

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2021
VIA ZOOM
7:45 AM

DDA Board Members present: Doug Simons Jr. (Chair), Cole Hanson, Dan Meyer, Libby Olson, Maria Rainsdon, Duncan Rowley, Vance Wagner

DDA Board Members absent: Josh Niernberg (Vice-Chair), Anna Stout

Downtown Grand Junction Staff present: Brandon Stam, Dave Goe, Vonda Bauer, Rykel Menor

City of Grand Junction Staff present: City Manager Greg Caton, City Attorney John Shaver, Community Development Director Tamra Allen, Senior Planner Lance Gloss

CALL TO ORDER: Doug called the meeting to order at 7:44 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting of December 10, 2020

Duncan made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2020 Downtown Development Authority Board meeting. Libby seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

REGULAR AGENDA

DDA RESOLUTION 2021-01 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING SCHEDULE

Duncan made a motion to approve DDA Resolution 2021-01 designating the location for the posting of the notice of meetings, establishing the 2021 Downtown Development Authority meeting schedule, and establishing the procedure for calling of special meetings. Maria seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

MARIJUANA CITY BALLOT UPDATE

Lance explained that Grand Junction City Council is considering two questions on the April ballot that would allow retail marijuana businesses to operate in the city limits of Grand Junction. The ballot would include two questions. The first question would allow voters to repeal a moratorium on marijuana related businesses that was passed in 2011. The second question would authorize the City to establish sales and excise taxes on the marijuana businesses.

The Marijuana Working Group and City staff have been meeting to discuss all facets of marijuana. The Marijuana Working Group consists of business owners, Grand Junction residents, and professionals in the marijuana industry. There have been discussions regarding licensing, enforcement, land use, and establishing zoning requirements close to schools, libraries, parks, etc. City of Grand Junction Police Department staff have also been closely involved with the Working Group.

City staff requested feedback and recommendations from the DDA Board regarding the pros and cons of marijuana and if retail marijuana stores should be considered in the Downtown area. Lance stated that the Working Group suggested allowing six to ten retail marijuana businesses in City limits.

Brandon has received mixed feedback from some Downtown businesses. Some businesses were in favor indicating sales would increase tax revenue and tourism. Others who were against it said it was the cultural aspect of having marijuana downtown, the potential of increased crime on Main Street, would bring in more vagrants, and the effect it may have on real estate costs.

The consensus of the Board was in favor of allowing retail marijuana businesses to operate in the DDA District. However, Board members noted the importance of the outward appearance of the storefronts, limiting the number of permitted operators in Downtown, restrictions on license types, and increased security as concerns that need to be addressed.

EL JET'S/SKY OUTPOST FUNDING REQUEST

Brandon stated that Jen Taylor (Principal-Buena Vida LLC, El Jet's Cantina, Sky Outpost) recently gave a presentation to the Board for the El Jet's Cantina/Sky Outpost project at Riverfront at Dos Rios. Jen submitted a letter to the DDA Board requesting \$125k to offset capital development fees for the project.

There was discussion regarding the challenges in establishing benchmarks for the project since Dos Rios is undeveloped. It was recommended having a more specific request (example: pergolas, shade shelters) would be beneficial. The Board expressed they were in favor of the project; however, the project benchmarks for the funding request should be established by the Real Estate Committee and brought back to the Board for further discussion.

Brandon has requested additional financial information from Jen and will request specific capital project costs that may be reimbursed. This information will be reviewed by the Real Estate Committee prior to coming back to the Board for consideration.

230 S. 5TH STREET PROPERTY DISCUSSION

Brandon sent a memo to the Board regarding the property located at 230 S 5th Street and Colorado Avenue Lot. The memo explains that Greyhound and Bustang are relocating to GV Transit Center; therefore, the property will be available to purchase. The City of Grand Junction and DDA had inquired about the property over a decade ago. However, there were some community concerns regarding the acquisition as well as environmental concerns. The asking price for both the building and parking lot on Colorado Avenue is \$700k.

Doug, Vance, and Brandon toured the property and agreed that this would be a great opportunity for the DDA to purchase the property. This property is the entry into Downtown and would allow the DDA the ability to control the future uses on the site.

Brandon explained that if the DDA were to purchase the property, funding would be available from the 103 Fund and/or the 611 TIF Fund. Fund 103 is projected to have a \$2.1m balance if there are no new capital project expenses and 611 TIF Fund is projected to have a \$1.4m balance once the debt reserve is disbursed.

After discussion, the consensus of the Board was to have Brandon and the Real Estate Committee draft a contract with contingencies. It was also suggested that an appraisal be performed on the property.

Vance made a motion to allow Brandon to write a contract for the property located 230 South S 5th Street and Colorado Avenue Lot with numerous contingencies and subject to diligence and subject to ratification by the DDA Board. Dan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

UPDATES

Jeremy Nelson (President of Regeneration Strategies, LLC) gave an update of the Lowell Village Townhome Phase 2 construction process. Mr. Nelson received an approval decision letter for Phase 2 of the Lowell Village Townhomes project on November 11, 2020 and have been working diligently to address the nineteen conditions of approval included in the letter.

OTHER BUSINESS

Arlo DiCristina, owner of tattoo studio Elysium Studios, recently purchased the property located at 535 North 7th Street that is in the historic 7th Street corridor. The property previously was a church. Mr. DiCristina is moving his studio from 861 Grand Avenue to the new property. The property located at 535 North 7th Street is not currently in the DDA/BID boundaries therefore Mr. DiCristina will be requesting to incorporate the property into the DDA/BID boundaries.

A concern from Board members was that the property is surrounded by residential properties in the Historic 7th Street District corridor. Otherwise, the consensus of the Board would be in favor of Mr. DiCristina's request.

City Attorney John Shaver stated that Mr. DiCristina has met with City Council to discuss a zone change. Seventh Street is being designated as a planned District. The studio was not consistent with the land district therefore the district was amended to allow for his use.

Maria made a motion to approve Arlo DiCristina's Elysium Studio to the DDA and BID boundaries and then proceed to City Council for approval. Libby seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Maria made a motion to adjourn. Libby seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.