

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	20-566	Meeting:	December 21, 2020
	Agenda Item:	35	Roll Call:	20-2120
	Submitted by:	Erin Olson-Douglas, Development Services Department Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Resolution approving First Amendment to the Urban Renewal Development Agreement with Des Moines Griffin Building, LLC (Tim Rypma et al) and consenting to assignment of said agreement to Freedom Financial Bank, for development of Griffin Building at 319 7th Street.

SYNOPSIS:

Des Moines Griffin Building, LLC (Tim Rypma, Jeremy Cortright, and Paul Cownie, Development members; Ron Daniels, and Abe Wolf, Lead Investors, 102 Court Avenue, Suite 204, Des Moines, IA 50309) completed a historic restoration of the 6-story, approximately 50,400-square-foot building at 319 7th Street. The project provides 35 multi-residential apartment units, as well as approximately 17,800 square feet of commercial, office, and retail space.

The developer has requested that a minimum assessment agreement of \$3,000,000 for the commercial portion of the project to assist them with securing long-term financing of the capital improvements made to the building. The amendment adds references to the minimum assessment agreement in the relevant sections of the development agreement.

The developer has also requested that the City consent to an assignment of the economic development assistance for the project to their lender, Freedom Financial Bank.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The original building was constructed in two (2) stages. The first three (3) floors were completed in 1885, and the top three (3) floors were completed in 1906. Throughout its existence, it has housed retail space on the first floor and offices on the upper floors.
- Formally known as the Flynn Building and renamed in 1998 as the Griffin Building after Edna Griffin, an outspoken African American woman with a finely-honed sense of justice and the will to act, out of respect and thanks for her contributions to civil rights in Iowa.
- The Griffin Building is a site of historical significance in the fight for civil rights and anti-discrimination in our community. On July 9, 1948, Edna Griffin along with her infant daughter Phyllis, John Bibbs, and Leonard Hudson visited Katz Drug Store at this site to buy ice cream and sodas. The group was refused service based on their race.
- The subsequent picketing, sit-ins, and distribution of handbills calling for a boycott of the store were events orchestrated by Edna Griffin to force Katz Drug Store to obey the 1884 Iowa Civil

Rights Act, which guaranteed that “equal accommodation” would be provided to all, regardless of race. Those actions resulted in a 1949 Iowa Supreme Court ruling for the plaintiffs and the subsequent desegregation of the Katz Drug Store.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: September 10, 2018

Roll Call Number: [18-1544](#)

Action: [Development](#) Agreement with Des Moines Griffin Building, LLC for historic renovation into mixed-use commercial and residential at 319 7th Street, and approving proposed Conceptual Development Plan. ([Council Communication No. 18-441](#)) Moved by Mandelbaum to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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