



SHAKER HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Revitalization and Development Agenda Shaker Heights City Hall, Council Chambers Wednesday, September 11, 2019, 6 PM

1. Approval of August 14, 2019 Minutes

Documents:

[NRD 08-14-19 MINUTES.PDF](#)

2. Request to Appropriate \$150,000 for Demolition in Fund 223, Housing Nuisance Abatement Fund

Documents:

[NRD COMMITTEE MEMO-9-4-19.PDF](#)

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SHAKER HEIGHTS

Neighborhood Revitalization & Development Committee Minutes
Wednesday, August 14, 2019
6 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Anne E. Williams, Chair
Nancy R. Moore, Council Member
Earl Williams, Jr., Council Member
Carter Strang, Citizen Member
Jeri E. Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer
Joyce Braverman, Director of Planning
Kamla Lewis, Director of Neighborhood Development
Kyle Krewson, Director of Building and Housing

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Anne E. Williams at 6 P.M.

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Approval of the July 10, 2019 Minutes

Anne E. Williams reviewed the minutes, and a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved.

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Application to Acquire City Owned Vacant Lot at 3643 Avalon Road (PPN 735-30-037) for Side Lot

Summary. Kamla Lewis indicated that the City has received an application from Sharee and Douglass Thornton, 3639 Avalon Road, who are interested in acquiring the city owned vacant lot adjacent to their home in order to use it as a side lot. The residents were in attendance at the meeting. The Neighborhood Revitalization & Development (NRD) Committee is being asked to consider this application and make a recommendation as to whether City Council should approve the sale of the vacant lot located at 3643 Avalon Road (PPN 735-30-037) to the Thornton family.

Background & Discussion

Proposal Summary

- **Applicant** : Sharee and Douglass Thornton, 3639 Avalon Road
- **Proposal summary** : to purchase this vacant lot, and fence it to use it as a side yard, at a cost of approx. \$3,325. They propose to use contractors to do the work.
- **Price offered** : \$50.00

CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS

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Staff Review of Application

- The applicants’ property is not in foreclosure, they are current in their property taxes, and have had no criminal nuisance activity complaints. They have no outstanding Housing or Zoning Code violations. They have owned their home in Shaker Heights since July 2003, and are owner occupants.
- The applicants’ proposal meets all the criteria with the City and neighborhood guidelines of the program. Larger lots typically command higher prices at sale as well. Sale to the Thornton family would return the vacant lot to productive use and tax revenue generation.
- The City has no redevelopment plans for this vacant lot.
- Staff considers that the use of the lot as described would be an improvement over it being maintained by the City as a vacant lot. It currently costs the City approx. \$615 per year to maintain a vacant lot.

Background Information

- In May 2008, the City adopted a Side Lot Program to make City owned vacant lots available to the adjacent neighbors. The goal of the program was to encourage adjacent neighbors to acquire these lots to make capital improvements to the property that would increase tax value, such as construction of a house addition or garage, landscaping, etc.
- Applications are accepted on a “first quality, first served” basis. Proposals that are approved by NRD will go to City Council for final approval.
- There is no set price for side lots under the Program; pricing is negotiable based on lot size, location, configuration, planned improvements, etc.
- If the NRD recommends acceptance of this application, and it is approved by Council, the City will enter into an agreement with the applicant that will include all of the conditions and the buyer’s responsibilities. The buyer will have to seek Planning Commission (CPC) approval for the consolidation of the lots. If there are variance requirements, they may also have to seek Zoning Board approval. Only once all these conditions are met would the property be transferred.
- The property was acquired by the City in 2008 for \$1 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The two family house that had previously stood on this lot was demolished by the City later that year in 2008 after the city had acquired.
- Through its vacant lot program, the City so far has sold fifteen (15) vacant lots:

Year	# lots	Price	Buyer	Street	Use
2003	2	\$1.00 each	Rysar	Lindholm	New houses
2011	3	\$1.00 each	Zaremba	Strathavon	New houses
2011	1	\$1,000	Adjacent neighbors	Ashwood	Two side yards

Year	# lots	Price	Buyer	Street	Use
2011	1	\$100	Neighbor	Enderby	Side yard
2011	1	\$1,000	Heights Christian Church	Daleford	Community garden
2012	1	\$50	Neighbor	Menlo	Side Yard
2013	1	\$50	Neighbor	Riedham	Side yard
2013	1	\$1,000	Neighbor	Daleford	Side Yard
2014	1	\$1,000	Neighbor	Avalon	Side Yard
2014	1	\$100	Neighbor	Albion	Side Yard
2017	1	\$50	3 adjacent neighbors	Palmerston	Side Yards
2019	1	\$1	Knez	Hildana	New house

- One additional vacant lot on Rolliston is being leased to a community group for use as a Community Garden, and another lot on Winchell was approved for sale to a neighbor in May 2019.
- If it is approved, it will go the Finance Committee and then to Council.

When this program was put in place in 2008, as this committee debated how to review applications, they decided that they would accept the first quality proposal. As a result, if they received a proposal that they didn't like, they didn't necessarily have to accept it if they thought there was something better that was worth waiting for. So it's not "First Come; First Served" necessarily, it is "First Quality" in that it meets all the criteria. Typically, the City goes through a number of conversations with the applicants prior to submitting. For example, the Thornton's started this process in 2015 and at first their proposal did not meet the criteria. So they worked on it so they could meet all of the criteria. Kamla indicated they have received several proposals in a similar manner.

