LPA gives reluctant go ahead to urban renewal along Main Street

By Bob Fell
Journal Staff writer

The Local Public Agency (LPA) for urban renewal gave reluctant approval to going ahead with the proposed urban renewal program in the 600 and 700 blocks on the north side of Main Street during its regular meeting Monday.

The buildings fronting main in the 600 block are being considered for designation in an historic district which would preclude use of federal funds from urban renewal to tear down the buildings.

The resolution proposed to go ahead with the acquisition of the half-block on the north side of the 700 block and to proceed with acquisition in the 600 block "taking into consideration the possibility of its historic significance."

The buildings fronting Main in the 600 block are being considered for designation in an historic district which would preclude use of federal funds from urban renewal to tear down the buildings. A decision on the designation has not been made and Leonard Swanson, urban renewal director, was in Pierre Monday appearing before the state Historical Preservation committee to explain the city's position.

Before the LPA could vote on the main resolution, Robert Apa recommended an amendment indicating the LPA's "intention" to exempt two buildings in the 700 block. He said one of the Buell properties is only nine years old and does not meet the criterion of a "dilapidated" building.

He also said that Mike Whalen has advised the city considered with the land is being appraised for its "re-use" value.

Harold Schmidt urged action by the LPA, stating "we can't keep these business people in limbo any longer."

The LPA approved Apa's amendment and then gave a 6 to 4 approval of the resolution with Robert Flittie, Earl Huntington, Charles Swander and Mrs. Loucks voting against. Voting with Apa, Wilson, Madden and Schmidt in favor were Jim Kissel and Art LaCroix, chairman.

With the full council present, the LPA raised the question of whether the resolution should be sent to the council for its approval or if the LPA action is final. It was finally agreed the LPA action is final and the resolution will be forwarded to Omaha, said that while she felt the $120,000 offer for the property was adequate, she did not realize that it included the price of property owned by her tenants.

She said that when the "leaseholders rights" had been deducted from the offering price, she is left with $71,000. She said she feels the property owner is entitled to more.

She asked the LPA to direct a third appraisal be made on the property.

The LPA was advised, however, that a third appraisal has been made and that Mrs. Hansen has appeared before the appeals board.

The third appraisal, said Ernest Hansen, substantiated the first two appraisals and the

It was agreed the LPA action is final and the resolution will be sent to the council "for its information."

In other business, the LPA was unable to offer any relief for a property owner on Omaha except to instigate condemnation proceedings. Mrs. Floyd Hansen, owner of six businesses and two apartments on the north side of the 600 block on

Chairman LaCroix said the LPA is powerless to change the appraised figures without a recommendation from the appraisers or the appeals board.

Bills totaling $19,118.05 were approved including $8,710 in non-flood bills under protest.