

CITY OF ELKO
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
1:30 P.M., P.D.S.T., TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2015
ELKO CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
1751 COLLEGE AVENUE, ELKO, NEVADA

NOTE: The order of the minutes reflects the order business was conducted.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chris Johnson, Chairman of the City of Elko Redevelopment Agency (RDA).

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Chris Johnson
Mandy Simons
Robert Schmittlein
Reece Keener
John Rice

City Staff: Curtis Calder, City Manager
Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manger
Rick Magness, City Planner
Rebecca Hansen, Planning Technician
Jeremy Draper, Development Manager
Ryan Limberg, Utilities Director

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INITIAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments made at this time.

I. NEW BUSINESS

A. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

4. Presentation by Logan Simpson and discussion regarding the Downtown Corridor Project. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

Mayor Johnson said he wanted to review the contract to make sure Logan Simpson was within their scope. He will weigh the presentation with the contract. The City Attorney has advised them the agenda item is not posted correctly and would like the RDA to give clear direction.

Rick Magness, City Planner, said those items could be addressed by staff with support from the Logan Simpson Consultants. The consultants worked on addressing the public comments. The consultants were ready to present the plan to date. He handed out a new site plan for the downtown corridor, and then explained the SOQ process.

Dave Harris, Logan Simpson Design, Director, said they've been working on the project since fall of 2014. They've done a lot of work with staff and the public. The purpose of this meeting is to update the RDA. They're striving for a unified vision, and seeking clear direction and approval. They would like to get final comments to move the project forward and finalize the work. He gave an overview of the process with the tasks outlined. The first design had a lot of criticism and feel they have addressed the concerns. They are presenting the alternative today. There has been a survey online since February which received over 300 responses. Typically in an active community they only get 100-150 responses. With the latest data 62% of respondents felt the parking is just right and 69% are in favor of non-parking related activities. This plan provides aspects which support the community: entrepreneurship, quality goods, higher resale value, local ownership, more desirable jobs, increased currency velocity, greater tax revenue and less need for municipal services. It creates improved accessibility, promotes a sense of comfort, draws a diverse population, fosters frequent and meaningful contact, and nurtures & defines community identity. He went over 10 myths of downtown planning. Parking has been the highest priority since the beginning. Most businesses feel they need the parking to be successful. Elko has more than sufficient parking. Within the side streets and corridor they propose 1096 and there are currently 1378. The current city code requires 2300 within 400 feet and they are providing 2338. The comments they got back from the Option 1 was the parking was reduced way too much between 3rd and 4th. Western Folklife did an extensive parking analysis almost daily. They used those numbers to come up with Option 2. One of the local business owners did an extensive cut and paste to extend out the amenities so one block was not impacted. The second option was very well received by the task force and others. This can be phased in alternatively. From that option he and Jesse Bell did some more research to come up with Option 3. There are two-way streets with 26 foot wide access aisles and gained 25 additional parking spaces.

Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager, asked him to provide the number of surveys done. He asked if the side streets of the corridor were surveyed also. He asked for clarification on whether the City Code is 2300 parking spaces or 2.4 spaces per 1000 sq. ft.

Mr. Harris answered the demand they used the national average of 2.4 spaces per 1000 sq. ft. They presented that to the task force who agreed. The only parking counted was done in the corridor and did not include the side streets.

Mr. Wilkinson questioned the downtown square footage. It was originally 1 million and now it is 880,000.

Mr. Harris said they received the 1 million from staff. When they did their study they did a three dimensional study three times and came up with 880,000 sq. ft. He went over the parking proposed. This Master Plan is a 20-year plan. This entire vision may never be fully built-out because it may evolve. The point is to agree on a plan and get behind one plan. The plan needs to

be implemented in phases because then you can make changes along the way. As you slowly eliminate some parking spaces you will be able to get feedback from the community on whether it is working

Reece Keener asked if it was true there will be a net increase in the 700 block. If someone builds a 5 story building will there be ample parking?

Mr. Harris answered yes there will be an increase in the 700 block. He said the existing parking counts use 90 spaces and they have 100-150 on each block. If you go to big cities you have to pay for parking which is provided by individual owners for a charge.

Kelly Higgins, 555 4th Street, asked if the national average of 2.4 spaces includes employees.

Mr. Harris answered it does include employees and also includes restaurants. He went over the zoomed in plan between 3rd and 7th. The paving on 5th Street is special paving to reduce speeds. One idea is a megatron screen for ads and movies in the park at night. The loop is for possible food truck vendors. A way to create a pedestrian connection to Idaho Street is between 4th and 5th.

Lina Blohm, 5th & Idaho Street, said she was concerned about the length of space and the two-way streets.

Mr. Harris said it is drawn to scale. Currently there is a 20 foot promenade, there is a 20 foot head-in parking aisle, a 26 foot drive aisle and a 97 foot area for the park in the middle. For special events the internal parking can be used for vendors.

Ms. Blohm asked what the philosophy was of the two-way travel.

Mr. Harris answered two-way travel is more desirable because it is easier to understand by visitors and people who aren't familiar with one-way streets. In the new plan you can drive down the street in either direction to decide which business you want to go to. As opposed to a one-way system, if you can't find parking, you have to go around the block.

Jesse Bell, Logan Simpson, explained they reached out to businesses. He talked to Bodily's Furniture who also had a concern about two-way traffic and angled parking spaces. He said this plan with 90 degree parking will allow trucks to back into the space without going against traffic.

Mr. Harris said they also gained spaces by changing it to 90 degree parking. We haven't been able to get in contact with the Roy's Market owners about this idea. They would have shade canopies for parking on a day to day basis and they could possibly utilize the space for a farmers market on the weekends.

John Rice asked how people would access the Roy's parking lot.

Mr. Harris answered from the alley.

Mayor Johnson asked how this plan coordinates with the Urban Code Overlay and the Economic Study.

Mr. Harris explained they conducted several meetings and conference calls with the Leland group. They even modified their plan to support the public meeting feedback. The store-front improvement, shade canopies and the promenade elements are a result of those communications. We have provided critical feedback to them asked for specific economic feedback. We asked them which downtown businesses we should strive to support and attract. For the Urban Code Overlay we redlined it and sent comments to Mr. Magness of our opinion and ideas for the design element.

Catherine Wines, 421 Railroad Street, asked if the green spaces are landscaping.

Mr. Harris answered it's a placeholders for landscaping. He is aware water has been a concern to the public. The corner planters will be drought tolerant species with decorative rock so they are easy to maintain.

Ms. Wines said concrete is easier to maintain. She felt they could do away with some of the landscaping and suggested stamped concrete. Fifth Street feels like it could use more trees. She understands this is NDOT, so maybe they can get NDOT on board. The new design looks more like a parking lot than streets.

Stephanie Herr, 560 Idaho Street, asked if they looked into the delivery aspects because there are some big semis that use the one-way. She asked if other delivery trucks will have to use her parking lot.

Mr. Harris said Mr. Bell had the same concern. With the width a semi could stop on the road for a period of time. The alleys are unused and they could also utilize those.

Ms. Herr said the alleys are being used for deliveries. She felt one entrance was dangerous to pedestrians. If they don't have two entrances, that will hurt their business.

Mr. Harris asked if she was asking them to entertain another entrance, and they will work on making that modification.

Aaron Martinez, 396 Poplar Drive, felt the City needs to focus on traffic flow. He will voice his comments during final public comment.

Mr. Harris explained numbers and examples from downtown Phoenix, AZ. It used to be a nonfunctioning parking lot. An agreement was made with Arizona State University (ASU) to put a satellite campus downtown. Diversification helps the economy by bringing several different people to the area.

Mr. Wilkinson asked if the City of Phoenix had agreements with the schools and businesses to relocate downtown before those improvements were made.

Mr. Harris answered they happened simultaneously. Phoenix committed to the improvements and the university then moved. The project took 15 years to complete. Springville Splash Pad in Springfield, UT invested \$720,000 for the splash pad which has constant use. It has had great success and they have vendors come in with food. Winslow, AZ did a Route 66 upgrade. It has a very small population of less than 9,000. The town was bypassed by Highway 40 and was a ghost town. Now people really go down there to take pictures and spending time in their corridor. This was done with a Federal Transportation Grant. He went over more examples.

Mayor Johnson asked about numbers for Elko as far as sewer, water and electrical.

Mr. Harris explained the numbers were only supposed to be supplied during their 30% detail, but was asked to give those numbers sooner. They did do their research. Costs in Elko are double anywhere else, but yes, the numbers are in there. There is a 20% contingency because numbers constantly change. Architecture for restrooms is \$120-150 per sq. ft. It's not to say we can't build the 400 block for less than \$3 million, but we have to work together.

Mr. Rice said the Tax Increment Fund (TIF) is only \$3 million over 30 years. However, the vision is \$17 million.

Mr. Harris said the vision gives you something to go after. You need to adopt the plan, identify what items you want to build and then fight for the money.

Mr. Bell said TIF is only one option of funding. Funding that may be available today, changes once investments and interest is shown. Similar to a small business, you don't have the funding you need when you first start. Usually getting started creates a great synergy. The trend nationally is businesses want to be downtown.

