

Lakeport Redevelopment Opportunities Memorandum

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From: David Bownes, Ward 2 City Councilor & Scott Myers, City Manager

To: Laconia Mayor & City Council and Laconia Parks Commission

It is widely known that several key properties have changed hands in the Lakeport Square area over the past two years. Irwin Marine has expanded their operations into an existing building while Lakeport Landing Marina has increased their footprint and redeveloped the former fire station parcel into a state-of-the-art showroom.

Additional underutilized and/or vacant buildings have recently changed hands, both on Union Ave. and Elm St. in Lakeport Square. Initial conversations with the owners indicate that there is the potential for significant investment in these properties. A mixed-use development would expand commercial/office/retail space as well as to add to and improve the residential housing stock. Recent land-use changes, including Performance Zoning and the Urban Commercial District, will allow developers to be creative with this type of re-use. With this redevelopment, the increased demand for parking spaces for employees, customers and residents will need to be addressed.

Some of the parking needs can be addressed on private property but because of the infill and tightness of the existing neighborhood, there are not many private opportunities that would create a significant amount of new parking spaces. One property owner made an informal inquiry with the City with regard to using the current green area of Sanborn Park as one component of a parking solution.

The entirety of Sanborn Park, including the playground, basketball court and green area, encompasses about 1.6 acres. A little less than half of that acreage is made up of the playground/court area. The remaining .85 acres of green space is almost square in shape, and is level. Depending on a final design layout, it would be estimated that this acreage could accommodate approximately 90 parking spaces.

If there were interest from a group of property owners in Lakeport to request the green space for additional parking, the City may be well served by entering into a long-term lease, public/private partnership or other agreement for the property with the owners responsible for paying for the improvements and upkeep. Discussions about the City entering into some sort of lease arrangement on this parcel would certainly involve the Parks Commission, the City Council and the residents of the City. There are many ways of structuring an agreement in the areas of public/private spaces, maintenance agreements, performance benchmark guarantees, landscaping/screening for abutting properties and more.

We look forward to receiving input from all interested parties and providing whatever additional information that may be requested.