

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2013 Mid-Year Report

All figures through June 30, 2013

Significant 2013 Events:

1. The Exhibition Center Project continues to move slowly. The ownership of assets for the Radisson Paper Valley was transferred to the Lender (GCCFC also known as LNR) thru the foreclosure process. In compliance with the Courts direction, on January 7, 2013 the Radisson Paper Valley was sold at the Outagamie County Sherriff's Sale to GCCFC (LNR) for \$17.8 million. This sell allowed the City and the Fox Cities Exhibition Center Board to continue to discuss and dialogue with LNR about the future of the property and the Exhibition Center. The City of Appleton as a lead investor will continue to work closely with all stakeholders and will continue to monitor, observe and assist with this project.
2. Staff has been working with Vetter Denk and Ganther on a development proposal for the Foremost Site. Staff attended a developer hosted neighborhood meeting in May and both developer and staff have been working to address community concerns. Additionally, staff requested and conducted a traffic analysis of this site. Developers will host another neighborhood meeting in the fall and staff will request another traffic study after Lawrence in back in session. Staff continues to work closely with the Department of Natural Resources to obtain a Certificate of Closure thru the Voluntary Party Liability Exemption process.
3. The Department staff coordinated the annual Historic Preservation/Restoration and Stewardship Certificate Awards program for the Month of May for the Historic Preservation Commission. There were two (2) properties nominated. Both properties satisfied the eligibility criteria for the Historic Preservation/Restoration Certificate. The Certificate Awards presentation was held at the May 15th Common Council Meeting.
4. The Department staff in collaboration with The Friends of Hearthstone, Inc. applied for a Certified Local Government grant to cover the costs of hiring a professional consultant to prepare a National Register Nomination for the Hearthstone building, located at 625 W. Prospect Avenue. The Wisconsin Historical Society awarded grant to the City of Appleton of up to \$5,960 hire a professional consultant to update the Hearthstone National Register of Historic Places nomination. Staff wrote the Request for Proposal (RFP) and released it on July 12, 2013 to procure the services of a professional consultant to prepare and process the update to the Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Hearthstone home.
5. On May 20, 2013 the Department staff presented their analysis of allowing outdoor storage of recreational vehicles when accessory to a personal storage facility (self-storage/mini-warehouse) which include aesthetics, parking surface, noise, lighting, hours of operation, safety and security and storage of recreational vehicles issues to the Plan Commission for discussion. The Plan Commission determined outdoor storage of recreational vehicles is important to the City as a whole and directed staff to present the proposed zoning text amendments at an Informal Public Hearing. On June 24, 2013, the Plan Commission reviewed proposed zoning text amendments and recommended the Common Council approve the proposed zoning text amendments as presented by staff.
6. The Department staff reviewed, revised and streamlined, where possible, the administrative manual regarding procedures and staff responsibility for the acceptance, processing and distribution of City Plan Commission items (application form, staff reports, agendas, minutes and reports and City Plan Commission room setup) based upon current department staff structure. The revised administrative manual was presented to the Department Director and Administrative Assistant in March 2013.

7. The Department staff provided technical assistance to the Facilities Ground and Construction Department regarding applying for a Wisconsin Historic Marker sign for the Vulcan Hydroelectric Power Plant replica building located at 530 Vulcan Street in order to replace the missing 1953 historic marker sign at this site. The Historic Preservation Commission drafted the new narrative sign text to enhance the historical details about the Vulcan Hydroelectric Power Plant replica building.
8. The Department staff began implementing the Neighborhood Program which included creating an information brochure, updated the City's Neighborhood Program webpage and presented the program at the Neighborhood Watch Captain's meeting.
9. The Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan program began rehabilitation on nine (9) homes and committed just over \$135,000 to project costs in the first half of 2013. Both of these numbers are approximately forty (40) percent of the target for the year. The Program received nearly \$200,000 in program income in the first half of 2013, almost meeting the target for the year. A large portion of that program income was due to the sale of the Summer Street property which had been purchased in the fall of 2011 to save the City's investment in the property when it went into foreclosure. The City was paid just under \$80,000 for that property. Currently there are eleven (11) homes under contract for rehabilitation with ten (10) additional homeowners who will have their rehabilitation begin later this year. Applications for the program will be accepted from September 16, 2013 through October 25, 2013.
10. Facilitated the first Diversity & Inclusion Group meeting for employees to support a welcoming and inclusive workplace. At that meeting, we identified the need to have training for employees on customs within the Hmong community. Staff worked with Human Resources for a date at the end of summer to bring in a professional for training for employees.
11. Collaborated with New North and the Green Bay City of Commerce to make updates to the guide for multicultural residents highlighting minority owned businesses to support economic development in the Fox Cities. The guide can be found at: <http://www.thenewnorth.com/strategic-initiatives/diversity-resources>
12. Collaborated with the Appleton Public Library on the 2013 Walk a Mile program kicking off in June 2013 focused on the African American community and Juneteenth. About 30 people were in attendance. In the fall, we have other two more Walk a Mile programs scheduled.
13. Collaborated with the Appleton Public Library and various interfaith groups to create the 'Understanding Each Other' series on religion. We kicked off the series in the spring and have two more programs scheduled for the fall of 2013.
14. Served in a leadership role once again for Juneteenth 2013. About 4,000 people attend at Appleton City Park bringing awareness to this historic celebration.
15. Collaborated with The History Museum at the Castle regarding Black History in Appleton for Juneteenth celebration. Look at opportunities for further collaboration on Civil Rights history in our city in 2013 and 2014.
16. Facilitated a meeting with Appleton Fire Department and the Hmong American Partnership to look at ways to connect with the Hmong community regarding ongoing safety issues and communication barriers. Training for landlords is being planned.

