

SEPTEMBER CITY UPDATE



ORDINANCE ON NUISANCE PROPERTIES

Just one “problem property” can negatively impact an entire block or neighborhood.

Repeated property maintenance issues, junk vehicle violations, police calls for various violations, etc. at any one property warrant special attention and corrective action.

Such situations are addressed in Title 9, Chapter 7 of the Two Rivers Municipal Code, “Chronic Nuisance Premises.” Under this ordinance, the Chief of Police may identify a property as a “chronic nuisance” if there has been enforcement action required for three or more nuisance activities at that property within any 12-month period.

The owner of the premises must be given formal notice that his/her property has been determined to be a chronic nuisance. That owner must then meet with an authorized official of the City, as designated by the Police Chief, to present a written action plan to abate the nuisance.

Once the property owner and the City have agreed on such an action plan, the owner is expected to abide by the terms of the action plan. Failure to do so will result in a letter from the Police Department, giving the property owner 10 days to respond and address the any ongoing violations.

If the owner of a nuisance property fails to respond to the Police Department’s initial notification or fails or ceases to cooperate per the terms of an agreed-upon action plan, then enforcement action can be taken under the Chronic Nuisance Premises Ordinance. That can mean, in addition to any penalties for a specific code violation (say, for a junk vehicle), that the property owner may be subject to penalties under the Chronic Nuisance Premises Ordinance--\$200 to \$5,000, plus the costs of enforcement/abatement.

The City Council on August 16 approved several changes to this ordinance. Those changes included:

- Providing a more specific definition of “chronic nuisance”
- Including written warnings or documented verbal warnings as “enforcement actions” that may be considered in identifying a property as a chronic nuisance premises
- Adding Fire Code and Public Health Code violations to the offenses that can count toward designation as a chronic nuisance premises
- Modifying the definition of “premises” to make clear that this ordinance does not just apply to residential properties

With these changes, the City hopes to have a more effective tool to address such “problem properties.”



To view any City ordinance online, go to www.two-rivers.org, click on “Government” then “City Ordinances.” To report concerns about a possible nuisance property, contact the City Manager’s Office at 920-793-5532.

DESIGN MOVING AHEAD ON CENTRAL PARK WEST 365 PROJECT

The City Council on August 23 approved a budget amendment to provide \$45,000 in funding to move forward with more detailed design work on the Central Park West 365 Project.

This ambitious redevelopment project is intended to make the portion of Central Park in front of the J.E. Hamilton Community House a year-round venue for outdoor activities. The concept plan for the project was developed by a nine-member citizen committee (including two City Council members), working with City staff and a Madison-based park designer, Parkitecture + Planning. Major elements of the plan include:

- Replacing the 45 year-old band shell with a new structure, to be located at the north end of the park;
- Adding a new splash pad feature, as a summer draw for families with young children
- Adding an ice skating loop and rink, with artificial ice to allow for a reliable, extended skating season
- Adding a new concessions/restroom building
- Eliminating that portion of West Park Street lying directly in front of the Community House, to extend the park space right up to the building



Concept Plan for Central Park West 365 Project—Summer View from the Southwest (Intersection of Washington and 17th Streets). For more project information, go to www.two-rivers.org

The design as set forth in the concept plan for the park is not “cast in stone,” but will be further reviewed and possibly modified as the design process moves forward over the balance of this year.

The project has a significant price tag, estimated at \$1.8 million (including a 10 percent contingency). The Council has given direction that \$600,000 be provided for funding the City’s share of the project in the 2022 Budget. Clearly, if this vision for a revitalized public space that will draw people downtown year-round is to become a reality, the City and interested citizens will need to work hard to pursue grants and fund-raising for this potentially transformative downtown project.