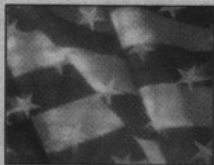


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February 28, 2007

City grants 2 more weeks for downtown details

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By Debbie Carson

Staff Writer

Pinnacle/Ram has until March 6 to tweak its plans and iron out details for Temple Terrace's 7-year-old downtown redevelopment project

After a 2-hour long Community Redevelopment Agency meeting Feb. 20, the council voted to keep Pinnacle/Ram in the running for the downtown redevelopment project - for now.

Somewhat encouraged by the progress the council saw in two of the firm's three

plans, the council agreed to give the firm a little more time to work out the details.

With a vote of 4-1, the council agreed to give Pinnacle/Ram two weeks to address concerns the council had over financial obligations and designs.

City Councilman Ken Hallway opposed the motion, saying that Pinnacle/Ram's plans were not what the city or its citizens had wanted.

He said that he could not support Pinnacle/Ram's plans because they did not achieve what the city was looking for in New Urbanism.

"It looks just like the DeBartolo plan," Hallway said, referring to the huge Tampa developer that had bid on the downtown project only to be rejected by the city.

The criticism focused on Block C, where the Sweetbay Supermarket and a few other tenants currently reside.

The council had charged Pinnacle/Ram with the task of incorporating Sweetbay in the downtown project without moving the company from its current location. Sweetbay has asked for more than \$3 million to break its lease and be moved

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elsewhere in the targeted redevelopment site. The city want to move the grocer, its largest surviving tenant, yet does not want to pay Sweetbay.

Faced with keeping Sweetbay where it is, along with a couple adjacent tenants, Pinnacle/Ram suggested that they repaint and re-skin the building, putting on new facades to make it blend in with the rest of the project.

"I feel there's more work that could be done to the Sweetbay plaza," said Community Services Director Ralph Bosek.

The council was not convinced that rehabbing the building would give the area the New Urbanism look the city is looking for.

"What this looks like to me is a modified shopping strip," said Mayor Joe Affronti.

All three plans that the developer presented that night would make the city relatively whole on its land purchases, representatives from Pinnacle/Ram said.

The plans are identical north of Chicago Avenue and vary south of the divider.

The developer proposes creating a new street, tentatively called Main Street, to the east of N. 56th Street, which would connect Bullard Parkway with Chicago Avenue.

The council saw all three plans and decided that Pinnacle/Ram should polish plans B and C.

The main difference between the two plans is that the developer would purchase all of the city's 27.3 acres of land in Plan B and would purchase only 23 acres in Plan C. The city would retain ownership of about 4.3 acres of land along the riverfront for a park.

Plan C also includes the possibility of having a \$3 million performing arts center somewhere in the downtown area.

Though the majority of the council seemed pleased with Plan C, Councilman Mark Knapp asked that Pinnacle/Ram tweak Plan B, too, noting that Plan B might be a better fit.

"Is it the perfect plan the city's envisioned?" asked Councilman Frank Chillura. "No. It's not."

Along with asking Pinnacle/Ram to modify its latest plans, the council also wants answers to a few open questions.

—Who owns the 225-space parking garage?

—Who pays for Regions Bank to move?

—What will the internal traffic patterns be?

The council expected to have the answers to their questions Tuesday, Feb. 27, at a special workshop for the Community Redevelopment Agency.

The workshop was scheduled to refine their questions and comments and check the progress of the downtown plans.

The council is expected to make a final decision on a plan on March 6.

For news coverage of the CRA meeting Feb. 27, visit www.CNewsPubs.com and select The Beacon on the left-hand side. From there, click News.