhood-wide input meeting at the Temple B'Nai Jeshurun. This meeting was designed to give residents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide their thoughts on the weaknesses and strengths of the neighborhood. The input from this meeting and data collected by staff set the agenda for the Planning Committee for the next twelve months. A second neighborhood-wide meeting was held June 28, 2007, to follow-up on the progress and present the goals and strategies that were developed during the planning process to neighborhood residents.

Summary of the Plan

The planning committee meetings focused on enhancing the strengths of the neighborhood, including preservation and reforestation of the tree canopy, increasing recreational opportunities within the neighborhood, and community enhancement opportunities. The WNA has taken a proactive role in preserving the tree canopy in the Waterbury neighborhood. The WNA has partnered with various tree organizations including Trees Forever, Iowa State Forestry Extension, as well as State, County and City agencies. Because these partnerships have been established, which have led to numerous reforestation, preservation, tree survey, and resident education activities, it was recommended the WNA continue these partnerships and pursue additional opportunities as they arise.

Preservation of the existing housing stock is also a key priority for Waterbury. The plan recommends the WNA consider hiring a consultant in the future to conduct a historic survey of the neighborhood to determine if there are eligible districts or properties within Waterbury. It should also be noted that even though Waterbury has a stable housing stock, the planning committee and staff determined that NFC programs should be made available for those low-income residents within Waterbury. The NFC agreed and has pledged to work with the neighborhood association to accommodate those who qualify. It is not anticipated that a high number of loans will be generated in Waterbury, but it is a resource that should be offered to those in need. Waterbury is the first “Stable Neighborhood” in which the NFC has worked.

The Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP) is another key component to becoming a Designated neighborhood. NIRP addresses aging infrastructure in Designated neighborhoods and provides improvements above and beyond the City’s annual street, curb, and sidewalk maintenance programs. Waterbury and South Park were each allocated \$682,500 in NIRP funds. After several meetings, the Public Works staff and planning committee finalized a strategy that would meet the needs of both the neighborhood and the City. The planning committee determined the top priority should be to repair the defective sidewalk in the neighborhood. The breakdown of NIRP funds can be found below:

Street HMA Overlay	\$70,400
– CIP NIRP	
Curb Repair	\$161,380 – CIP NIRP
<u>Sidewalk Repair</u>	<u>\$450,720 – CIP NIRP</u>
Total NIRP for Waterbury	\$682,500 – CIP NIRP

Several potential City projects were discussed during the planning process with the planning committee and appropriate City staff, including:

- Implementation of the Waveland Trail through Waterbury.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the “enhanced crosswalk” at the Polk Blvd and Grand Avenue intersection approximately six months after it is constructed. Follow-up with appropriate actions.
- Establish a “Community School Park” at Merrill Middle School, similar to the park at Brody Middle School on Park Avenue, as identified in the *Parklands* – Park’s Master Plan.

Several potential neighborhood enhancement projects were discussed during the planning process, including:

- Continue preservation of the mature tree canopy through a variety of activities including reforestation, resident education, disease prevention, and appropriate trimming/maintenance.
- Providing funding and volunteer workers to assist in the continued maintenance of the Waterbury Gardens.
- Improve neighborhood entrances at 56th Street south of I-235 and at 63rd and Grand.
- Establish designated walking path(s) though out the neighborhood w/ connections to trails and parks.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: July 10, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-1346

Action: Recommend approval of the Douglas Acres, Drake, Merle Hay, South Park and Waterbury Neighborhoods for selection as Designated Neighborhoods in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. Staff recommends that Waterbury and South Park be the first two neighborhoods to go through the planning process. Upon completion of those two plans, the City Manager will reevaluate resource availability given current budget constraints to determine which of the remaining neighborhoods is most appropriate given available resources. All five neighborhoods will be eligible to receive assistance from the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC). Moved by Kiernan to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: March 13, 2006

Roll Call Action: 06-479

Action: [Resolution](#) approving recommendations from the Neighborhood Revitalization Program Evaluation Steering Committee to restart the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and to begin research on the creation of a Comprehensive Affordable Housing Policy. Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 5-2.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Date: November 15, 2007

Board/ Commission: Plan and Zoning Commission

Action: Recommended approval to adopt the Waterbury Neighborhood Strategic Plan as an element of and amendment to the *Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan*.

Date: October 3, 2007

Board/ Commission: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Action: Recommended approval of the Waterbury Neighborhood Strategic Plan.

Date: June 7, 2006

Board/ Commission: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Action: Neighborhood Revitalization Board recommendation to designate Waterbury, Drake, South Park, Douglas Acres and Merle Hay to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program with the City providing an implementation plan for neighborhood order and Neighborhood Finance Corporation to be approved and effective by September 1, 2006.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE