



Muskegon City Commission: Assistance for downtown's Highpoint Flats on Tuesday agenda

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MUSKEGON, MI – The Muskegon City Commission has faced a number of significant and difficult issues the past month but Tuesday's meeting agenda offers a much lighter work load.

However, one major agenda item is intended to move a key development project for downtown Muskegon forward. The downtown project comes after a month of commission decisions on a selecting new mayor, filling a vacant city commission seat, approving an historic water agreement and allowing a Sappi rezoning issue to be on the Nov. 6 general election ballot.

Now, the city is proposing offering an economic incentive to Jon Rooks and his Parkland Muskegon LLC to create a market-rate apartment complex out of the historic Comerica Bank tower at 285 W. Western. Rooks proposed a **\$10.5 million redevelopment of the office building in 2008 as a 48-unit Highpoint Flats condominium project.**



The condominium market since the 2008 start of the Great Recession has kept the developer from securing financing for Highpoint Flats. City officials said Rooks is now intending to create market-rate apartments in the eight-story former bank building.

To assist in the financing of the apartment project, the city commission is being asked to create a "brownfield redevelopment authority" that will allow for capture of future taxes to help pay for redevelopment costs associated with environmental issues. The project also is being proposed for additional assistance from the Michigan Economic Development Corp., city officials said.

Besides the Highpoint Flats incentive issue, commissioners will consider recommending approvals of Michigan Liquor Control Commission license changes for the Frontier Liquor Shoppe, 631 W. Southern and Muskegon Family Foods, 1157 Third. Both are liquor license transfers to new owners.

Finally, the city commission is being asked to purchase a single-family residential house at 2221 Surfwood from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for renovation and eventual resale in the city's restoration and home ownership program.

The commission meets Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. in the city commission chambers of Muskegon City Hall, 933 Terrace. The meeting is open to the public and citizens can address any agenda item or other issues of public interest.

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