

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BOARD MINUTES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

248 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Junction, CO

7:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Scott Howard, Bill Wagner, Peggy Page, Patti Hoff, Scott Holzschuh, Bill Keith, Steve Thoms, Harold Stalf

ABSENT: Bonnie Beckstein, Harry Griff

GUESTS: Kathy Dirks, Rich Engelhart, John Shaver

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Scott Holzschuh requested that the minutes reflect the names Scott Howard and Scott Holzschuh instead of Scott and Scott Holzschuh for clarification. With that change, Scott Howard made a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting, Bill Keith seconded; minutes were approved.

Steve reported that the search committee has narrowed down the applications for Executive Director to 10 finalists. March 27 will be the date for telephone interviews. The committee received 44 applications from all walks of life and around the nation.

Harold stated that we need to form an Awards Committee for the upcoming Annual Meeting. Awards are given for Best Façade, Best Renovation, Best New Building, and Downtown Champion. Steve Thoms, Scott Howard and Patti Hoff volunteered to be on the committee.

TIF UPDATE – The Senate hearing was on February 28. Bruce Hill and Harold Stalf went to Denver to testify on behalf of Grand Junction along with the Colorado Dept. of Revenue, Ft. Collins, Longmont, Colorado Counties Inc., and Colorado Municipal League. After committee discussion, it passed six to nothing. It now goes to the full Senate and then to the House Finance Committee. After their approval, it goes to the full House and then to the Governor. We might have a bill by our April 10 DDA meeting. Then the Governor has 30 days to sign it. Harold met with Jon Peacock to reaffirm the sales tax provision. Harold will send out a revised draft after the meeting. Scott Howard asked about the proceeds and the new base. The new base will be 1991 with a 20-year extension. The other participating entities would have a chance to get 50% of the proceeds however the sales tax component will make up the difference for the DDA. Scott Holzschuh asked if the 50/50 negotiations with the School District would need to take place every year. Harold suggested asking them for a 20-year extension. Bill W. wondered if the freeze of the mill levy would affect the School Finance Act. Scott Howard asked if our mission is still to address blight and slum issues. Harold replied that it has been expanded beyond blight to development.

The Mesa County Library sent a letter approving their full annexation of all properties into the DDA. If the library should sell any property, it could be developed and the DDA might receive some tax income.

The DDA gave out 100 gift certificates when we opened 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 35 of them were redeemed.

Harold mentioned that at the last meeting, Bill W. had asked about assessed property values around the Valley. Harold can't seem to get the downtown numbers from the County Assessor. Bill met with the County and they have found mistakes in the current assessment. Harold would like to see the percentage of change by area. Citywide there has been a 37% property assessment increase. Bill feels there's not a business downtown that can support these increases!

COLORADO AVENUE – Harold presented the revised edition without reverse angle parking. The new plan reduced some parking spots by Wells Fargo. They are willing to negotiate for development of other

parcels. The house behind the Avalon is being demolished and there will be more parking opportunities there. All of the curb cut negotiations are completed. Scott Holzschuh asked if the project is still on budget. Harold stated that there are extra expenses with the parking lot improvements. Harold will ask Trent to make a financial report of all our projects (7<sup>th</sup> Street and the Parking Garage) at the next DDA meeting. Scott Howard asked if there would be traffic lights at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. Harold replied that there would not. Bill K. asked about the timing of completion. Harold said there were problems with the storm sewers and the City had to revise the schedule. Scott Holzschuh added that there are very strong opinions among some Board members regarding the City's changes, but we need to support the revised plan and continue our cooperative relationship with City Council. Steve Thoms agreed that we need to foster partnerships with other entities. Rich Engelhart (Assistant City Manager) assured Steve that the City will be cooperative. Steve mentioned that we still do not have enough street lights downtown at night. Harold replied that the timers are messed up from time to time and suggested we compile an inventory of who owns which light poles. Patti feels that there is nothing but opportunity by developing Colorado Avenue.

ART ON THE CORNER – The AOTC committee met and selected the first, second, third place and People's Choice sculptures for DDA purchase. They would like to recommend for first place #11 ("At the Park"); for second place #12 ("Leaf Angel"); and third place is a tie between #4 ("Volume Text") and #26 ("Horse and Rider"). Denny Haskew will receive the Lou Willie \$500 Cash Award for his years of participation. The People's Choice was #27 ("Wooshie") which is being purchased by the Commission on Arts and Culture to be placed at Lincoln Park Pool. Scott Holzschuh asked about vandalism and upkeep of the sculptures. Alison stated that last year was not a good year. We do reserve funds for these incidents and they are covered by insurance with the City, but we try not to make claims unless absolutely necessary. There were 29 pieces selected for this year's display. We received fewer applications than last year. Bill W. asked if we need to raise the artist honorarium. We will look at increasing the honorarium next year. Scott Howard made a motion to buy the four pieces for a total of \$46,000 leaving us \$4,000 for pedestals; Patti seconded; motion carried.

The committee would like to populate Colorado Avenue with sculpture especially during the renovation of Main Street. Harold would like to put bigger pieces on 7<sup>th</sup> Street since AOTC is the signature of Downtown.

Scott Holzschuh is concerned about what we have spent so far. Harold said that we have committed \$134,000 but not all of it is this year. Scott Holzschuh would like a snapshot of the budget at each meeting. Harold stated that he presents the DDA budget report quarterly.

Scott Holzschuh mentioned that at the retreat, each board member was to prioritize a list of thirteen things. Steve said that so far he has received three responses. Harold made copies of the list for those board members who needed it.

Patti mentioned that at the Steering Committee Meeting it was made known that there are funds available through the Housing Authority for facade improvements. We need to get this money back into the community to address blight. Steve feels we need to have more vision for the future. Harold stated that we have been waiting for the TIF legislation to pass before making future plans. Scott Holzschuh suggested looking at the strategic plan to address future plans. Harold will ask Ann to make a presentation to the board in April or May. Patti would like to see a program established as soon as possible for funds to support facade renovations.

Bill K. made a motion to adjourn into executive session; Scott Howard seconded; the board adjourned into executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION-REAL ESTATE: Bill Wagner made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute the sales contract for 401 Colorado Avenue as discussed in Executive Session.

ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at 9:23 a.m.