

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2016
437 COLORADO AVENUE
7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Kirk Granum (Chair), Duncan Rowley (Vice-Chair), Shane Allerheiligen, Marty Chazen, Jason Farrington, Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Tom LaCroix, Dan Meyer, Vance Wagner

STAFF: Vonda Bauer, Kathy Portner, Allison Blevins

GUESTS: John Shaver (City Attorney), Tim Moore (Deputy City Manager), Kristen Ashbeck (Community Services Coordinator), Dustin Anzures (Realty One Group)

CALL TO ORDER: Kirk called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting of August 11, 2016

Shane made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2016 meeting; Duncan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Kirk welcomed and introduced new DDA/BID Board member Vance Wagner.

DIRECTOR START DATE:

Brandon Stam accepted the DDA Director position. Brandon will start his new position at the beginning of October, however, he is planning on attending the September Board meetings.

7TH STREET HISTORIC SIGN ORDINANCE – attachment:

At the last meeting the Board reviewed a draft of the proposed 7th Street Historic District sign code that was prepared by Kristen Ashbeck (Community Services Coordinator) and Joe Hatfield (a resident of the 7th Street corridor). At that meeting the Board concluded the proposed sign code was too restrictive South of Grand and needed to be simplified. Kathy indicated that the revisions have been made to the proposal and would like the Board's opinion on the revisions prior to moving forward through the Planning Commission and City Council's hearing process.

Kristen explained that many general requirements addressing color and materials have been removed from the proposal for the entire district. The proposed Sign Standards for the properties south of Grand Avenue include:

- All sign permits for properties within the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District shall be reviewed by the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District Guidelines and Standards. The other guidelines that apply to the property south of Grand Avenue are the applicability, sign type, location and size, and illumination.
- Applicability – Entire property for those on west side of 7th Street within the District and the Westerly 140 feet of the parcel on the east side of 7th Street within the District or aligned with the back of the historic high school building, whichever is greater.
- The existing sign code will apply to the Eastern side of R-5 and other commercial properties downtown in the B2 zone district.
- Size - No single sign shall exceed 32 square feet in size.
- Illumination - added external and internal illuminated signs. If internally illuminated, signs shall be of a dark background with only the individual cut out letters illuminated.

Marty indicated there needs to be more clarification under the section Sign Permit Review regarding signs on the R-5 property easterly 240 feet of the parcel on the east side of 7th Street south of Grand Avenue. Kathy stated that the intent was to define the line at the back of the R-5 building. The distance will be defined more clearly in the revised proposal.

There were concerns that the maximum sign size of 32 square feet is too small. Kathy stated that the current sign allowance is based on the parcel frontage and the number of travel lanes, which for the R-5 property would allow for a large sign. While the board agreed that some maximum size restriction might be warranted along the 7th Street frontage, they recommended allowing more than 32 square feet. Kathy will provide some examples of existing signs and bring back to the Board for further discussion.

TWO RIVERS CONVENTION CENTER DISCUSSION:

The City Council directed city staff to draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Two Rivers Convention Center (TRCC) to either lease the property to another entity to manage it or sell the building. The RFP will be broad in nature that would allow someone to propose some kind of operation of the facility in total or in part and also will include a potential sale of the building. The Avalon operations may be included in the RFP. The RFP is expected to be completed and posted within a month.

Options presented at the City Council workshop were:

1. Keep it the same
2. Lease it out and have it operated and run by another company
3. Lease it to someone and let them operate and run it
4. Sell the property

Tim stated that a study was performed by Hunden Strategic Partners which identified some operational deficiencies of the existing Two Rivers building. The study indicated that the cost to renovate the building would be approximately \$15 million dollars.

