

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date:	May 23, 2011
	Agenda Item No.	21
	Roll Call No.	<u>11-884</u>
	Communication No.	<u>11-327</u>
	Submitted by:	Phillip Delafield, Community Development Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving the Neighborhood Revitalization Board's recommendation of Charter Status for the Waterbury Neighborhood effective January 1, 2012.

SYNOPSIS:

The Waterbury Neighborhood has made significant progress in the implementation of their strategic neighborhood plan. Only a few action items remain to be accomplished by the neighborhood and/or the City. The Neighborhood Revitalization Board and staff recommend that the Waterbury Neighborhood be graduated to Charter Neighborhood status effective January 1, 2012.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Waterbury Neighborhood was selected to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) as a Stable Neighborhood in May 2006. The Waterbury Neighborhood plan was approved by the City Council in November 2007.

Neighborhoods involved in the NRP are periodically evaluated. These evaluations examine if the goals from the neighborhood plan have been achieved, and determine if the neighborhood is ready to graduate to charter status. Staff met with the Waterbury Neighborhood Association on March 31st, 2011 to discuss the evaluation and the possibility of graduating the Waterbury Neighborhood to Charter Status.

Waterbury entered the Neighborhood Revitalization Program as a stable neighborhood. The housing stock in Waterbury is a direct reflection of the stable classification with very well maintained homes throughout the neighborhood. Waterbury consists primarily of single-family homes but does have some multi-family properties along or near Ingersoll Avenue. Preserving the diverse housing stock and maintaining the character of the neighborhood are a top priority for Waterbury.

The housing stock in the Waterbury neighborhood has remained unchanged since completion of the plan, continuing to remain stable. Staff has observed a drop in sale prices across the City of Des Moines since 2007 due to the economic recession and housing crisis. Property values in Waterbury during this time have held steady and most properties have increased in value slightly. Waterbury's housing stock continues to be very well maintained and very desirable real estate, which puts Waterbury in a favorable position for continued growth in valuation and sale prices as the economic climate continues to improve.

The short term action items related to Neighborhood Character and Housing have been accomplished. The action item to explore hiring a consultant to conduct a historic survey of the neighborhood and nominate districts and/or properties to the National Register of Historic Places was identified as a long term goal (5-10 years) has not been accomplished. The WNA will likely explore this in the near future.

Waterbury has a beautiful tree canopy and natural, rolling terrain that are defining elements of the neighborhood. Protecting and preserving the tree canopy and natural features was also a top priority for the Waterbury neighborhood. Progress has been made on many, if not all of the action steps identified in the plan. The action items in the Trees and Natural Features section of the plan are all ongoing, long term commitments and will continue indefinitely with leadership from the WNA.

The City's Public Works Department evaluated all streets, curbs, and sidewalks in the Waterbury Neighborhood. Based on that evaluation, and input from the neighborhood association, a NIRP work plan was developed and approved by the planning committee. The NIRP work plan outlined \$682,500 of infrastructure improvements for the neighborhood. Sidewalks were identified as the priority over streets and curbs with \$450,720 going to sidewalk improvements, \$161,380 going to curb improvements, and \$70,400 going to street resurfacing. All NIRP work has been completed.

The Waterbury Neighborhood does not have a City Park within its boundaries. Open space at Merrill Middle School serves as green space in the neighborhood but there are limited amenities available. However, immediately south of the neighborhood lies Greenwood/Ashworth Park and the Art Center. Crossing Grand Avenue was identified as an obstacle for residents attempting to access this parkland. Funding has been secured for the installation of a high-intensity activated crosswalk (HAWK) signal just east of the Polk Boulevard and Grand Avenue intersection. The signal should be in place by July 1, 2011. A trail connection to Walnut Creek was recently completed when the plan was done, and a Waveland Park trail connection was proposed. Trail improvements have been completed.

Waterbury takes a lot of pride in its neighborhood and has successfully lead several community enhancement projects including the Waterbury Garden at the intersection of Polk Boulevard and Ingersoll Avenue. Additionally, the Waterbury neighborhood has established a number of successful social events and traditions, such as the luminary display on December 24th. Waterbury has constructed a brick and stone entry marker at 56th Street and Pleasant Drive. Progress has been made on many, if not all of the Community Enhancement related goals identified in the plan.

The Waterbury Neighborhood Association should be commended for doing an excellent job in carrying forward the goals and priorities identified in the plan over the past 3+ years. Based on the successful implementation of the plan, staff recommends conditionally moving the Waterbury Neighborhood to Charter status as of January 1, 2012. The conditions being that the City of Des Moines follow through on the following items:

- Installation of the HAWK crossing signal just east of the intersection at Polk Blvd. and Grand Ave. (To be completed by July 1, 2011)
- Provide technical assistance on any remaining plan goals that require City involvement.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: November 19, 2007

Roll Call Number: 07-2195

Action: [Regarding](#) request from Neighborhood Revitalization Board to adopt the Waterbury Neighborhood Strategic Plan as an element of and amendment to the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan. ([Council Communication No. 07-698](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt and approve the proposed amendment. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: July 10, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-1346

Action: [Designation](#) of five new neighborhoods to the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Douglas Acres, Drake, Merle Hay, South Park and Waterbury). ([Council Communication No. 06-427](#)) Moved by Kiernan to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Date: May 4, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Recommended approval of the Waterbury Neighborhood Plan Evaluation and recommend moving the neighborhood to Charter Status as of January 1, 2012.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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