



Community Development
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MINUTES
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
Board of Commissioners – July 24, 2014

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| Commissioners Present | Derald Polston, Vice-Chair
Linda Barbeau
Sara Kaynor
John McNeill, D.D.S. |
| Commissioner Absent | Chairman Carletta Thompson, M.D. |
| Staff Present | Cindy Lopez, Senior Planner
Kathleen Banks, Secretary |
| Others Present | Cory Styron, PRCA Director
Boone Birdsell, Yearout Energy Services Company |

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00p.m. by Co-Chairman Polston and there being a quorum, the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

2. APPROVAL OF THE June 19, 2014 MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaynor and seconded by Commissioner McNeill to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2014 meeting. This motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

3. BOONE BIRDSSELL FROM YESCO:

Mr. Birdsell brought us up to date on what has been happening since our last meeting. Mr. Birdsell did a recap on his previous presentation and plans to have a no cost lighting audit for the next MRA meeting. Yearout Mechanical, a New Mexico based Company, has a fabrication shop that can build just about anything you can envision in their shop. They also have a plasma cutter for any cut outs desired. Mr. Birdsell walked downtown Main Street taking pictures. There is a lot of existing infrastructure down Main Street. Mr. Birdsell explained the advantages LED had over the Hi-Pressure Sodium (HPS) we are currently using; there is 50- 70% less energy usage, clearer visibility and a truer color rendering index or CRI. Mr. Birdsell had conversations with Kris Cope, a GIS Technician, at Farmington Electric Utility Services; Gary Moore with Traffic Engineering and John Armenta with FEUS. There was talk about the widening of the walkways, and eliminating some of the infrastructure on Main Street. Mr. Birdsell stated that in Alamosa they had gone to two one way streets in their downtown and it had actually doubled their size.

Senior Planner Lopez stated based on her experience that having two one ways streets didn't necessarily promote economic development and that most locations she was aware of were changing back to two way streets. Farmington Utilities will have to upgrade the electrical lines through the downtown area and Mr. Armenta stated he thought a lot of their work would involve tearing up of the sidewalks to get down to the existing wires. At that time the lights can be relocated and wires stubbed to accommodate the new lighting options. The commissioners reminded Mr. Birdsell that the MRA Commission wanted to pursue the most decorative, well lit, cost effective way possible for lighting downtown. Commissioner Polston asked if it was possible to achieve sufficient lighting using a single pole Type II Streetscape Pedestrian scale with directional light. He then inquired about the possibility of using heavy duty lights that could be wrapped around the trees that could be lit year round. What type of warranty do they come with? Mr. Birdsell answered the lighting audit will address most of those questions but he would find out by the next MRA meeting. Commissioner McNeill shared photos that he had taken of some lights in Steamboat Springs. All the commissioners were in agreement that the concept Commissioner McNeill shared held most of what they wanted for downtown Farmington. Mr. Birdsell pointed out that banners and placards could also be hung from the poles. He then reiterated that he would invite Tom Curtis with Resource Lighting to be at the next meeting to address the more specific lighting questions and concerns.

4. Parks Recreation and Cultural Affairs MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION & INPUT CORY STYRON:

Senior Planner Lopez stated that the MRA Commissioners were emailed the PRCA Master Plan documents and have had an opportunity to view the draft of the plan. Mr. Styron went over the Executive Summary of items. It outlines the objectives for the next 3-5 years. The major objectives and action plans are: to improve internal/external communication; attract tourism and develop outdoor recreational opportunities; more family functions; cultivate youth and teen oriented activities; improved ADA accessibility; and easier/more convenient connections; add special events and festivals that would directly impact the downtown area; better trails and paths for walking; upgrade outdated facilities, amenities and technology; improve water access; better lighting and safety. Mr. Styron is meeting with the River Reach Foundation to view the access points (intake/outtake beach areas) next week. He showed some conceptual drawings of TOTAH PARK. They are looking at the Miller St and Corcoran Dr. Area west of Boyd Park for the Signature City Park location. It will have a direct approach on Orchard Street and be a catalyst project; with a mercantile plaza - about 7 blocks from downtown with grass covered picnic areas, a pavilion, shops, water features, a large entertainment venue, playgrounds, sand volleyball courts, with hopefully a senior living facility within walking distance for active seniors. Commissioner Barbeau mentioned that the Red Apple could run the routes when there is an event, we could bring in horse drawn carriages available for use in the winter, and the possibility of pedi-cabs in the summer months. Another idea is to jazz up the Indian Center a little with artists on display creating rugs, pottery, and jewelry as they work, giving the history on the patterns, intricacies and designs they use. There have also been numerous discussions regarding Lake Farmington and getting it open for recreational activities, there is an area that could be made more beach-like for water experience. So far the community is very supportive of what the PRCA wants to do, and open to a possible hike in GRT to help pay for changes and upgrades. The Plan has been approved by the Parks Advisory

