

**RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY**  
**Wednesday, October 26, 2022 | 8:00 AM**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes: April 27, 2022
2. Review application from EPIC Unite Real Estate Holdings, LLC (New Construction) located at 234 Main Avenue North
3. Other Business and Public Comment
4. Adjourn – Next Meeting: November 22, 2022 (Tuesday due to Thanksgiving holiday)

Renaissance Zone Authority meetings are broadcast live on cable channel TV Fargo 56 and can be seen live at [www.FargoND.gov/streaming](http://www.FargoND.gov/streaming). They are rebroadcast each Friday at 3:00 p.m. Minutes are available on the City of Fargo Web site at [www.FargoND.gov/renaissancezoneauthority](http://www.FargoND.gov/renaissancezoneauthority).

People with disabilities who plan to attend the meeting and need special accommodations should contact the Planning Office at 701.241.1474. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements.

## **RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting:**

**Wednesday, April 27, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Renaissance Zone Authority of the City of Fargo, North Dakota, was held in the Commission Chambers at City Hall at 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

The Renaissance Zone Authority members present or absent were as follows:

Present: Deb Mathern, Reid Middaugh, Steve Swiontek, Prakash Mathew, Dr. Dean Bresciani, Commissioner Dave Piepkorn, Commissioner Arlette Preston

Absent: Chad Peterson

Chair Mathern called the meeting to order.

**Item 1: Minutes: Regular Meeting of July 28, 2021**

Member Preston moved the minutes of the July 28, 2021 Renaissance Zone Authority meeting be approved. Second by Member Swiontek. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 2: Review from Great Plains Block 3 Venture, LLC (New Construction) located at 225 4th Avenue North and 419 3rd Street North**

Planning Coordinator Maegin Elshaug presented the staff report for a proposal to construct a residential building, and noted staff is recommending approval as the proposal meets the guidelines and all required approval criteria.

Discussion was held on the evaluation scoring, location of parking, building height, and the east façade and sidewalk location.

Applicant Representative Deb Wendel-Daub, Kilbourne Group, spoke on behalf of the application.

Continued discussion was held on access to parking.

Member Preston moved to recommend approval to the City Commission of the application submitted by Great Plains Block 3 Venture, LLC and to grant the property tax exemption and the State tax exemptions as allowed by the Renaissance Zone law contingent upon completion of the project and verification of costs. Second by Member Mathew. On call of the roll Members Piepkorn, Middaugh, Mathew, Swiontek, Preston, Bresciani, and Mathern voted aye. Absent and not voting: Member Peterson. The motion was declared carried.

**Item 3: Memo from Jim Gilmour, Director of Strategic Planning and Research regarding 401 3rd Avenue North**

Director of Strategic Planning and Development Jim Gilmour provided an update on the proposals received for the 401 3rd Avenue North location, and that they will be coming before the City Commission at the May 2, 2022 meeting.

Discussion was held on future applications and process regarding contingencies in agreements.

**Item 4: Other Business and Public Comment**

Discussion was held on the Renaissance Zone blocks, availability, and locations.

Commissioner Piepkorn suggested the possibility of considering going to the legislature to request more blocks in the upcoming year.

**Item 5: Adjournment – Next Meeting: May 25, 2022**

The time at adjournment was 8:25 a.m.



**Renaissance Zone Staff Report for  
EPIC Unite Real Estate Holdings, LLC (334-F)  
234 Main Avenue**

**Project Evaluation:**

The City of Fargo received a Renaissance Zone application from EPIC Unite Real Estate Holdings, LLC to construct a mixed-use project at 234 Main Avenue. Pursuant to the application, the intent of the project is to construct a 7-story building with underground, first and second level parking, commercial space on first and third levels, and residential (apartments and for-sale condos) on floors four through seven. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023 with completion in 2024.

