

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2013
248 SOUTH 4TH STREET
7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Kevin Reimer, Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Les Miller, Stephan Schweissing, Kirk Granum, Martin Chazen

ABSENT: PJ McGovern, Jason Farrington, Shane Allerheiligen

STAFF: Harry Weiss, Diane Keliher

GUESTS: John Shaver, Bennett Boeschstein, Rich Englehart, Barbara Traylor-Smith

Bennett distributed an Avalon construction update and Harry distributed Resolution 2013-06 for the Board's review.

CALL TO ORDER: Jodi called the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Stephan made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 25th meeting; Marty seconded; minutes were approved.

WHITE HALL UPDATE: The City and DDA are doing an exchange between White Hall and Avalon parking lots. The White Hall property is currently designated as a condominium. Harry has asked the City to dissolve the condominium and put the property back to a single fee simple parcel. The DDA will look at a possible subdivision options as redevelopment scenarios are analysed. A recombination plat is being processed by the Planning Department and Jamie is working on dissolving the condominium. It is expected to go to Council at the first meeting in September. John will confirm the date.

Kevin asked if there were plans to put together an RFP for White Hall. Harry would like to put out two RFPs - one for the asbestos abatement of the education wing and a second general solicitation of development interest. Those RFPs would be advertised through standard channels - newspaper and internet sites. Harry added that the upcoming Sonoran Institute housing study should give us good data on the site's potential use for housing. Marty asked if we couldn't list it with a commercial broker. Harry said the RFP for development interest would circulate among the commercial real estate brokers, and that a listing at this juncture would be premature as the DDA's interest is to insure the property is redeveloped and we have not articulated clear development objectives and conditions of sale. The board needs a sub-committee to look at the current POD to see if it needs an amendment. Bennett mentioned that UC-Denver has the Colorado Center for Community Development (CCCD) that could be engaged for design ideas. Harry has asked Sonoran if we might fold them into the housing study; however, CCCD is undergoing a reorganization right now and it does not appear they will be operational til early next year.

Harry would like to establish a task force for White Hall. Jodi feels it is the DDA's responsibility to guide the redevelopment. Marty wants it back on the tax rolls as soon as possible. He also would like to look at all the potential uses for that property. He does not want the DDA to own the building for too long. Les agreed that the DDA does not want to be a landlord. Les, Stephan, and Jodi would be willing to

serve on the task force. Stephan stated that if PJ is interested in participating he would give him his spot. Harry stated that there will also be a local advisory group made up of DDA and BID members as well as local developers and realtors for the Sonoran Institute study.

Dissolution of the Downtown Housing Effort (DHE): In 1983, the DDA and the Grand Junction Housing Authority (GJHA) launched a joint venture to address housing needs in the downtown area. Initially the program provided no- or low-interest loans for home improvements, and due to the GJHA's participation, the focus was on affordable housing. Through the years, we have tried to collaborate on projects without success. The DDA's current thinking is to refocus our housing interest on market-rate housing rather than low-income housing.

In the original agreement, it was determined that upon the ten-year renewal of the agreement, one partner can unilaterally dissolve it. Harry drafted Resolution 2013-06 authorizing the withdrawal from and termination of the DHE. Half of the program's assets will be distributed to the DDA and half to GJHA. The outstanding notes will be managed by GJHA. GJHA will hold the notes until they are paid and then split the proceeds with the DDA. Marty asked if there are any restrictions on the funds. Harry replied that there are no restrictions, but the proceeds probably should go to the capital fund. Rich asked if GJHA wants the funds to go to housing. Harry stated that there are no conditions as such. Les made a motion to approve Resolution 2013-06; Stephan seconded; Marty asked for clarification of Section 10 of the DHE agreement that states if the DDA is unable to accept the money, then it goes to the City; Harry explained that had the DDA not been extended for 20 years and had gone out of business, that provision would apply; motion carried.

FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM: Les and Jason reviewed an application from Loki located at 445 Colorado Avenue. They want to replace the storefront windows and add new signage. Les emphasized that this will be the last application to go through the old process. It looks like a project that is substantial and meets the criteria of the program. The Façade Grant Committee recommends a \$ 9,000 grant that excludes the signage. The board agreed with the grant and gave direction to approve the application.

Les and Jason compiled some areas of concern regarding the current Façade Grant Program. The application process is very loose with decisions made only by the Committee. The Committee feels the board should approve all program expenditures. Once the application is complete, the Committee will review the application and make a recommendation to the DDA board. Stephan feels that the Committee should make the decision to deny and only bring to the board projects that are feasible.

There is a line item in the DDA CIP budget for façade grants. Harry would like to know if there is flexibility in that amount since the number of applications vary from year to year. Stephan would hate to restrict the program or discourage people from applying. He feels we should keep the budget flexible depending on the number and scope of projects rather than establishing a strict yearly budget.

Harry suggested offering a grant for design work for new construction in order to comply with the urban design of the Greater Downtown Plan. Kevin is hesitant to be involved with the architectural review process, but would be willing to look at certain projects. Harry raised the concern for the equitable treatment of all DDA property owners since the current program benefits only existing buildings. Kevin questioned whether the facade grant for a new entrance on the side of the Reed Building was a good use of the program. Harry felt strongly that the project enhanced the pedestrian activity of the side street and helped "turn the corner." Kevin felt it was more beneficial to the property owner than the public. Kevin would like to see more marketing of the program.

Façade grant funds are to be used for capital improvements as opposed to routine maintenance. Marty is concerned about keeping the buildings historical. Harry stated that our grant program is not that exclusive. Marty asked if the applicant has to meet all of the evaluation criteria. Les replied that these are merely things to consider when making an application. Harry said we could provide examples of successful projects and encourage more substantial projects.

The idea of a Community Contribution criterion seems too subjective. Although these are legitimate concerns, they should not be used as a basis for denial of a grant. John said these are unspoken criteria. Jodi feels that a building improvement might motivate the property owner to take better care of the facility. Kirk mentioned that the Sabrosa building might benefit from such a grant.

Kevin asked if we can use the leftover façade grant money for sidewalk cleaning. Harry replied that we have to use TIF money for capital expenses.

John suggested approaching businesses that need an upgrade. Jodi said a lot of property owners aren't aware of the program. Harry would like to see signage on the projects indicating the DDA's financial contribution and where you can obtain an application.

DDA/BID BUDGET REVIEW: The BID budget & operating plan needs to be submitted to Council by September 30th. The operating plan will change with the dissolution of the DTA and changes to the committee structure. The DDA will be budgeting capital projects such as White Hall.

AOTC FORUM: Jodi and Les plan to attend this forum from 3-6 pm on August 27th. We have invited 30-40 people to this meeting. It is an open meeting that will be given to the media as a press release. We hope to clarify how AOTC fits into the DDA's mission and look at opportunities to help the community understand the DDA's involvement in the program. Marty asked what is the desired outcome of the forum. Harry said it is to assemble a group of folks who have had sustained involvement with AOTC since its inception and gather their input regarding the program's future to bring back to the DDA board for consideration of AOTC policy decisions.

DCI CONFERENCE: Downtown Colorado Inc. (DCI) is holding its annual conference on September 11-13 in Grand Junction. DCI is the main networking organization for DDA's and BID's. There are four slots for program sponsorships that include four passes to the conference.

OTHER: Kevin mentioned the Epic Ride over Labor Day weekend and hopes the event will be a success. He feels the merchants will benefit from this crowd. Rich added that Prescott, AZ has greatly increased its participation in the past year. Harry and Aaron had a good Downtowner meeting with the merchants to discuss the route and expo. There are some logistic challenges at the finish line, but thanks to the City, the kinks have been worked out.

ADJOURN: Les made a motion to adjourn; Kevin seconded; the board adjourned at 9:05 am.