

Downtown area re-use, parking discussed

Bob Fell
Staff Writer

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Members of the Rapid City Common Council met informally Wednesday for a briefing on re-use of the 600 and 700 blocks on the north side of Main.

The half dozen council members present also discussed establishing a downtown parking district. The parking district would permit the city to assess property owners within the district for purpose of financing off-street parking.

While no official action was taken, it was generally agreed to adopt the specifications for bidders on the urban renewal land after some additions, and to follow through on the parking district idea.

Mayor Art LaCroix, however, suggested the staff meet with members of the Downtown Parking Board and the Chamber of Commerce parking committee to work out details before the proposal is presented to the full council.

The district, as outlined by City Attorney Ray Woodsend, extends generally from the alley north of Main to the alley south of St. Joe and from Fourth Street to Ninth Street.

This area has an assessed valuation of nearly \$19 million and the total property along Main and St. Joe has a lineal front footage of 6,698 feet on which an assessment could be based. Woodsend estimated an assessment of \$10 per front foot per year for 10 years could finance a half million dollar off-street parking project.

The sale of the south halves of the 600 and 700 blocks on the north side of Main will be offered in three options.

First option would include a total package of both blocks with a provision for the bidder to apply to the city for vacation of Seventh Street from Main to the alley on the north, or to permit construction over Seventh at a minimum of 14 feet above the street.

The second option would be an offer on just the 700 block. The third would be just the 600 block. The land in the 600 block, however, includes from Seventh Street east to within 25 feet of the old fire station.

In all cases, the developer must agree to surface parking areas yet to be acquired on the north side of the alley and at the west ends of each block. The parking area land and developed parking lots would remain city property and provide free parking according to present plans.

The best use of the land is limited to a motel or hotel that may include multi-family residential units, offices, financial, retail eating and on-sale liquor only in connection with a full-service restaurant and personal and business services.