The Planning Department has reviewed the application and has provided a project ranking based on the analysis below:

1. **Renaissance Zone Plan Goals:** Use consistent with the RZ Plan (as per Visions and Goals): As noted in the 2019 Renaissance Zone Development Plan.
  - a. *Grow as a Neighborhood:* Invest in housing to increase the population living Downtown and maintain Downtown's diversity.  
The project will add approximately 28 1-2 bedroom market rate apartments and 16 for-sale condos.
  - b. *Prosper as a Business Center:* Increase the number and types of jobs Downtown.  
The mixed use building will have approximately 17,081 square feet of commercial space, providing opportunities for businesses to be in the downtown area, as well as offering a work-live environment.
  - c. *Thrive as a Destination:* Create a unique Downtown experience with an activated riverfront and vibrant sidewalks and public spaces that serve as the backdrop of the community's social life.  
Project could serve as a destination and also contributes to Downtown as an overall destination. The location of the project is nearby the river, which will activate further east on Main Avenue than any other projects to date. Project provides sidewalks and ground level interaction, and provides pedestrian and non-motorized transportation to connect to the river greenway.
  - d. *Be a model for Inclusive Growth and Development:* Protect Downtown's diversity and evolve as a model for equitable growth and development.  
Project provides different market rate housing options. Project does not address diversity, public amenities or needs for specific populations.
  - e. *Complete our Streets:* Make complete streets common place and encourage trips by foot, bicycle, and bus, as well as car.  
Project proposes pedestrian circulation, as well as connections to the metro-area trail system. Routes 14 and 16 run along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, with stops within a tenth-mile of the subject property. The site is also several blocks from the MATBUS GTC (Ground Transportation Center).
  - f. *Park Smart:* Manage parking resources to meet the needs of drivers, while also making room for new development and activity.  
The project proposes 182 parking spaces, including underground parking (34 spaces), enclosed parking (18 on floor 1 and 33 on floor 2) and exterior parking on the south side of the development (30 space).
  - g. *Play with purpose:* Develop a system of connected all-season green spaces designed for people (of a range of ages and interests) and purpose (as infrastructure that absorbs stormwater).  
Project provides space to hold and treat stormwater. Project provides public amenity greenspace on the south side of the building, which may be programmed for events and provide public art. These amenities contribute to the open space network.



**(18/20 points)**

2. **Investment Thresholds:** Does the investment comply with minimum investment thresholds (locally determined) for residential and commercial projects as set forth in this RZ Plan?

According to the application, the structure accommodates (number) square feet, as follows:

- *Proposed Building Total:* approximately 136,901 square feet
- *Residential:* approximately 60,496 square feet
- *Commercial:* approximately 17,081 square feet
- *Parking:* approximately 38,341 square feet

\*Remaining square footage is ancillary space of hallways.

The application estimates a total capital investment of \$25,500,000, which calculates to approximately \$186 per square foot.

**(10/10 points)**

3. **High Priority Land Use:** The new construction or proposed improvements are representative of “High Priority Land Uses” as defined by this RZ Plan.
- a. **Primary Sector Business, Industry, and Talent-Dependent Enterprises:**  
Staff is not aware that the applicant is specifically targeting primary sector business, but project provides space for such uses.
  - b. **Active Commercial, Specialty Retail or Destination Commercial:**  
Staff is not aware that the applicant is specifically targeting active commercial, specialty retail, or destination commercial, but the project provides space for such uses.
  - c. **Mixed Use Development:**  
Yes

**(18/20 points)**

4. **Targeted Areas:** Is the investment located in a “Targeted Area” as defined by this RZ Plan? Consideration shall be given to whether this property has been vacant or underutilized for a period of time and/or whether the property is specifically targeted for clearance.
- a. **Parcels that have been vacant or underutilized for an extended period of time:**  
The Park East Apartments were demolished in 2015-2016, and the property has remained vacant since.
  - b. **Parcels specifically targeted for clearance:**  
The RZ Plan identifies Block 29 for redevelopment with mixed-use and ground level interaction on Main Avenue and the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Main Avenue. The 2007 Downtown Framework Plan highlights the importance of this block in terms of improving synergy and extending the success of downtown onto Main Avenue, and also states the block should be developed as a ‘gateway’ between the Fargo and Moorhead areas with a focus on mixed-use, walkability, economic vitality and connectivity (greenway, streetscape, etc.).

**(10/10 points)**

5. **Urban Design:** Is the project representative of strong urban design principles?  
The project includes strong urban design principles, including density, form, and proximity to amenities. The building is placed close to Main Avenue and the design contemplates the interface of the structure to the right-

of-way, as the ground floor facade provides architectural interest through varying materials and a high amount of glazing that provides transparency and vibrancy. The site is located near the Red River where residents and employees can connect to metro area trails and other destinations. The project is located within the DMU, Downtown-Mixed Use, zoning district and will have to meet the architectural intent of that zoning district as well.

