

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2016
437 COLORADO AVENUE
8:15 A.M.

PRESENT: Jason Farrington (Chair), Kirk Granum (Vice-Chair), Shane Allerheiligen, Marty Chazen, Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Dan Meyer, Les Miller, Stephan Schweissing

ABSENT: Duncan Rowley, Kathy Portner

STAFF: Vonda Bauer, Allison Blevins, Robin Brown

GUESTS: John Shaver (City Attorney), Tim Moore (Interim City Manager), Jeffery Fleming, (Urban Planner-Colorado Land Advisor), Greg Ruland (Reporter-The Daily Sentinel), Downtown Business Owners-Ron Maupin, Margie Wilson, Brian Badini

CALL TO ORDER: Jason called the meeting to order at 7:53 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting of April 28, 2016

Jodi made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2016 meeting; Kirk seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

EBRICKS FAÇADE GRANT:

The Façade Grant subcommittee (Shane & Stephan) reviewed a Façade Grant request that was submitted by Kenneth Risky, new owner of 124 N. 7th Street. Kenneth plans to move his business, eBricks, to this location. The total of the two low bids submitted was \$20,250, which would qualify for a grant of up to \$10,000.

Stephan made a motion to approve the Façade Grant request of \$10,000 to eBricks. Marty seconded the motion. Jodi abstained. The motion was approved.

MERCHANT PRESENTATION:

Ron Maupin, owner of Haggie of Vendors, met with some downtown merchants to discuss their decrease in sales. Ron suggested that it would be beneficial to the businesses to provide additional marketing and advertising to get tourist season back. He indicated that people shop online more than in the past, therefore, it will be a challenge to keep the downtown vibrant. Ron indicated that he has extended his hours of operation to include Sundays. He would like to know the hours of operation for businesses downtown. Allison replied that she would work on getting that information.

Margie Wilson, owner of Grand Valley Books, stated that 60% of her business comes from out of town customers. She indicated that when tourists come to Grand Junction they usually check into the hotels about 6:00 p.m. They are disappointed when they walk downtown to shop in the evenings because the majority of the stores are closed. She indicated that businesses should be open later to provide service to customers. Margie suggested disbursing the advertising dollars over the entire year to promote Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduation, etc. and reduce the amount of advertising for November and December.

Shane Allerheiligen, owner of A Robin's Nest of Antiques, stated that 90% of his business also comes from out of town customers. Most of his advertising dollars are spent for out of town advertising through mobile apps in order to capture tourists on I70. He indicated that there needs to be a way to incentivize businesses to stay open later in the evenings.

Brian Badini, owner of Pollux Clothing Company, stated that the appeal of the downtown area is the mix of businesses that we have to offer. He said there is a misconception from the local perspective that if we shop at the mall we will save money. Brian indicated that traffic in general is significantly down since January 1st. Pollux has extended their hours of operation in order to serve more customers. He indicated that marketing outside of the area might create an urgency in local people to shop downtown.

Allison prepared a budget for advertising that included ½ shop local and ½ of out of County. The marketing budget for local advertising is currently \$75,000 which the majority of those funds get disbursed for events. The BID advertises through monthly billboards, Regal Cinema commercials, radio advertisement, social media, advertising with The Daily Sentinel, Juco, The Business Times, and Horizon Magazine. The only out of town advertising is a \$1,500 grant provided by the VCB.

There was a suggestion that the BID should piggyback with the VCB. The VCB currently focuses primarily on the wineries, mountain biking in Fruita, etc. The VCB could provide regional advertising strictly for downtown. Robin stated that Blueprint 2.0 might be able to provide a Marketing Consultant that could recommend marketing and advertising ideas.

Ron stated that since the DDA has not been paying a salary for an Executive Director, the merchants would like to request \$40,000 be transferred from the DDA to the BID to increase additional marketing and advertising for the downtown area for this year. Stephan stated he would be willing to consider the DDA offering assistance, however, there would need to be some type of agreement between the merchants and the DDA stating that their stores would be open until at least 7:00 p.m. After discussion, the Board requested more information, details, and costs to provide out of area advertising.

Jason thanked the merchants for attending the meeting.

UPDATES:

WHITE HALL

John has talked to Silas, however, they have not responded to the proposal regarding the project. John anticipates they will not proceed with the project. After discussion, the consensus of the board was to give John Shaver direction to notify Silas to formalize the documents to close the deal if they do not want to proceed with the project, otherwise, a new RFP will be prepared.

BROADBAND

There were no updates.

R-5

Jason stated that the 7th Day Adventist Church was interested in leasing the R-5 property, however, CMU has extended their stay.

The R-5 building will be vacant as of August 1, 2016. Utilities for the R-5 building are approximately \$36,000 per year in addition to expenses for ground maintenance. A Request for Proposal is being drafted for the R-5 property and will be brought back to the board for review.

Shane suggested asking the School District if they would continue to mow the lawn. Jason will pass the information on to Kathy.

LAS COLONIAS AMPHITHEATER

Parks & Recreation Department is scheduled to discuss the possibility of the DDA amending their previous motion to continue funding the Las Colonias Park project based on new information at the May 26, 2016 DDA Board meeting.

END CAP

Les stated that the initial option period for the purchase option agreement expires May 15th. By this time the developer must provide a Conceptual Site Plan and Strategy and Implementation Plan. Due to time constraints in board meetings, the Real Estate Subcommittee (Les & Jodi) met with Jeffrey and Darin (Senegy Builders) to review the Conceptual Site Plans and Strategy and Implementation Plan to see if it satisfied the objectives of the DDA for the site. The contract calls for a review and approval by the board of these deliverables. After reviewing the documents, the subcommittee recommended that the DDA approve the deliverables which would extend the initial option period until November 15th, 2016 by which time the developer has to provide the DDA a contract to purchase the property or the Option to Purchase Agreement shall be null and void.

John stated that at the last meeting the Board directed staff to prepare a parking letter of intent. John indicated that the draft is complete, however, it had not been given to the developer yet in anticipation of a decision this morning.

Les made a motion that the DDA Board accept the recommendation of the Real Estate Subcommittee to approve the due diligence documents presented by Senegy Builders relating to the Purchase Option Agreement for the end cap property. This will extend the initial option deadline from May 15, 2016 to November 15, 2016. All other terms and conditions remain the same. Kirk seconded the motion. Dan abstained. The motion was approved.

SPIKE SCULPTURE:

Robin stated that a permanent sculpture (Spike) belonging to the DDA was damaged by a hit and run accident approximately five years ago. No claims or information regarding the damage can be found. Lyle Nichols has repaired the sculpture. He will invoice the DDA for \$1,500.00 for the repairs.

OTHER:

Jason stated that at the last meeting, the Board agreed to keep the BID and DDA separate. Kathy, Robin, and Allison have been preparing a memorandum of understanding and developing an internal staff structure. There will be more information at the next board meeting.

Shane stated that RV parking is needed downtown. Tim Moore indicated that the parking lot on 7th Street between Ute and Pitkin might be an option for RV parking since the Police Department is currently using it for overflow parking. There will need to be more discussion regarding how to manage enforcement issues.

ADJOURN: *Stephan made a motion to adjourn; Marty seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.*