

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
Thursday, July 23, 2009
248 S. 4th Street, Grand Junction, CO
7:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Scott Howard, Bill Wagner, Harry Griff, Peggy Page, Bonnie Beckstein, Scott Holzschuh, Bill Keith, Steve Thoms

ABSENT: PJ McGovern

STAFF: Heidi Hoffman Ham, Diane Keliher, Kathy Dirks

GUESTS: Shawn Cooper, Rich Englehart, Brad Siegel, John Shaver, Ted Ciavonne, Ed Lipton, Karen Hildebrandt, Michael Schwerin, Laurie Kadrich, Deb Kovalik, Michael Phillips, Roger Davidson, Ron Veslack

CALL TO ORDER: Steve called the meeting to order at 7:45a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Harry had a question about the paragraph regarding Ted Ciavonne's contract. Heidi clarified that the change order was \$11,500 including the 100 and 200 block designs and any design changes to the 400 block. With that clarification, Harry made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 9 meeting; Bill K. seconded; motion carried, minutes were approved.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - Peggy asked to have Steve Thoms retained as chair since she has a conflict regarding Main Street. Steve stated that he would like to continue as chair to complete the DDA's current projects. Harry made a motion to retain Steve as chair; Bonnie seconded; motion passed.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS – Scott Holzschuh made a motion to appoint Bill Keith as the DTA Board representative; Harry Griff as the Avalon representative; Scott Howard as the PMAG representative; and Peggy as the Historical Board representative; Bonnie seconded; motion passes.

DOWNTOWN UPLIFT – Kathy handed out an overview of comments received after taking the preferred design to City Council. There was an open house at Farmers' Market, ads in the Daily Sentinel and the Free Press. There were postings on Twitter and Facebook, as well as posters, and a broadcast email. As of yesterday, there were 59 public comments received; 34 liked the design and 15 did not like it. To reach property owners and merchants, there was a comment sheet sent out by email and mailed directly to 71 property owners. There were 60 comments received; 27 liked the design; 33 did not like it. Kathy also separated the 400 block comments; out of 21 comments, 7 liked the design and 14 did not like it. Taking away of parking on Main Street was the main concern. There were comments about construction affecting business during the economic slow down of the country.

Shawn reported on the preliminary budget estimates for the project. For reference, Colorado Avenue cost around \$800,000 per block and it will cost around a million per block for Main Street although the 100 and 200 blocks will probably be less expensive. There is radioactive material (mill tailings) that will need to be removed. There is a lot of grading that has to be done carefully because of the tree roots. There is the removal of the old trolley tracks. All brick planters will need to be reconstructed and additional planters added. The art fountains will have to be removed and rebuilt. There are two sets of traffic signals. There are upgraded amenities such as Wi-Fi and sound. There will be an interactive fountain, pavilion, three play areas, shade shelters, and kiosks. Sculptures will need to be removed and stored. There will be additional electrical outlets and removal of existing amenities. There will be water service extensions to buildings. Fiberoptic splice boxes will need to be relocated. There are additional irrigation lines and banner poles. Exact construction costs will be difficult to know until the project can be sent out for bids in the current economy.

AVALON AND SYMPHONY – Laurie Kadrach gave a history of the discussions between the City and the DDA relative to the Avalon Theatre. The City has recently been approached the Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra to consider renovating the using the Theatre as their performance venue. Laurie supports a memo of understanding between the DDA and the Symphony to look at a business plan. Steve would like to move forward with an agreement. Laurie wants a business plan versus another study. She would like to explore how documents could be created and what uses would be advantageous for the building. The master plan would be funded by the DDA and the Symphony. The Symphony has created a venue committee to do a study of various locations. Copies of the study were handed out.

Karen Hildebrandt stated that the Symphony is committed to being the primary tenant at the Avalon as a long-term solution to their venue needs. A Master Plan Process would incorporate what has been done with other similar facilities. The Symphony has \$30,000 to contribute to a master plan. By next summer there should be a master plan in place and the Symphony could occupy the Avalon by 2011. There are 8 concerts a year. The Symphony would like to split the cost of the master plan with the DDA. Ideally, the DDA and Symphony would submit a memo of understanding to City Council and have the master plan developed by next June. Harry is concerned that the Symphony will monopolize the Avalon at the expense of other events and that construction would have to be phased to be affordable but is very supportive of the Symphony being downtown.

(Bonnie left the meeting at 9:30 a.m.)

Scott Holzschuh made a motion to authorize the DDA Executive Director to provide matched funding up to \$37,500 to develop a master plan for the Avalon and evaluate the Memorandum of Understanding and bring it to the Board for signature within 30 days; Peggy seconded; motion carried. John advised the DDA to either authorize the Executive Director to make the expenditure or appoint a subcommittee. John added that choosing a consultant is the big decision.

Harry made a motion to form a subcommittee (Harry and Steve) to support Heidi with negotiations with the Symphony; Scott Holzschuh seconded; motion passed. The subcommittee will help with the MOU process of forming the partnership.

UPLIFT CONTINUED – The DDA Board may want to have another meeting before taking the proposal to City Council. There are concerns about the budget numbers and ramifications of the design. Harry believes there is some significant opposition to the plan “as is.” Heidi has concerns about the overall impact of taking out significant design features of the project.

(Harry left the meeting 10:00 a.m.)

Bill W. prefers to go ahead with the preferred plan. Bill K. would like to look at the 600 block for the super block. Peggy suggested putting in a few parking spots in the 400 blocks as a compromise.

(Scott Howard left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.)

The Board authorized Ted Ciavonne to revise the 400-block with four parking spaces on each side and present the preferred alternative including 100 and 200 blocks to City Council. Construction will be recommended in phases beginning with the 100, 200 and 300 blocks.

ADJOURN – Bill W. made a motion to adjourn; Bill K. seconded; the Board adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____

SENT TO CITY CLERK _____ DATE _____