Note that in the packet there are different renderings; the current rendering shows the updated building, however, the previous version more accurately reflects the interface between the building and Main Avenue. The applicant can speak more to this at the meeting.

**(10/10 points)**

6. **Investment Analysis:** Consideration and analysis as to the total actual investment in the project.

As proposed, the redevelopment project and improvement costs exceeds the \$100 per square foot requirement. As previously noted, the application represents a total estimated investment of \$25,500,000.

**(10/10 points)**

7. **Business Relocation:** Consideration as to whether the project will include or accommodate the relocation of a business from another North Dakota community?

The project does not intend currently for the movement or relocation of a business from another North Dakota community.

**(10/10)**

8. **Street Activation:** Will the project fit contextually and will the project contribute or enhance the area from an architectural perspective?

Main Avenue was recently reconstructed to be more pedestrian friendly as well as slowing vehicular traffic. This project will enhance the area from an architectural perspective. The project is architecturally designed and provides interest with varying articulation, glazing, textures, and other horizontal elements, including façade variation. When traveling west on Main Avenue, citizens will see facades with varying degrees of recesses and projections as well as architectural materials. The applicant has also stated that the project will provide a range of activities that will also connect to the green space to the east. Renaissance Zone projects are anticipated to be conscience of four-sided design, which is provided by this project. Project is harmonious with new projects to the west and southwest.

**(10/10 points)**

### **Summary:**

This application received a score of X on a 100-point scale. The applicant met all required criteria and the use is consistent with the RZ Plan. The proposed new construction project surpasses the local capital improvement requirement of \$100 per square foot for new construction.

This project is consistent with the RZ Plan to provide a mixed-use development within a target area that acts as an activity generator by providing for residential units and street-level retail activity.

The amount invested in the project exceeds state and local guidelines. The project does not involve the relocation of commercial businesses from another North Dakota city. The applicant will not be seeking any historic preservation tax credits.

This project will make use of a lot that is currently underutilized. Staff believes that this project will be a benefit to the downtown community and will positively contribute to the health of surrounding businesses.

| Minimum Criteria (New Construction Proposals) |                                 |              |                 |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Criteria:                                     |                                 | Staff Rating | Possible Points |
| 1   | Consistency with Plan Goals     | 18           | 20              |
| 2   | Investment Thresholds           | 10           | 10              |
| 3   | High Priority Land Use          | 18           | 20              |
| 4   | Consistency with Targeted Areas | 10           | 10              |
| 5   | Urban Design                    | 10           | 10              |
| 6   | Investment Analysis             | 10           | 10              |
| 7   | Business Relocation             | 10           | 10              |
| 8   | Street Activation               | 10           | 10              |
| Total Rating (100 possible points)            |                                 | 96           | 100             |

**Suggested motion:**

Recommend approval to the Fargo City Commission to approve the application submitted by EPIC Unite Real Estate Holdings, LLC and to grant the property tax exemption and the State income tax exemptions as allowed by the Renaissance Zone law contingent upon completion of the project and verification of costs.





234 Main Ave





Planning & Development  
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## APPLICATION FOR RENAISSANCE ZONE PROJECT

Property owners, business owners, developers or investors interested in pursuing a Renaissance Zone project should review the 2019 RZ Plan. The RZ Plan delineates the current geographical boundaries of the program (only certain blocks within the downtown core are included) and provides additional detail on minimum investment requirements and applicable program goals and objectives that must be met.

Application submitted for (check all that apply):

- ☒ New Construction ☐ Commercial Lease  
☐ Purchase with Major Improvements ☐ Rehabilitation: ☐ Commercial ☐ Residential  
☐ Primary Residential Purchase ☐ Block Addition

|                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Property Owner Information</b> |                                      |
| Name (printed):                   | EPIC Unite Real Estate Holdings, LLC |
| Name (printed):                   | Amy Hass                             |
| Address:                          | 745 31st. Ave. E. Ste. 105 West      |
|                                   | West Fargo, ND 58078                 |

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Contact Person Information (if different than owner)</b> |                                 |
| Name (printed):   | Brian Reinarts                  |
| Address:  | 745 31st. Ave. E. Ste. 105 West |
|   | West Fargo, ND 58078            |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Parcel Information</b>  |  |
| Address: 234 Main Ave., Fargo, ND 58103  |  |
| Unit Number: n/a   |  |
| Renaissance Zone Block Number: 29  |  |
| Legal Description (attach separate sheet if more space is needed): Block 1, Lot 1, MHB Guardian Addition |  |
| Block 1, Lot 1, MHB Guardian Addition  |  |
| Parcel Number: 01-8821-0010-000  |  |

