

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2012
248 SOUTH 4TH STREET
7:30 A.M.

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

ABSENT: Harry Griff, Cynthia Burke

STAFF: Harry Weiss, Diane Keliher, Kathy Dirks

GUESTS: Rich Englehart, John Shaver, Ted Ciavonne, Lois Becker, Dave Detwiler, Eve Tallman, Library Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Bennett clarified his comment that he felt the rain garden component of the library site may be was over engineered, not the entire project. With that clarification, Les made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 8th meeting; Bennett seconded; minutes were approved.

Harry asked if the agenda could be revised to move the executive session to the end of the regular meeting.

MESA COUNTY LIBRARY: Harry explained that there will be no formal action taken on the library's funding request at this meeting. The Board will need time to consider how the DDA might be involved in the project, and Harry will facilitate the Board's exploration over the next couple of weeks, bringing it for formal action at the April 12 meeting. The library project also figures into the topic of today's executive session.

Eve began by stating that library sought to advance the objectives of the Strategic Downtown Master Plan Catalyst Project - to create an anchor for the north end of Downtown; foster commercial activity at 5th and Grand Avenue; provide a link between residential areas and Downtown; serve as a model for future development on Grand Avenue; provide patron activity inside and outside; become a venue for public art; and, ultimately, to be an economic driver for Downtown.

During the Catalyst Plan development there was talk of creating a separate authority with Mesa County, City of Grand Junction, DDA, Grand Junction Housing Authority, and the Library District to move the concepts of the Catalyst forward. The Library District passed a resolution moving towards creating an authority, but that never happened. The Library District also pursued a draft Memo of Understanding, but could not get the other entities to participate. The Library District has decided to move forward with the pressing needs of the facility which has seen a 40% increase in use over the last three years.

The Library conducted an in-house survey of its patrons indicating that about 1,500 people use the library each day and that 81% of them are running errands or shop downtown when visiting the library.

The Library's schematic design has attempted to meet the operational needs of the organization, the patron needs and preferences, and incorporate the larger urban design and revitalization goals expressed in the Catalyst Plan. In reorganizing the architectural program to create a more urban form,

and in addressing the public space around the building and site, the Library has seen the projected \$5.5 million project balloon to \$6.3 million for the full realization of the preferred scheme.

Dave Detwiler has been working with the Library on the financial analysis of the project with Shaw Construction providing cost estimates. Dave reviewed the “preferred” plan which costs an additional \$860,000 over the budget, and then showed lesser versions of that scheme that selectively pare away elements due to cost and /or constructability efficiencies. The “bare bones” plan produces a new library building incorporating the urban form objectives, but leaves little if no money for site improvements. An intermediate scheme provides some of the urban site improvements for a cost of approximately \$357,000, and could serve as the basis for a phased project whereby the remaining improvements might be built over time. However, phasing the project would require firm commitment from all entities over time, and could result in additional costs due to remobilization or disruption of operations.

Currently the Library plans to move out for about 6 months and move back in after construction is completed. The \$5.5 million includes the cost of relocating during construction and other soft costs. The Library District has identified a potential \$90,000 of CDBG funding that could be applied to site improvements on 6th Street, and has estimated \$360,000 will be needed for the preferred site improvements along the major urban frontages of Grand and 5th that the Library would like the DDA to fund. The Library is also willing to consider selling the additional land it has north of Ouray, including the former credit union offices, where new infill senior housing was envisioned in the Catalyst Plan. The DDA or the DDA and the Housing Authority together might acquire this property.

PJ asked where the \$5.5 million is coming from. Eve stated that it is coming from the Library District fund balance. PJ added that the County has kept 50% of the TIF for this year and the DDA has recently committed \$3 million to the Avalon project, and has a number of other financial commitments under consideration that would generate private investment and new tax revenue whereas the Library remains important but nonetheless tax exempt improvements. Eve pointed out that the Library District has given 100% of their TIF this year. PJ feels that the DDA board is not set up to fund this kind of project.

Bennett asked for clarification about the state mandate regarding storm water mitigation when disturbing over an acre of land. He also asked about the amount of parking. Eve reported that 85% of the library’s patrons drive to the library. Ted added that the preferred plan actually has less parking and lends itself to future development of pad sites that could replace the parking fields.

Kevin asked why costs have increased. Eve explained that the costs have increased with the many new and different kinds of services that the library offers.

PJ asked what the cost would be for the property north of the library building. Eve stated that there are 20 lots at \$60,000 each.

UPDATES & OTHER BUSINESS: City Council voted to allow outdoor dining leases to include 3rd party product logos on umbrellas where the product is consistent with business’s branding/identity. This addresses the concerns raised by Main Street Café and Naggy McGee’s. Harry will send a follow up email to council regarding the question of the overall branding and identity of Downtown as a unique and local experience which runs counter to the national product logos.

The contract for the Avalon design should be finalized by the end of the week. The first schematic review will be on April 2-3 with the final schematic due in early May. The schedule still projects bid review in September and construction beginning in early October. Harry Griff and Harry Weiss will be reviewing the designs.

Harry W. emailed District 51 Schools Superintendent Steve Schulz to broach the possibility of acquiring the R-5 site at 7th and Grand Avenue. Rich stated that he thought the district was unlikely to pursue that idea at this time as they are thinking about relocating some activities to R-5 from other schools.

Harry is meeting with CDOT about the realignment of I-70B Friday, March 23.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Jodi recused herself from executive session.

Steve Thoms 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); Bennett seconded. The board moved into executive session at 8:35 am. PJ McGovern left the meeting at 9:06 am designating Steve Thoms as his proxy. Peggy Page left the meeting at 9:17 am.

Both the Executive Session and the DDA regular meeting were adjourned by acclamation at 9:20 am.