Commission, the Planning & Zoning Committee, and the next step is City Council for their approval on August 12th. There are a lot of Great opportunities within our grasp we just need a way to get organized and get surrounding communities involved. Ms. Lopez commented that the flood way and flood plain will need to be in the discussion. Commissioner Barbeau asked specifically what is the difference between the river usage in Durango and the river usage here in Farmington. Mr. Styron replied that The Four Corners Paddle Project has been exploring those issues; the main thing he has seen is that not a lot of people know about the access points, availability, etc. He has personally noticed more activity along the Animas in the last three weeks. The Commissioners were in agreement that this project could change the community and was one the MRA wanted to get behind. They were appreciative of the time and effort Mr. Styron and his staff have put in, as well as, the placement of the park; remarking it is the first time in years the City has even considered putting something in the MRA district.

5. DISCUSSION ON LINKAGE FROM PARK TO DOWNTOWN, CORY STYRON:

This agenda item was combined with Item 4 discussion.

6. REPORT ON PUBLIC WI-FI:

Commissioner McNeill stated that all the City required was a letter of interest for the public Wi-Fi, not an RFP. The ad was run in Sunday's paper; the deadline for the letter of interest is August 6th. Mr. Davis is going to send a letter of interest to the City on Monday.

7. DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION UPDATE:

Elizabeth Isenberg sent a report through Kathleen Banks:

a) On Thursday, July 10, 2014 MRA Committee members John McNeill and Linda Barbeau joined the State Legislative Finance Committee members for a tour of Downtown Farmington. This gave us the opportunity to discuss the Downtown, including connections to the River, Complete Streets, Lighting, and our Gateway project, the members and staff were receptive and appreciative of the tour. MRA members had a handout to give Legislative Finance Committee showing our ideas. Commissioner McNeill added that he and Commissioner Barbeau attended the walk and gave the Legislative Finance Committee members handouts showing the anticipated Gateway designs and possible lighting. Commissioner McNeill found out the LFC do look at requests for Statewide Capital Outlay Funds and we are eligible for those funds. The City may apply for the funds.

b) The final TGIF at Orchard Park of 2014 is tomorrow, July 25, 2014. This concert series has been very successful this season – averaging around 300 participants per week. A special thanks to Three Rivers Brewery for continuing to partner with the Downtown for this event and others.

c) The Rod Run Block Party event was held in Downtown Farmington last Saturday night, July 19th. This is the Downtown's largest event drawing hundreds of cars and thousands of community members. The weather was warm, but perfect, and the evening went off without a hitch.

d) The next official event for Downtown will be our Fall Art Walk and FUNraiser. This will be held on Friday, October 10th. This year's FUNraiser is another deck of playing cards with a Dia de los Muertos theme. So far 49 artists have committed to donating an original 8 X 10 piece of art (any medium) with a Day of the Dead theme. The original pieces will be sold for \$50 each the night of the Art Walk along with decks of playing cards for \$12. The FUNraiser will take place at Studio 116.

8. REPORT FROM MRA AD-HOC COMMITTEE:

Commissioner McNeill reported the MRA Ad Hoc Committee met earlier this month. The members consist of Fran Fillerup, Duane Waken, MRA Commissioner, Cindy Lopez, MRA Commissioner Barbeau, Elizabeth Isenberg-Phelps, David Sypher and Cory Styron. Commissioner McNeill suggested additional members Audrey Winters with Farmington Chamber of Commerce, Tanya Stinson with Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Ray Hagerman with the Four Corners Economic Development. They have all been contacted and the next meeting will be taking place July 31st at the MPO office. Fran Fillerup provided a report done in 2012 to show a concept of Complete Streets for Main St and Orchard Ave developed by the MPO and a cost estimate based on the City of Farmington's Block-to-Block Agreement that was in effect at that time. David Sypher spoke with Commissioner McNeill about the Traffic Safety Report Study now being done, there are funds available, but the MRA may not qualify. It is a new program and not many people know about it. Currently Main and English have the highest rate of accidents (19) where Main and Orchard have a smaller rate of accidents (7). Ms. Holton volunteered Ms. Lopez to write the grant for the Safety Study improvements made with Complete Street Guidelines; it is due by October 15th. Ms. Lopez is agreeable to the task provided she has the support of Mr. Sypher's staff as she is not an engineer and not familiar with the study. Mr. Sypher also has a template that Ms. Lopez can use that should be very helpful. This is a safety study, not a traffic study.