Is this property listed on or a contributing structure to the National Register of Historic Places? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
Do you intend to apply for a Historic Preservation Tax Credit in conjunction with this project? ☐ Yes ☒ No

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Project Information</b>  |  |
| Total Project Cost:<br>(Qualified Capital Improvements) \$25,500,000                          |  |
| Current Use of Property: Vacant Lot   |  |
| Anticipated Use Upon Completion: Commercial and Residential                                   |  |
| Expected Date of Purchase: 11/1/2022  | Expected Date of Occupancy: Fall 2024  |
| Estimated Property Tax Benefit:<br>(Over five year exemption period) 11/1/2022<br>\$1,732,725 | Estimated State Income Tax Benefit:<br>(Over five year exemption period) \$1,732,725 0 |
| Current Employees:<br>(Full-time equivalent)  | Anticipated Employees:<br>(Full-time equivalent)                                       |

per email from Brian Reinarts on 10/17/22

**Scope of Work**

Build a 7-story mixed-use building on a currently vacant lot. This will be a 136,901 sf mixed-use building with underground parking along with 1st and 2nd floor parking. 17,081 sf of Commercial space on the 1st and 3rd floors. 4th through 7th floor will consist of apartments for lease and condos for purchase. There will be additional surface parking on the south side of the building as well as pedestrian connections to Main Ave. and the Fargo Parks river trails. An exterior amenity for the residents and public will be a plaza/park.

**Additional Project Information**

New Construction/Rehabilitation/Purchase with Improvements Only

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Current Building Value:<br>(Taxable Improvement Value) \$380,000 | Estimated Building Value Upon Completion:<br>(Taxable Improvement Value) \$25,500,000 |
| Building Area Upon<br>Completion (SF): 136,901                   | Number of Stories<br>Upon Completion: 7   |

Commercial Lease Only

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Lease Area Upon Completion (SF): 17,081   |  |  |   |
| Type of Business: Office and Retail   |  |  |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New business moving to the Renaissance Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Expanding Business moving to the Renaissance Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Business Expanding within the Renaissance Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation of a lease moving from one Renaissance Zone Project to another Renaissance Zone Project |

Residential Purchase Only

Will this be your primary place of Residency?: No

**Acknowledgement** – We hereby acknowledge that we have familiarized ourselves with the rules and regulations to the preparation of this submittal and that the forgoing information is true and complete to the best of our knowledge.

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Owner (Signature): <u>Amy Hass</u>             | Date: <u>10.5.2022</u> |
| Joint Owner (Signature): _____                 | Date: _____            |
| Representative (Signature): <u>[Signature]</u> | Date: <u>10.5.2022</u> |

**THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION FORM:**

|                          |   | Submitted                           | N/A                                 |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Renaissance Zone Project | Current photos of property, relevant to project scope and proposed renderings of the proposed project | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |
|                          | Certificate of Good Standing from the Office of the State Tax Commissioner                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |
|                          | Business Incentive Agreement from the Department of Commerce for all non-residential projects         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
|                          | For residential purchases provide proof of ownership and closing date                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|                          | Goals and objectives as outlined in the 2015 Fargo Renaissance Zone Development Plan (Attachment A)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**APPLICATION DEADLINES:**

The Renaissance Zone Authority regularly meets on the Fourth Wednesday of each month at 8:00 am in the in the City Commission Chambers at 225 4<sup>th</sup> Street North, Fargo, ND 58102. For consideration during a monthly meeting:

- Renaissance Zone applications are due by 4:30 pm on the last weekday of each month.

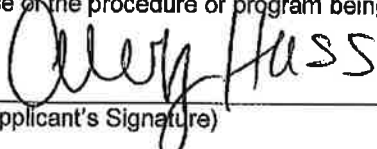
**REQUIREMENTS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES:**

The Renaissance Zone is administered according to the following written documents, each of which are available on the City of Fargo's website.

