

STAFF REPORT
October 25, 2021

Topic: Review and discussion on an application for a tax relief under RSA: 79-E for the property at 51 Elm Street.

Discussion: The City adopted the provisions of RSA: 79-E in 2012. The statute reads in part:

Declaration of Public Benefit. –

I. It is declared to be a public benefit to enhance downtowns and town centers with respect to economic activity, cultural and historic character, sense of community, and in-town residential uses that contribute to economic and social vitality.

II. It is further declared to be a public benefit to encourage the rehabilitation of the many underutilized structures in urban and town centers as a means of encouraging growth of economic, residential, and municipal uses in a more compact pattern, in accordance with RSA 9-B.

III. Short-term property assessment tax relief and a related covenant to protect public benefit as provided under this chapter are considered to provide a demonstrated public benefit if they encourage substantial rehabilitation and use of qualifying structures, or in certain cases, the replacement of a qualifying structure, as defined in this chapter.

Fiscal Impact: The City Council has the authority to grant tax relief under RSA: 79-E and the financial impact of that tax relief will vary by the nature of the project and the time period and dollar amount of tax relief granted. RSA: 79-E reads in part:

II. Upon receipt of an application, the governing body shall hold a duly noticed public hearing to take place no later than 60 days from receipt of the application, to determine whether the structure at issue is a qualifying structure; whether any proposed rehabilitation qualifies as substantial rehabilitation; and whether there is a public benefit to granting the requested tax relief and, if so, for what duration.

III. No later than 45 days after the public hearing, the governing body shall render a decision granting or denying the requested tax relief and, if so granting, establishing the tax relief period.

IV. (a) The governing body may grant the tax relief, provided:

(1) The governing body finds a public benefit under RSA 79-E:7; and

(2) The specific public benefit is preserved through a covenant under RSA 79-E:8; and

(3) The governing body finds that the proposed use is consistent with the municipality's master plan or development regulations; and

(4)(b) If the governing body grants the tax relief, the governing body shall identify the specific public benefit achieved under RSA 79-E:7, and shall determine the precise terms and duration of the covenant to preserve the public benefit under RSA 79-E:8.

Staff Recommendation: A public hearing was held on October 12, 2021, in order to receive public input on the application for tax relief.

This report submitted by: Scott Myers, City Manager

Proposed motion:

"I move to remove this item from the table."