Kamla also indicated that when the last one they approved went to Council in May 2019, one of the Council members asked Kamla to do an analysis of the change in the value of the combined lot from the time when they applied until now. Obviously, it is not a perfect analysis because differing amounts of time had passed. On average for those that had combined lots/side lots, there was an increase in taxable value of \$20,000 and that was on the average of 14% increase in the tax valuation for the property.

Nancy Moore indicated that if you are analyzing all of the financials, it saves the city a considerable amount of costs for cutting grass. Plus there is no property taxes when the city owns the property.

The Thornton's were welcomed to the committee and were asked if there was anything they wanted to add to the discussion. [Comments were inaudible].

Recommendation. Staff recommends that the Thornton family application to acquire the City owned vacant lot located at 3643 Avalon Road (PPN 735-30-037) for \$50.00 and utilize it as a side yard, be recommended by the NRD to Council.

Motion was made, seconded and approved. All in favor.

Van Aken District Clean and Safe Program - Authorization to enter into a contract with RMS Investments

Joyce Braverman stated that in September 2018, a Clean and Safe Program in contract with Downtown Cleveland Alliance (DCA) was established for the Van Aken District. The program operates in the core Van Aken District and was financed by RMS, the City, Tower East, and University Hospitals Health System (UHHS). The existing agreement between the City and RMS to jointly fund this program ends on August 19, 2019. This is a request to authorize a new contract for August 2019 to August 2020. The funds are available in the Economic Development budget to pay the City's share of the program cost.

The Clean and Safe Program currently provides "clean" services including trash removal, power washing, and weeding, and "safe" services such as enhancing the sense of safety, visibility, safety escorts, and responding to unusual activity. The program operates from 7am to 12am (midnight), seven days a week.

DCA requests a 5% increase in the billable hourly rate of the program in order to renew for the upcoming year. This would result in an increase of \$1,283.10 for the City based on last year's cost allocation. RMS has indicated that they are very satisfied with DCA's services and costs, including the proposed 5% increase for 2019-2020. The program statistics report for the past year is attached.

To fund the program, each participating entity will contribute funds based on number of employees or land area. This is based on a contract of \$159,139.64 for 2019-2020 service, as shown below.

RMS	\$87,526.80 (55%)
City	\$44,559.10 (28%)
Tower East	\$7,956.98 (5%)
UHHS	\$19,096.76 (12%)

Since the numbers haven't been adjusted from what is presented, if UHHS does not participate the second year, is it true that the \$19,096.76 value that they would have would be divided between RMS and possibly Tower East? The City is committing \$44,559.10. [Additional comments inaudible].

The evidence of this program and its benefits is one of the best ideas that Planning and RMS has had. This has put a lid on the worst abuses and the program should be complimented. Additional comments inaudible.

Recommendation. This is a request to authorize entering into a contract with RMS Investments for \$44,559.10 for an additional year of the Clean and Safe Program. Motion was made, seconded and approved. All in favor.

The October meeting will be held October 10; instead of October 9.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 11, 2019.

Anne E. Williams, Chair
Neighborhood Revitalization & Development Committee



SHAKER HEIGHTS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Neighborhood Revitalization and Development Committee
c.c. Mayor David Weiss
Jeri Chaikin, CAO
Frank Brichacek, Interim Finance Director
Kyle Krewson, Director of Building and Housing

FROM: William Hanson, Housing Commissioner

DATE: September 4, 2019

RE: **Request to Appropriate \$150,000 for Demolition in Fund 223, Housing Nuisance Abatement Fund**

This is a request to appropriate \$150,000 of available cash receipts in Fund 223, Housing Nuisance Abatement Fund, so that the funds can be used for demolition activities. These funds were received by the City as reimbursements from previous demolitions and placed in a nuisance abatement revenue account. While this demolition work was funded through the Cuyahoga County Demo Fund, the County has authorized the City to keep any reimbursed demolition funds provided such funds are used for additional demolitions. Therefore, this action is requested to make these funds available for additional demolition work.

We currently have 5-7 vacant and abandoned homes under consideration for demolition and this request will ensure funds are available should we determine to proceed.

Vacant and abandoned homes that are blighted negatively impact property values and quality of life in a neighborhood and can become magnets for crime. The City closely monitors vacant properties in an effort to keep them secure and in compliance with the City's Vacant Property Ordinance. If an owner fails to take action to repair a vacant, abandoned, and blighted house, the City may declare the property a public nuisance and order all structures repaired or demolished. If the owner fails to comply the City may proceed with demolition. The City may also consider demolition of deteriorated vacant homes acquired through the tax foreclosure process.

The City has received three (3) separate awards for demolition funding through the County Demo Fund since 2012 totaling \$2,140,000 and 155 houses and 8 commercial buildings have been demolished during this period by the City or the County Land Bank acting on our behalf.

The City has applied to the County for an additional \$400,000 of demolition funding and anticipates a favorable response to this request though the award has not yet been made.

Staff requests that the Neighborhood Revitalization and Development Committee approve the proposal to appropriate \$150,000 from Fund 223 so that funding is available for demolition activity as needed.