- Renaissance Zone Designation
  - o City of Fargo Renaissance Zone Development Plan
  - o North Dakota Renaissance Zone Program Guidelines

**CERTIFICATION:**

Applicant certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, the information contained in the application and attached hereto is true and correct. Applicant also certifies that he/she understands all written requirements, policies, and guidelines of the Fargo Renaissance Zone Authority, the City of Fargo, and/or the State of North Dakota governing the use of the procedure or program being applied for:

  
 (Applicant's Signature)

Amy Hass

(Printed Name)

10.5.2022

(Date)

If the property owner(s) and applicant are different, the property owner certifies that he/she has full knowledge of this application and consents to its submission:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Applicant's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Applicant's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Date)

## Goals of the Fargo Renaissance Zone Plan

Is the proposed use of the project consistent with the RZ Plan? As noted in the Renaissance Zone Development Plan the desired land use will contribute to a number of goals:

1. *Grow as a Neighborhood.* How will this project invest in housing to increase the population living Downtown and maintain Downtown's diversity?

The Unite building will provide a variety of housing options from rental to ownership. There will be 28 1-2 bedroom units for rent and 16 condos for ownership. The condo units will bring a more permanent resident to the downtown that will have a long term investment in the downtown area as well as contribute to the downtown economy.

2. *Prosper as a Business Center.* How will this project increase the number and type of jobs Downtown (or accessible from Downtown)?

The Unite building will be a mixed-use building with about 17,081 sf of commercial space that will provide opportunities for businesses to be in the downtown area which will increase the employment of the downtown. The range of jobs could vary pending on the business type but we could see anything from retail to office tenants.

3. *Thrive as a Destination.* How will this project create a unique Downtown experience with an activated riverfront and vibrant sidewalks and public spaces that serve as the backdrop to the community's social life?

This project will create the opportunity for a strong pedestrian connection to the Fargo Parks river trails and to the City's oldest park, Island Park. These connections will promote an active lifestyle by the residents engaging with Fargo's park system. With this project located on Main Ave. it will enhance the pedestrian experience as well as improving the connection not only to Fargo's downtown but also to Moorhead's downtown. There are also plans to create a small park/plaza south of the Unite building that will not only be for the residents but also the public.

4. *Be a Model for Inclusive Growth and Development.* How will this project protect Downtown's diversity and evolve as a model for equitable growth and development?

With commercial as a part of this development it will bring a mix of users to these businesses creating diverse opportunities for all users and businesses. The model of mixing rental units and privately owned condos will diversify the residents of the project which will enhance that live, work and play experience of the downtown.

5. *Complete our Streets.* How will this project make complete streets common place and encourage trips by foot, bicycle, and bus, as well as car?

Being creative with parking in the downtown area can be a challenge but we feel we have created a unique way of doing this by providing underground parking but also using a portion of the 1st floor and 2nd floor to additional parking for our users, tenants and residents. We will also have surface parking on the south side of the building which will be visually hidden from the public creating a more pleasing visual for the pedestrian traveling the sidewalks. We will encourage the users to use foot and wheeled transportation by making strong connections to our city trail systems including the river greenway trails. There will also be internal walk-ability as phases of the development are completed.

6. *Park Smart.* How will this project manage parking resources to meet the needs of drivers, while also making room for new development and activity?

Being creative with parking in the downtown area can be a challenge but we feel we have created a unique way of doing this by providing underground parking but also using a portion of the 1st floor and 2nd floor to additional parking for our users, tenants and residents. We will also have surface parking on the south side of the building which will provide additional parking for the users of the retail and office tenants.



7. *Play with Purpose.* Will this project develop a system of connected all-season green spaces designed for people (of a range of ages and interests) and purpose (as infrastructure that absorbs stormwater)?

We will be exploring the opportunity of providing a public park/plaza south of the proposed building. The public space will provide an opportunity to engage the local art community and also to be programmed for a variety of events that range from movie night to yoga on the lawn. Another unique opportunity this public space will provide is the opportunity to control and treat the sites stormwater. This is very unique for the urban environment as it is typical for stormwater to be placed right into the city's system.















Updated rendering. Refer to other rendering for view  
of interface between building and Main Avenue.



Sealed cover has caused the above described traction and... and plans for "FIT IN MOND...  
SECOND ADDITION" to the City of Fayette County, Missouri. The... and possibly...  
wide utility easement is shown for location on this plat and is hereby... the 40' wide...  
access and utility easement is the 25 foot wide utility easement and the 40' wide...  
drainage easement is shown on this plat for the purposes stated.



Refer to updated building rendering. This rendering is outdated but included to show the interface between Main Avenue and the building.





