

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2012  
248 SOUTH 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Peggy Page, Steve Thoms, Harry Griff, PJ McGovern, Kevin Reimer, Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Bennett Boeschstein, Les Miller

ABSENT: Cynthia Burke

STAFF: Harry Weiss, Diane Keliher, Kathy Dirks

GUESTS: John Shaver

CALL TO ORDER: Peggy called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Steve made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting; Les seconded; minutes were approved.

MESA CO LIBRARY FUNDING REQUEST: The Mesa County Central Library made a presentation to the DDA board last month showing the preferred option for the library expansion and asking for \$360,000 from the DDA to fund site improvements along Grand Avenue to the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street to achieve the urban design objectives of the project. The DDA's philosophy of investment is to either make buildings taxable or improve sales tax revenue. However, the library is a service and an amenity that makes it attractive to live as well as work and visit downtown. It is an important anchor and inter-generational magnet for downtown with multi uses for children, elderly, and working people. Weiss feels the project fits the DDA mission, the site plan looks good, and the project deserves support. The question is, "Where does the DDA fit in?"

The board discussed TIF money and how it should be used for economic development. The DDA could suggest that the County consider allocating some or all of its discretionary TIF revenues in 2013 for the library expansion. The county is restricted from giving the library district a direct grant. Eve Tallman is willing to go to the commissioners with the DDA or alone. Weiss feels this is a way for the county to support the library expansion project while conserving the DDA's base TIF resources.

Bennett feels it is important that the library be connected to downtown over Grand Avenue. Weiss stated that improvements to Grand Avenue are not part of the library's project, but that an improved street section with median strip/pedestrian refuges will be incorporated in the Greater Downtown Plan.

Griff added that if the library block were urbanized, it would positively impact the residential areas north and east of the library. He feels the DDA needs to support this project because of the library district's history of participation with 100% of their TIF money. Even though the DDA has to incur debt to spend the money, it would be a good way for the county to participate in the project.

Kevin wondered if there was discussion of development of retail space on Grand Avenue. Weiss explained that the site plan does provide parking areas that in the future could be developed as pad sites, provided parking displacement was accommodated in the area by other means. Kevin requested that the record show that the DDA would like to see the area at 5<sup>th</sup> and Grand be developed for retail space in the future.

Weiss added that the library discussed phasing the project, but they would rather phase the funding than the construction.

Jodi asked if the site plan is for the entire (\$860,000) project. She is supportive of the project in general and reaching out to the surrounding residents.

Kevin asked what districts participate in the DDA's TIF funding. Weiss replied that about half of the DDA's TIF funding comes from the School District with the other half coming from the City, County, Library, Fire, Drainage and Mosquito Districts. Kevin feels that the School District would be in favor of the DDA supporting the library.

Peggy asked about using the county's excess Tabor money. Bennett mentioned that the CDBG money is coming available again. He agreed with Jodi, that the design should be for the entire project to address future site improvements. Bennett added that he feels the median on Grand Avenue should be a priority for the City in future streetscape planning.

Weiss would like the board to make a decision regarding funding level, conditions and time frame.

Harry Griff made a motion to commit \$160,000 of the current DDA's TIF money to the library expansion project with the understanding that the County be approached for discretionary TIF revenues for the remaining amount of the \$360,000 request. During discussion, Steve suggested that the DDA include a condition that the Library District maintain its current commitment to 100% TIF sharing with the DDA for the coming four years. John Shaver reviewed the legal context of the annual authorization of the shared TIF, and advised that the DDA board had no legal basis by which to make that a binding condition on the Library Board, but that continuation of the 100% TIF sharing by the Library District with the DDA for the coming years can certainly be communicated as a matter of policy and preference. Steve seconded the amended motion. PJ suggested raising the DDA's support to \$180,000 which would be 50% of the total request, for the County to match. He further advised that DDA not bring up to the matter of future TIF sharing with the Library District as the status quo is they have agreed to 100% and that would hopefully remain the case without further discussion. Peggy agreed that the County would likely be more open to a 50% match; Steve seconded the revised motion; Les mentioned that he feels there is too much parking taken away for landscaping. Weiss assured that the preferred plan would accommodate the library's parking needs. Bennett would like to see a final sketch of the plan; motion passed.

UPDATES & OTHER: Peggy announced that the DTA needs volunteers for the Art and Jazz beer booth Friday and Saturday nights.

Weiss sent a letter to the owner of the building to the west of the Avalon. It is being used as a "green room" for the Avalon and has potential to be developed into an administrative office. Her tenants are leaving and there is rumor that she might be willing to sell the building. She has not responded.

Griff & Weiss attended the Avalon intermediate schematic design meeting. The design is progressing and there will be a final set of schematics presented to the committee on May 2<sup>nd</sup> with a limited public unveiling of the plan on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. This next set of design document will include preliminary cost estimating, revised plans and elevations, and both interior and exterior perspectives. Weiss has copies of the intermediate design if any Board members would like to peruse them. Griff said the meeting went well, it is a good committee and he is excited about the plans. Weiss stated that one option would be an outdoor terrace on the east side along 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Griff added there are two additional options for outdoor spaces – a balcony on the mezzanine level overlooking Main Street, and a rooftop terrace on the corner of Main & 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

Steve made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of real, personal, or other property interest under C.R.S. section 24-6-402 (4)(a); Griff seconded. The board moved into Executive Session at 8:38 a.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Jodi recused herself from the second half of executive session.

After adjournment of Executive Session, Steve made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting; Les seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.