The Board discussed areas of concern regarding Two Rivers Convention Center (TRCC) and the Event Center which included:

- The anticipated loss this year for TRCC is \$500,000. TRCC has been running a deficit for years. The loss is shared between the City and the VCB. The VCB is using their reserves to help pay for the loss.
- The TRCC building is approximately 40 years old. It will need a great deal of capital improvements. It is structurally sound but needs to be renovated to accommodate larger events.
- There might be better operating models for TRCC .
- If Two Rivers Convention Center closed, it would affect the businesses throughout the downtown. Sales tax revenue would also be reduced. Two Rivers is an anchor and an entrance to downtown.
- 85% of utilization of TRCC is city and community oriented.
- TRCC is a benefit to the community and provides a service to the community. It is similar to a City park.
- There has been confusion regarding the discussion of an Event Center and how that relates to TRCC.
- The DDA needs to take a strategic leadership role and come up with some ideas and recommendations.

- What is the DDA/BID's role in this? Does the DDA want to help subsidize the loss? Does the DDA help fund the renovation of the Convention Center?
- Does the City of Grand Junction have a potential location in mind if a new Event Center is to be built? The DDA/BID would like the Event Center to be located downtown.
- The Reimer's would like to build another hotel downtown, however, they are not going to commit to a \$10 million dollar investment unless there is some sort of commitment in the development of the downtown area.
- The DDA and BID need a strategic plan for the downtown area.

The consensus of the DDA Board was to write a letter to City Council recommending that Two Rivers Convention Center continue to operate as a convention center and also recommend that if an Event Center is built, it should be located downtown. Tom LaCroix volunteered to draft a letter with the assistance of Duncan and Dan.

UPDATES:

White Hall RFP

There were two additional developers that attended the second pre-proposal meetings for White Hall and R-5 on August 9, 2016. The responses are due September 12, 2016.

R-5 RFP/Ameritowne/Transfer to DDA

Kathy met with staff from Ameritowne and they are interested in utilizing the R-5 building, September 19, 2016 through October 21, 2016. The Ameritowne program plans to set up a miniature town in the building for fourth and fifth graders to learn about the financial system. Ameritowne will provide an agreement between the DDA and Ameritowne.

Mesa County School District will transfer the R5 building to the DDA in early September. The DDA will begin paying the utilities and will be work out the details for property maintenance.

Endcap Parking LOI

The Letter of Intent regarding leasing 31 parking spaces in the Rood Avenue Garage is complete and has been signed by 4R/Senergy Builders. The next deadline for 4R/Senergy Builders to present their full program of what they are proposing is November 15, 2016. At that time, they will have the option to purchase the property.

Kirk will be attending the Parking Garage Condo Association meeting scheduled September 1, 2016.

RV Parking

A bollard, which will protect the utility box, and the signs for the temporary RV parking have been installed. Allison will send information to the public informing them that the parking lot is available for use.

AOTC Reception

Robin was unable to attend the meeting so Kathy gave an update on Art on the Corner. There were 33 submissions received for this year's temporary exhibit. The first jury met on Monday, August 22 and the second jury will meet on Tuesday, August 30, to finalize the 2016 temporary collection. The final collection will be installed on October 8, 2016. An Artist Ball will be held on Saturday, October 8, 2016, from 6:30-8:30 at the Avalon Theatre. This year tickets will be sold to the public so they may attend the event. All proceeds from the Ball will go towards maintaining the permanent collection.

There was discussion regarding the management of the Art on the Corner Program as well as repairing and maintaining the existing sculptures. Marty recommended that staff provide a summary of the AOTC program.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A restaurant owner is interested in the property at 457 Colorado Avenue. Adams Vacuum Center was previously located at this site.

There are two spaces being created at 126 7th Street, one space is for the Legos Store and a tap room is being considered for the other space.

Train depot – The agreement between the DDA and Dustin Anzures (Realty One Group) will be finalized within the next couple of weeks. Dustin stated they would like to apply for a construction grant that will need to be submitted in October. Realty One Group will be asking the DDA to sponsor the application for the grant.

ADJOURN:

Marty made a motion to adjourn; Duncan seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.