



MINUTES
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
Board of Commissioners – August 20, 2019

Commissioners Present John McNeill, D.D.S. – Chair
 Jill Tanis – Vice Chair
 Doug Dykeman
 Greg Mills

Commissioners Absent Elizabeth McNally

Staff Present Julie Baird
 Michael Bulloch
 Beth Escobar
 Sherry Roach
 Karen Walker
 Warren Unsicker

Others Present Jamie Church

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair John McNeill, and there being a quorum, the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

2. Approval of the July 16, 2019 Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Dykeman and seconded by Commissioner Mills to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2019 meeting. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Update on CLG and Vacant Building Ordinances – Warren Unsicker

Mr. Unsicker said he has been meeting with the Fire Department, Code Enforcement, and the Legal Department to evaluate a citywide ordinance for vacant building management. Resources such as Code Enforcement and the Fire Department are being discussed, as well as how to encourage or incentivize property owners to improve their buildings. Mr. Unsicker stated that he is working with city departments to make sure the MRA District is included in the ordinance. CTED (Community Transportation Economic Diversification) funds might be used as a possible incentive. This fund is intended for transformative projects and economic development.

Commissioner Dykeman asked if Arts & Cultural and Historic Preservation funds could be used on top of the CTED fund as an incentive. Mr. Unsicker said it might be possible if certain criteria were met.

The CLG, Certified Local Government, is still being evaluated to see how it will affect existing historical preservation efforts or if it is beneficial to pursue at this time. City administration is evaluating whether there are resources available.

4. Brownfield Workshop Discussion – Jill Tanis

Commissioner Tanis presented a handout that summarized the workshop in Ruidoso that she attended. Ms. Tanis stated that there is a lot of assistance available to do remediation in brownfield areas. She explained the definition of a brownfield as an underutilized, and/or abandoned property with potential pollutants or contamination.

Ms. Tanis stated that assistance for brownfields assessment, cleanup, and remediation is available. It is easier to obtain funding for redevelopment of a site with technical assistance and low interest loans or grant funds. To obtain assistance, a community needs to have a goal project.

Ms. Tanis explained some of the available resources and listed those resources in the handout.

Chair McNeill commented that the city has applied for brownfield grants several times for the Animas District, but has never been given any assistance. Dr. McNeill suggested an inventory of properties in the Animas District might help give a better view of what is needed for the area.

Julie Baird, Assistant City Manager, said the COG (Council of Governments) received several of the last brownfield grants. Ms. Baird said she would talk to the COG to see if it is possible to collaborate with the COG for brownfield grants, and she will look into inviting Evan Williams, Deputy Director of the COG, to the next MRA meeting in September.

5. Main Street Complete Streets Update – Sherry Roach

Sherry Roach updated the Commissioners on the Downtown Farmington Newsletter and Facebook readership. She is updating her contact list for the newsletter.

Ms. Roach said she has received 100% Construction plans for the Complete Streets Project. There are some minor storm drain, water line design, and electric design changes.

Ms. Roach gave an update on Public Works construction projects. Most are nearly finished.

The sign foundation for Four Corners Community Bank is being looked at to determine if it will be possible to relocate it for the roundabout that will be at that intersection.

The Marron and Associates Environmental Report from 2017 recommended to contact NMED (New Mexico Environment Department) to obtain the latest information on the site at 219 E. Main and inform NMED of the plans prior to construction. Contact has been made and updated reports are on file.

Ms. Roach stated that she has met with Public Works, the Legal Department, and the Finance Department on the CWSRF (Clean Water State Revolving Fund). The city has accepted their offer for the storm water portion of the Complete Streets Project. Paperwork for the loan closing is progressing.

HPD (Historical Preservation Division) asked for clarification on some of the materials that will be used on the Complete Streets Project.

6. Downtown Farmington Updates – Michael Bulloch

Michael Bulloch said a new store, Bilisaána, would be opening on the corner of Locke and Main Street this month. Bilisaána means Apple in Navajo. They work with Navajo silversmiths to produce watchbands for the Apple Watch. The owner works with the Maker's Space at San Juan College to produce the leather portion of the watchbands and test marketed their product at the Maker's Space last year. They had been doing online sales but wanted to open a brick and mortar store. Mr. Bulloch said he helped the owner find a space in the downtown area. The Nygren family owns the property and Scott Nygren had recently finished work on the building because of the Developing Commercial Properties panel that Mr. Nygren attended.

A \$5,000 grant from AARP was received for the Breezeway Plaza project. The scope of work was modified and the project will need to be finished by November 4, 2019. A large number of pallets and volunteers are needed to do the project.

Mr. Bulloch said he met with Amy Bell of NMMS (New Mexico MainStreet) a few weeks ago to discuss the Hidden Garden project. The project will need to be completed by December 31, 2019.

The Off-road Takeover is Friday, September 6 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. A MainStreet Project will be paying for the Porta-lets and Mr. Bulloch is working with the Cliffhangers to promote dining in the downtown restaurants during the event.

The Four Corners Film Festival is September 10-15, 2019. It will be centered around the Civic Center and Downtown Farmington culminating with a Block Party in Orchard Park on the 14th from 9:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Three Rivers Brewery and Traeger's will be serving at the event.

Sherry Roach, Shaña Reeves, and Michael Bulloch presented at the Summer Leadership Quarterly in Albuquerque. The presentation was about methods of communication regarding the construction project and smaller supporting projects.

The Western Planners Conference in Santa Fe is September 9, 2019. Mr. Bulloch said he will be part of a panel put together by Amy Bell of NMMS and he will be talking about communication efforts as it pertains to Economic Vitality and business resiliency.

The annual site visit from NMMS will be September 25, 2019. Daniel Gutierrez and Amy Barnhart will be visiting. A copy of the work plan will be emailed to the Commissioners prior to the next MRA meeting on September 17, 2019. The site visit will consist of a 30-minute tour of the district with Mr. Bulloch, a 45-minute meeting with Chair McNeill, and

a 2-hour session with the entire board, staff, the ACD team (coordinating council), and City of Farmington Officials.

Mr. Bulloch said he submitted a proposal to the National Main Street Center for the Main Street NOW Conference in May of next year. It is an expanded version of the communication presentation that Ms. Roach, Ms. Reeves, and Mr. Bulloch presented to NMMS two weeks ago. It will be a more in depth look at the Complete Streets Project and the efforts for business resiliency and economic vitality.

Commissioner Dykeman asked what would happen to the small park next to Downtown Junkers since the store is going out of business. Mr. Bulloch said plans for the interior of the park are on hold for now.

Commissioner Mills asked what type of advertising is available for events. Mr. Bulloch said there is not a budget for advertising. Event sponsors will often do their own advertising. The CVB (Convention and Visitors Bureau) is advertising the Off-road Takeover. Ms. Roach said the city web sites are utilized for most advertising.

7. Business from:

a. **Floor** – Chair McNeill introduced Jamie Church, the Chamber of Commerce President. Ms. Church said the Chamber of Commerce is a hub of information for the area. The CVB was also mentioned as a source for information.

b. **Chair** – There was no business from the Chair.

c. **Members** – There was no business from Members.

d. **Staff** – There was no business from Staff.

8. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Commissioner Dykeman and seconded by Commissioner Tanis to adjourn. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.



John McNeill, Chair



Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant