

MINUTES

COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

SPECIAL MEETING
OF
AUGUST 13, 2012

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
313 COURT STREET
THE DALLES, OREGON

PRESIDING: Chair Jim Wilcox

AGENCY PRESENT: Bill Dick, Carolyn Wood, Dan Spatz, Brian Ahier, Tim McGlothlin

AGENCY ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Nolan Young, City Attorney Gene Parker, City Clerk Julie Krueger, Community Development Director Dan Durow

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wilcox at 5:39 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted by City Clerk Krueger; all members present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Spatz and seconded by Wood to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Granada Block Redevelopment Memorandum of Understanding

Community Development Director Durow reviewed the staff report. He noted the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee had recommended the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be approved as presented. Durow reviewed the MOU, including various phases for development, responsibilities of the Developer and the Urban Renewal Agency, and Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA). He said the Agreement was proposed to be completed by September 30, 2012, but that time could be extended if necessary.

Durow said there would be several more opportunities for public input because the Agency would have the opportunity to review the information, as well as a review by Historic Landmarks Commission and the Planning Commission.

Spatz asked if the vertical housing zone discussed for the Commodore Parking Lot would apply to all of the downtown area or was only applied to this proposed development. Durow said the vertical housing zone would be applied to most or all of the downtown area. He said the RARE Planner would be working on that issue in the Fall.

City Attorney Parker noted there had been a discrepancy in two sections regarding the closing date so language was changed to state the funds mentioned in Section 4.2.2.a would be available upon execution of the closing documents.

Ahier asked if there was a cost estimate for the archaeological work. Durow said the first phase of that work was to prepare an overview, mostly using past records, there would be a better idea of what the cost would be for the second stage of the work, which was to dig test pits. Durow said when the second portion was completed, there would be a better picture of how the site would be cleared for construction.

City Manager Young said the Urban Renewal Agency was responsible for Phases I and II of that work, but the Developer would be responsible to resolve issues through design of their project.

Ahier asked for clarification of the one percent systems development (SDC) credits. City Manager Young said the SDC credits applied to all new construction projects in the City and there was no cap on the credits.

Community Development Director Durow noted the drawings were considered very preliminary and were developed for illustrative purposes only. He said the basic idea was to have vehicular access from First Street and pedestrian access on Second Street.

Public Comment

John Nelson, 524 West Third Place, The Dalles, spoke as a member of the Main Street Program Design Committee. He said the committee had some concerns regarding the appearance of the new development and suggested including a professional architect who was not connected to the development to help with the design review to make sure it fit with the historic nature of the area.

Steve Lawrence, 222 West 12th Street, The Dalles, said he hoped the project would be a success. He expressed concern that most of the negotiations had been held in Executive Sessions, excluding public input. He said it wasn't right to exclude the public from the process. Mr. Lawrence said the Civic Auditorium had been promised half the revenue from the rental of the Granada Theater in 2010, but had not received any money from it.

Regarding the proposed Disposition and Development Agreement, Mr. Lawrence said he hoped it would include protection and guidelines to be followed by the Developer. He expressed concern that the Blue Building would be demolished and said he hoped the agreement included language defining the financial strengths of the developer and/or its partners. Lawrence said it was important for the public to know the financial strength of the developers.

Ahier agreed with the concern that Executive Sessions were over-used in general, but said no decisions could be made in an Executive Session. He said there were times when property negotiations needed to be worked through in Executive Session.

Eric Gleason, 704 Case Street, The Dalles, expressed concern regarding possible vacation of the alley between First and Second Streets. He said it may need to be widened to two lanes to allow for delivery trucks in and out of the area.

Mr. Gleason offered assistance with archaeological work, noting his belief that the area was a rich archaeological area. Gleason said he was concerned about historic preservation and said this area could be of national significance. He expressed concern that historic buildings may be demolished. Gleason said the Blue Building was constructed in 1865 and was very historically significant, having been one of only three buildings that survived the fire of 1878. He noted the Recreation Building had originally been the Grand Theater before the Granada was in existence and said it was unknown how much of that structure was remaining behind the current facade of the Recreation.

Gleason expressed concern regarding the lack of a public process and said if the DDA was completed in September it would offer even less opportunity for public input.

MINUTES (Continued)
Special Urban Renewal Agency Meeting
August 13, 2012
Page 4

City Manager Young responded to a comment by Mr. Lawrence regarding rental monies being given to the Civic Auditorium, saying that money had been set aside in a special fund for future projects of the Civic Auditorium. He said staff would prepare a memorandum outlining the process.

Agency Deliberation

It was moved by Wood and seconded by Dick to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Granada Block Redevelopment Project and authorize the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Urban Renewal Agency.

Chair Wilcox said he hoped the project would be successful for the downtown and the entire community, but he didn't support many details of the proposal and would vote in opposition of the project.


The motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Granada Block Redevelopment Project and authorize the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Urban Renewal Agency was voted on and carried, Wilcox voting no.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Submitted by/
Julie Krueger, MMC
City Clerk

SIGNED:


James L. Wilcox, Chair

ATTEST:


Julie Krueger, MMC, City Clerk