

Town meeting on redevelopment of city block discussed by LPA

NOV 24 1975

By BOB FELL
Journal Staff Writer

Plans for a "town meeting" to hear from prospective developers for an urban renewal redevelopment project in the downtown area were discussed during the regular meeting of the Local Public Agency for urban renewal in Rapid City Monday morning.

Mayor Art LaCroix told the LPA he is organizing a public meeting to air the plans for redevelopment of the north side of the 600 block on Main, designed by THK Associates, and to hear from possible private developers.

Present business properties have been or are being acquired in the block from the old fire station west and the plans for redevelopment of the property, retaining the historical aspect, were unveiled at the council meeting last week.

During the LPA meeting Monday, Aldermen Jim Kissel and Page Townley said they have been contacted by private individuals who have expressed an interest in developing the property but want to remain "behind the scenes."

Kissel said he feels the LPA should adopt a policy or establish guidelines as to whether it wants to have a single developer take over the project or to have several involved.

LaCroix said he would appreciate hearing from anyone who might be interested in taking on the project. He also said that anyone interested will be given an opportunity to offer a pro-

posal during the town hall type meeting. He did not mention a date nor did the LPA take any action on Kissel's suggestion to decide the number of developers who could be involved.

A decision on moving the urban renewal administrative offices also was postponed until a legal opinion is handed down by City Atty. Ray Woodsend.

Several weeks ago, the council had discussed moving the department into the old Cochran Oldsmobile showroom at Omaha and Mountain View. The building, which had been rented by Thomas Oldsmobile-Cadillac, was vacated recently when the auto dealer moved to Cambell Street.

It was felt that if the urban renewal department could use the publicly-owned building, it would save about \$1,147 a month in rent for the present quarters at 2040 W. Main.

Townley commented that perhaps the council had moved too hastily in recommending the move and suggested the city try to continue to lease the building at a figure that would offset the urban renewal office rent.

Ernest Hansen, urban renewal director, said that it is against HUD (Housing and Urban Development) policy for cities to purchase property and then rent it out. The idea is to buy the property and then sell it for redevelopment and re-use.

Woodsend was instructed to check with HUD and get a ruling before any

further action is taken by the urban renewal department.

The LPA also was informed that Lloyd "Hub" Hamilton, owner of the Bronco Bar, would like to relocate in the old Buffalo Bar in the 500 block on Main. Hamilton's bar at the corner of Sixth and Main has been purchased by urban renewal. The council turned down his request to move next to the State Theater in the 700 block on Main because of the concentration of bars in that block.

Bonnie Hughes, relocation director, said Hamilton had contacted her with his request but said he does not have a firm plan for remodeling the Buffalo Bar to accommodate his lounge-type operation.

The LPA took no action, but suggested that Hamilton present a detailed plan for the remodeling to the city council.

In other business, the LPA approved resolutions offering just compensation on seven properties on the north side of Omaha between West Boulevard and 12th Street, totaling \$90,600, and offering 15 properties, including eight tear-downs, for public auction on Dec. 10 at 9 a.m. in the 4-H Building on the county fairgrounds.

Bills, totaling \$74,238.21, were approved including a business moving payment of \$65,431.45 to Northwest Pipefittings.