9. RE-PRIORITIZE MRA PROJECTS:

Ms. Lopez stressed the importance of deciding what the MRA wants the downtown to look like, what do you want it to be?

1. Catalyst Project - Totah Park (in the MRA Plan and PRCA Master Plan both support it)
 - a) Paddle trails; Rick Gage is already on board and moving forward.
 - b) There is a Capital Request for the State that the City does every year and this project is in the top ten.
2. Catalyst Project - Hotel to support Civic Center Expansion
Commissioner Polston inquired if this Civic Center Expansion would kill the "New" Convention Center Project? Ms. Lopez acknowledged that City properties around the Civic Center would definitely be part of that discussion.
3. Catalyst Project – Pharmacy to support the Hospital Downtown
4. Lighting on Main and Broadway Streets – in process
5. Mixed use development mostly in Animas District

- a) Land banking for a large mixed use area
- 6. Main Streets - Complete Streets – “Traffic Calming”
- 7. Multi-Family - Market Rate - Residential Development
- 8. Economic Development in the Downtown area
 - a) Filling up existing vacancies - what can we do for incentives to entice developers?
 - b) SJCC student housing?
 - c) Incubators?
 - d) Arts District?
 - e) Entrepreneurs?
- 9. Culpepper/Native Museum progress
 - a) The transition from private owner to City has taken place. The members inquired why this hasn't moved forward. Who is in charge? (Some thought it was the Museum curator) Ms. Lopez replied she thought it had something to do with state statute requiring taxes to be paid before a plat can be recorded, and one of the donors wanted to wait until tax time to pay their taxes. Commissioner Barbeau had heard there was a survey issue as well. Ms. Lopez will look into it and see what the holdup is. She thought this would qualify as a great infill project for the downtown, as well as, the project presented earlier this year at 119 W. Main St.
- 10. Gas Station across from Artifacts
 - a) Commissioner McNeill felt strongly that the abandoned gas station should be purchased by the City and renovated, get rid of the tanks, etc. He learned while on the recent walk that toured downtown Farmington that the original City Hall was at that location, so it has historical significance. It would be an ideal spot to place a small visitor information center, with a restroom and parking.
- 11. Historic Properties owned by Museum
 - a) Meet with the curator (Bart Wilsey) to discuss renovation(s)? Meet with the Museum's Advisory Foundation to discuss options? Meeting with Julie Baird the Director of General Services may also be a good place to start.
 - b) Become part of the MRA land bank?
 - c) Plaques on buildings? With ID automation barcodes?
 - d) Renovate the Historic oldest house in Farmington that it is still standing.
- 12. Gateway smaller projects
 - a) Directional signs on Murray and Miller to direct people off of the bypass towards downtown, and Broadway as well pointing them to Historic Main Street.
 - b) Hold an Arts contest for signage/murals on buildings – if it has no commercial message – it should be okay.
 - c) Decorate the pass-through walls downtown with the building owner's permission.

10. BUSINESS FROM:

- a. Floor-none
- b. Chair-none
- c. Members

Commissioner McNeill would like to see MRA'S attendance at more City Council working sessions.

d. Staff

Update on SJC Art and Retail Incubator

Commissioner McNeill met with Judy Castleberry, nothing has happened yet, so he encouraged her to keep the fires burning.

Update on Traffic Safety Study

This was already discussed.

Update on Construction plans for Gateway Project:

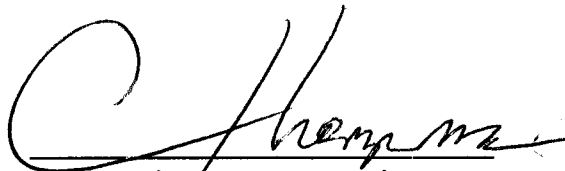
They are 90% done, the changes are being made that the MRA suggested. Commissioner Barbeau would like to review the final drawings now. Ms. Lopez will email the drawings to the MRA Board. Commissioner Polston recommended a final review of the plans before the construction drawings have been completed.

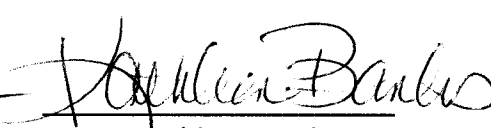
Possible Field Trip to a close by MRA District:

Ms. Lopez reminded the members of a trip some of them took to Albuquerque to visit the MRA and how helpful that was. The Albuquerque MRA took us on site tours, showed us their projects, set down and talked with us, introduced us to some of their MRA Board members and staff. Is anyone interested in taking another trip, or having someone come here to explain how they have done their projects? Ms. Lopez offered to set that up if there was an interest.

12. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Barbeau and seconded by Commissioner McNeill to adjourn. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm.


Carletta Thompson, M.D. Chairman


Kathleen Banks, Secretary