



Legislation Text

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**DATE:** February 8, 2018  
**TO:** Members of the Housing & Redevelopment Authority  
**FROM:** Janine Atchison, Housing Coordinator

Consideration of Maple Street Concept Plans

**SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:**

Housing & Redevelopment Authority Board Members to review site concept plans from ISG Engineering and determine next steps.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2017, Staff was approached by the owner of 1800 Maple St S regarding her desire to sell the property to the Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA). The HRA Board expressed interest and commissioned a residential appraisal for the property. After reviewing the appraisal in a closed session, the HRA decided to obtain site concept plans for the parcel to determine its usefulness for the purpose of building affordable housing. Bids were obtained by staff from 2 reputable engineering firms. The HRA approved the costs for the concept plans.

**ANALYSIS:**

Based on the concept plans provided, the HRA should decide if they want to continue to pursue the possibility of purchasing the property. Information regarding appraised value and purchase negotiations are not public and should not be discussed at a public meeting for the sake of negotiations.

The Northfield Strategic Plan over the next 3 years sets affordable workforce and senior housing as priorities. One of the goals of the Northfield Comprehensive Plan is to promote mixed income development throughout the City of Northfield. The Land Development Code also has regulations that guide development through the subdivision process.

In all 3 concept plans, provided by ISG Engineering, the access road is located on the south side of the site. To provide an access road on the north side of the site, City codes would require the access road line up with Afton Drive. Placing an access road on the north side would not be an effective use of the lot and would leave too much under-utilized open area. The open area would be along the northern edge of the site, which is the highest elevation onsite, and could not be used for storm water management.

Concept 1

This concept includes a cul-de-sac and 6 single-family homes. The cul-de-sac would require a variance as it is the only viable way to place more than 1 single-family home on the site. The Land

Development Code also requires all single-family homes to front on a public street.

The cul-de-sac meets the 96' turning radius required for fire equipment and is placed along the southern edge of the site. According to the City Engineer, the maximum number of single family homes allowed on the site would be six based on public street standards.

The cost of the land and the required public street (cul-de-sac), when divided into 6 lots, may be prohibitive to affordable housing. The estimated cost to the project for the public street alone could add \$35,000 to \$45,000 to the sale price of each lot.

### Concept 2

This concept allows 11 single level patio homes of approximately 1625 square, feet including garage space. The site concept includes a private road, which meets the requirements for emergency vehicles. Single level living could appeal to both seniors and families. There would be cost savings in building a private road versus a public street.

### Concept 3

Concept 3 allows for 16 two-story townhomes of approximately 1000 square feet. The site concept includes a private road along the southern edge of the site. Concept 3 provides more units, lowering the land and development costs per unit.

This plan could appeal to both families and seniors. The 6 townhomes facing Maple Street could be designed as single level townhomes and the additional 10 two-story townhomes could be designated for families.

The green space for the 6 townhomes is located primarily on the Maple Street side, which may not be appealing to families with children. However, this feature may appeal to seniors. The green space for the easterly two-story units is located away from driveways and streets, which may appeal more to families with children.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

One of the next steps would include negotiating a purchase price for the property. Based on previous conversations with the owner, it is not likely that the current residential appraised value will be considered. Staff consulted the City Attorney regarding determining a qualified basis for the property. The City Attorney's office ultimately recommended that the HRA obtain a subdivision appraisal if they plan to negotiate for the purchase the property.

After contacting 3 qualified appraisers, staff received estimated sub division appraisal costs of \$4,000 to \$5,000 with a time line of 2 - 4 months for completion.

The HRA may obtain a real estate broker's opinion first, however a subdivision appraisal is recommended before entering into negotiations. A special closed session of the HRA may be called to discuss specific issues related to purchase negotiations.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

If the HRA is interested in pursuing the possibility of purchasing the property, staff recommends obtaining subdivision appraisal.