17. Advocated for a victim of a hate crime in Jones Park on June 3. Provided information about Transgender victims to Appleton Police, local district attorney and victim witness, other staff involved and media. Trial for this hate crime set for August 12 and 13.
18. Participated in INCLUDE Fox Cities four month campaign focused on education about the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community. The campaign included multiple appearances by anti-bullying expert Jamie Nabozny as well as discussions on faith, leadership and safety. INCLUDE is becoming an ally organization and staff will continue to serve as an advisor as they meet quarterly.
19. Collaborated with INCLUDE and Positive Voice to bring the documentary 'Gen Silent' and the film maker to Appleton Public Library. 'Gen Silent' focuses on issues and abuse happening to LGBT elders. As a result we obtained curriculum to help staff who work with elders better understand the complexities of the issue to provide culturally sensitive and caring responses.
20. Worked with other city staff to make updates to Appleton's Fair Housing Ordinance. The ordinance had several concerns identified by Milwaukee's Fair Housing as part of the impediments report they generated for us. This ordinance is currently being reviewed by Community & Economic Development Committee.
21. Met with Appleton Police Chief Helein and Department of Justice community relations to discuss outreach to minority populations. We discussed responses to Arab, Muslim and Sikh religious institutions in the valley. As a result of this meeting, we collaborated with Menasha Police and the Sikh Temple Fox Valley to review responses and outreach. Further meetings and educational opportunities are being planned.
22. Worked with Lawrence University's film studies to develop a series of films about life in the Fox Cities. Provided film support, interviews and information for three of the five films that was presented in the spring at Lawrence University. In October 2013, LU will hold a public showing of these 10 minute documentaries.
23. Provided training for Appleton Library supervisors on diversity and inclusion.
24. At their request, worked with Department of Public Works on a couple of issues in homes that required cultural sensitivity.
25. Continued outreach to homeless population through collaborations with local shelter programs.
26. Met with local real estate agent focused on helping increase home ownership for minorities in the Appleton area.
27. Continue to serve on review team of teen suicides in Outagamie County to further outreach and connection to marginalized teen populations.
28. Continue connecting with minority leaders through numerous monthly networking meetings and formal and informational meetings and communication.
29. Continue providing multiple educational opportunities in community and staff when requested.
30. Continued to provide resources, referral and information for residents (current and potential), schools, media, employers, city staff and anyone requesting diversity and inclusion information and/or resources.
31. On 6/26 we mailed 1,000 letters to homes that have not been inspected in over 10 years to update our property records. The homes are in the area bound by Glendale to "OO"/Meade to Ballard. The alderpersons in this area were notified.

32. Staff met with Alderperson Lobner as he wanted to learn more about our assessment process. The homeowners have been very responsive to our request for entry. Staff has been handling the appointment calls.
33. We are attempting to inspect all buildings in the city once in every 10 year period to meet state requirements. This equates to an avg. of 2,400 inspections/year. Each appraiser will spend 4 hrs in the field daily thru 8/10. Staff will work a few evenings, but will not exceed 40 hrs/wk.
34. A full citywide revaluation of Commercial property including apartments was successfully completed to continue our 4-year revaluation cycle. This was a large project completed in-house which required accurate: market research, sales and income analysis, data collection, field inspections, appraisal computations and effective public relations for 1,300 Commercial properties. Commercial assessments decreased by an average of 7% due to the revaluation, while apartments increased by an average of 4%. These properties are now more fairly and equitably assessed at 100% of market value. A total of 1,440 assessments were changed in 2013 including residential properties, of which ten were appealed at the Board of Review. The total locally assessed value of the city increased slightly by \$4,685,500 or +.1% from 2012.
35. Areas of Assessor Primary Concentration for Remainder of 2013:

This August, we will begin a citywide revaluation of all 23,500 Residential parcels for the 2014 assessment year. We will use property data collected in recent years along with our newly developed market model application (a/k/a automated valuation model) to more efficiently establish market value assessments on all homes. The state of the economy has affected many home values since they were last revaluated in 2010. Value adjustments will be made as necessary to fairly distribute the tax burden.

Tech Services recently purchased 3 tablet computers and will soon begin configuring I-series screens for our use in the field. We plan to use tablets to collect property data instead of paper and pencil. This could save up to 300 labor hrs/yr in data entry time. Training and use of these tablets will begin in December.

Assist our Attorney's office and outside council with the defense of our 2010-2012 retail assessment appeals as they proceed through the court system. Three retailers (Walgreens, CVS, and Target) have filed court claims for excessive assessment in Appleton and in many other municipalities throughout Wisconsin. The result of these cases may affect the future assessed values of all commercial properties containing long-term leases.

Community Development Budget/Actual Comparison

for the period ending June 30, 2013

	Current YTD Actual	Current Year Amended Budget	% of Budget Expended
Administration	\$116,550	\$232,921	50.0%
Marketing & Business Services	\$41,233	\$162,190	25.4%
New & Redevelopment Projects	\$41,103	\$94,115	43.7%
Business Parks	\$24,122	\$62,763	38.4%
Geographic Information Systems	\$99,952	\$269,997	37.0%
Diversity	\$26,706	\$66,345	40.3%
Assessor Admin	\$1,634	\$7,730	21.1%
Assessor Assessing	\$240,577	\$507,288	47.4%
Planning	\$110,021	\$264,701	41.6%
Total:	\$701,898	\$1,668,050	42.1%