

Information Item

Date: December 12, 2022

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Ben Rowe, Assistant City Manager
Ken Millett, Economic Development Director

Subject:
Potential Purchase of Property for Future Development

Strategic Focus Area: Economic Vitality and Diversity
Strategic Objective: N/A
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



At Finance Committee in September, City staff and Carol Davis, Executive Director of the Simon Green Atkins Community Development Corporation (Atkins CDC), shared her organization's interest in potential financial assistance from the City to acquire and revitalize the abandoned Nissen Wagon Works site at 1539 Waughtown Street. After serving as home to Nissen's manufacturing operations, it transitioned to a Western Electric facility from the 1940s through 1990s. The property has since fallen into disrepair.

Based on statutory authority available to municipalities, it has been determined that the most viable option for City participation in the overall redevelopment of the property is for the City to acquire the property directly for future development. Planning for redevelopment options is in the early stages with details to be determined. A redevelopment evaluation would be completed in the future to identify the best potential uses. Revitalization could accomplish the goals of rehabilitating an abandoned property into an activity center by providing increased investment, creating job opportunities and/or affordable housing for those in the area, and decreasing blight. The first step in this process would be City Council consideration of pursuing control of the property.

Environmental assessments conducted under the current ownership identified issues requiring environmental remediation. Abatement by the owner is underway, and any potential agreement with the current owner would require the cleanup to be resolved prior to the City taking deed to the property.

It is anticipated that City staff will share additional details with City Council during closed session in January.