

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
Thursday, December 14, 2006
248 S. 4th Street, Grand Junction, CO
7:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Karen Vogel, Harry Griff, Scott Howard, Peggy Page, Jim Doody, Doug Simons, Bill Wagner, Bill Keith, Steve Thoms, Harold Stalf

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: John Shaver, Mark Relph, David Varley, Pat Gormley, Kristen Ashbeck

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made to approve the minutes of the previous meeting by Harry Griff, seconded by Jim Doody; motion carried.

The Grand Junction Housing Authority has asked that the DDA board sign their waiver of audit. We have an account with the GJHA that has \$350,000 in it and each year we must sign this waiver. Harry wanted clarification of the \$500,000 set aside by the DDA for housing. Scott explained that this account is in addition to that \$350,000.

Congratulations were given to Dave Varley for becoming the new City Manager!

The City bonded yesterday for the \$2.1 million remainder of the TIF funds. Harold added that we have signed the papers and will close December 22.

7TH STREET UPDATE – The bid opening for this project will be January 23. Harold suggested holding a joint meeting with City Council on February 5th and the next BID meeting on January 25th be followed by a special DDA meeting to discuss this project. We could approve the contract in early February, would like to begin construction around March 5 and require it be done before Thanksgiving of 2007.

As of today, the available funds for construction are a little over \$3 million. Based on the design and scope of the project we are coming in at \$1.3 million over the available funds. We will need to trim the budget as well as look at funding options.

We are looking at three alternative plans. A plain Jane version with no unique patterns or colors in the concrete, a toned down version of the original design, and what was ultimately designed. We have added several items; electrical circuits on 7th Street as well as Main Street; underground utilities between Rood and White; banners and poles for esthetics. The goal is to get to a project we can afford and identify additional resources we can utilize. We believe local contractors will bid on this project; however, we would like to have some competition in the bidding. Mark Relph explained that Mays Concrete is currently the only company in the Valley that can do this kind of specialized concrete work. Bill K. asked why we are this far along in the project and now we get a different estimate from the contractor. Doug explained that this is the nature of the beast. Harry asked about the City being able to fund some of the additions to the project. Doug is concerned about the character of downtown being lost in the alternative designs. Mark feels there has to be a balance between cost and design. Harold would like to get a firm final bid to take to City Council. Steve added that he would like to see this project done right the first time. Mark guarantees he will get this project done with the money we have. Jim asked for financial figures and how much the City has committed to. He is very concerned about selling these costs to the public. Mark replied that we are going to be struggling with construction costs for the next few years. Mark thanked the board and Harold for the input.

SOUTH DOWNTOWN PROJECT – The City initiated a plan for South Downtown in conjunction with the overall Growth Plan. A consultant conducted a series of public meetings with the industrial businesses to gain feedback. Kristen would like to now gain feedback from the DDA and other smaller focus groups regarding how this area interacts with the rest of downtown. There are three areas that we are looking at. The area from 5th to 9th Streets has a lot of potential for consolidation projects, service businesses, and incubator type businesses. The area from 9th Street to 15th Street is the real heavy industrial core with rail spurs.

Kristen has a met with GJEP and City Council and she has a meeting set with The Business Incubator Program and the Manufacturer’s Council. She has also met with housing interests and property owners as well as small business owners. Scott was glad to hear that there will be industrial businesses along with small businesses in this area. The focus of the DDA’s boundary is from 4th Avenue to 9th Street. Steve is wary of competition for the downtown area. Bill W. asked about developers cooperating with the Riverside Trail Plan. Kristen is asking for input from the DDA regarding land use that could lead to zone changes. Scott offered to discuss this issue with the board and get back to Kristen. She would like to conduct another public meeting in early February. The board invited her back to the January 11 meeting.

OTHER – Scott mentioned a letter to the editor criticizing the proposed roundabout at 7th and Main. This morning he noticed another article about cracking cement, sparrows, etc. Scott feels he should respond to these concerns. Steve would like to see an editorial page. Harold feels people won’t understand the roundabout until it’s built. Pat feels that we should always be selling our projects. Bill W. suggested putting information in a storefront on Main Street. Doug would like to see the Daily Sentinel do a feature on the improvements in the downtown area. Harold will talk to Denny Herzog (Daily Sentinel) about it.

Karen announced that she is going to bow out gracefully from the DDA board. Her last duty was to prepare the evaluation for Harold. After that, she will submit her letter of resignation. She added that this has been a fantastic opportunity and that she has enjoyed every meeting (to a certain degree)! Scott agreed that we have had a lot of fun with Karen on the board and we appreciate all of her hard work and service.

Reminder: No meeting with City Council next week; the Annual Dinner is on January 12.

A motion was made by Bill W. to move into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues; Karen seconded; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION-PERSONNEL:

ADJOURN – The board adjourned at 9:00 a.m.