Mr. Harris said he wanted to go over the estimated maintenance costs.

Jeremy Draper, Development Manager, said he sat down with Dennis Strickland and Joe Carr to look at the maintenance costs of the landscaping. At 10 years and 20 years there is an increase in cost for parking lot resurfacing. This also includes a 3% inflation.

Mr. Harris said some of the side street parking are dirt lots and aren't well marked. If we are doing improvements downtown, the Master Plan shows being able to go down the side streets to connect to Idaho Street and Silver Street. We can't get engineers involved until the master plan is adopted.

Mr. Keener said it looks great but how do we pay for it. He understands there is a component to look for funding opportunities. Have you looked into those?

Mr. Harris said they preliminarily did, but it's hard to without a master plan. You can't get funding without having a plan.

Robert Schmidlein asked if they can pursue funding with a conceptual plan.

Mr. Harris answered they could, however you have to be prepared to answer questions and concerns. Federal agencies require accountability.

Mr. Schmidlein said he had an issue with hiring a consultant because even if they are able to borrow \$2 million he doesn't see it generating \$10 million downtown. If they do block one it will take the full 20 years

Mr. Harris said they will continue to do that and have done that for other cities. They found \$400,000 for the City of Midvale. They have consultants in place in order to do that. They are not financing specialists or funding specialists. They can initiate getting funding, but we are at a critical milestone and we need approval to move forward. The plan can be modified in the future. If you can only bond for \$2 million that's spectacular because that pays for phase 1. The community would be thrilled to see something built next summer or spring.

Mr. Schmidlein asked City Staff if they could get funds from the Water and Sewer Funds.

Ryan Limberg, Utilities Director, answered that was their approach and the depreciation fund is to replace those facilities that may be at the end of their serviceable life.

Mr. Wilkinson said it is for the mains, not for laterals or services to the buildings. One the critical RDA items was to evaluate utility services to the buildings so they could be refurbished and provide for redevelopment downtown.

Mr. Magness said TIF is an overall portion of an overall package. There are grants and private/public partnerships. If we only focus on TIF then we have a very narrow vision. This is a Master Plan. We can bite this off one block at a time. After we have an approved plan we can go out there and find the funding.

Mr. Martinez said he agrees with Mr. Magness, but they are only able to get 2% of those funds. He felt traffic will be discouraged away from Railroad St, Commercial St, 3rd St and 5th St. He asked if Mr. Harris had discussed those traffic impacts with NDOT.

Mr. Harris answered his understanding was NDOT has already approved the plan. They were instructed to reduce the width per that approval

Jim Karr, Telescope Bowling, asked if anyone considered the impact to those businesses just outside the redevelopment area. He said looking at the Plan there are a significant amount of trees that overlap parking 2-3 parking stalls. He asked if the parking numbers make allowances for that.

Mr. Harris answered the trees are illustrated at full maturity and was only within one parking stall so they took it out of the parking quantity. Those trees are envisioned as an amenity to the corridor. They are envisioned to be big shade trees for the area.

Mr. Karr asked about the improved side street parking, how is diagonal parking improved.

Mr. Harris answered right now 4th Street parking isn't marked, so people just park any way they can. We aren't adding or detracting from that we are just making it easier for people to recognize the stalls and park in a safer manner.

Mr. Karr said he was concerned about Fire Department response in some areas.

Ms. Wines asked if they are only trying to improve a Master Plan.

Mayor Johnson explained that might have been the intent but the City Attorney advised them the agenda is not written that way.

Ms. Wines felt some of the amenities are not necessary right off the bat. We can hold off on the splash pad, community center, and restrooms. She sees those amenities being more attractive to corporate sponsorship.

Ms. Blohm said private investment does follow public commitment. We have to take a positive stand and take a positive direction. We are losing businesses and we have to collectively decide to move forward. Our TIF funds are increasing by more than the 3% we initially thought they would.

Mr. Wilkinson asked about Section 3.5, which is analysis of traffic flows. Is a traffic study going to be completed? He asked Mr. Harris if he was aware of any community investments that haven't had a positive outcome. He said he asked NDOT if they've seen the plan and they said they haven't. They did feel after seeing this presented they could work with it.

Mr. Harris answered for the traffic study we did a cursory review and highlighted a few places that need to be improved. We are not doing traffic studies on Idaho Street, Silver Street or other streets. The study ensures the plan is safe, it accommodates the turning movements are meeting City Code and the turning radiuses meet the semi-truck movements. The study is more in terms of public safety.

Mr. Wilkinson asked if Mr. Harris has worked with communities who committed to an investment and failed.

Mr. Harris answered he personally has only been involved with positive ones. Twin Falls failed due to poor positioning and planning of their investment dollars, but there is not perfect science. We can set up tours with cities who have had positive investments and they can explain how their funding was done, how they financed it and the return on their investments.

Mr. Draper said he reached out to Boyd Ratliff with the City's concepts who was open to doing something with 5th Street to enhance the corridor. He is willing to approach them to see what they need to get approval for this project.

Mr. Harris answered Ms. Wines question about 5th Street trees. We do intend on having trees, we've rendered this plan so many times that we forgot to add those back in.

Mr. Rice said the vision is \$17 million, but some of those things can be removed. He understands public investment does lead to private investment. He would like to see the other costs pulled out so they can understand the costs for the basics

Mr. Harris explained the initial idea was to show the full possible amount. We've been working with Newmont who is willing to invest, but they want to see a plan.

Mr. Keener asked where the Centennial feature is planned to go.

Mr. Draper answered the only action taken was it will be downtown. The committee needs to raise \$500,000. They could pay for one of these features, perhaps at 6th Street in place of the carousel. The clock tower could have some dining areas around it. That's the beauty of a Master Plan, it's a flexible vision.

Mr. Bell explained the City asked us to study 3rd Street to 11th Street and it's important to look at it cohesively. It's not realistic to expect to have this built in 10 years, but it's important to look at the whole plan. If you look at each block individually it could potentially be \$1 million. The design process is not linear it is circular. It's important to understand each other's needs and desires. Don't get discouraged with the huge numbers, realistically the east end is not in the short term.

Mayor Johnson felt it was better to have the presentation without a motion. He wants the RDA to define the parameters. They needed to get up to speed. Looking at the plan they have to balance the entire city and need to be careful with what they commit to. We are all in agreement we need a better Elko. We need to circle back with the Urban Overlay and Economic Vision to see how it adds to this plan. He thanked everyone for their input.

Mr. Keener asked if the documents are on the City website.

Mr. Magness said they will be. This was a presentation to get feedback and then put the most recent plan on the website. He felt they now have enough direction to move forward.

Mayor Johnson said he wants to discuss the other two studies, the Storefront Program and the budget. Then we can decide which plan we will support.

Mr. Keener felt the public needs to vet it.

Mayor Johnson said he agreed. It's important to understand what the benefit will be. We do have a goal to improve downtown. Future business would evaluate a community based on their downtown. The best way to move forward is to get information in front of us and discuss it.

Mr. Keener said he will take it upon himself to approach the Parks Department and the City Manager's office to discuss maintaining the plan.

1. Review, consideration, and possible action to appoint two stakeholders to the Redevelopment Advisory Council (RAC), and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

Per the adopted RAC bylaws, stakeholders shall be appointed by the RDA annually in July, and there shall be no limit on the number of reappointments of the stakeholders.

Mr. Magness said Ms. Blohm is still interested in participating. She has recently been appointed the Secretary for the RAC. David Roberts could not stay because he had a sales meeting, but he has expressed interest. Jonathan Karr also expressed an interest in the RAC.

Mayor Johnson asked if they had to be a property owner to be a stakeholder.

Mr. Magness answered no.

Mr. Wilkinson explained two of the three applicants are property owners in the downtown area and that may be a factor in your consideration.

Mr. Rice felt Mr. Roberts has emerged himself in the community in a terrific way and in a short time. He also sees Mr. Karr's and Ms. Blohm's stake being good tools for that committee.

Ms. Wines felt property ownership shouldn't factor into the decision as it is inappropriate. Stakeholders are citizens and tax payers, you don't necessarily need to own property in the downtown area.

Mr. Rice said he wasn't suggesting it be a requirement.

Mr. Keener said Mr. Karr's resume is not complete. He has been an active Fire Fighter with the City and it was not listed on his resume.

**** A motion was made by Robert Schmidlein, seconded by John Rice, to reappoint Lina Blohm and recommend Jon Karr as the other stakeholder.**

The motion passed unanimously. (5-0 Mandy Simons abstained.)

The following items were not discussed due to the meeting being adjourned.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 14, 2015 – Regular meeting **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

June 9, 2015 – Regular meeting **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

I. NEW BUSINESS

A. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS, PETITIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

2. Review, consideration, and possible action to approve an agreement between the RDA and the City for the Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) award for the City of Elko Downtown Storefront Improvement Program in the amount of \$292,000. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**
3. Review consideration, and possible action to amend the adopted 2015-2016 RDA fiscal budget to include the \$292,000 for the Storefront Improvement Program. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

FINAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments made at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Chris J. Johnson, Chairman
Redevelopment Agency