

MINUTES

COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING
OF
MARCH 24, 2014

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
313 COURT STREET
THE DALLES, OREGON

PRESIDING: Chair Steve Lawrence

AGENCY PRESENT: Bill Dick, Carolyn Wood, Tim McGlothlin, Linda Miller

AGENCY ABSENT: Dan Spatz

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Nolan Young, City Attorney Gene Parker, City Clerk Julie Krueger, Administrative Fellow Jon Chavers

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lawrence at 7:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted by City Clerk Krueger; Spatz absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Dick and seconded by Miller to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2014 regular Agency meeting. The motion carried unanimously, Spatz absent.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Recommendation from Urban Renewal Advisory Committee Regarding Prioritization of Urban Renewal Projects

Administrative Fellow Chavers reviewed the staff report, noting the recommendation of the Advisory Committee was to add a goal of increasing value to properties within the District and to approve the prioritized project list.

Chair Lawrence questioned how the street scape beautification projects would add value to properties within the District. Chavers said all properties facing the improvements would have improved value to their own properties.

Wood said increasing property values had never been a stated goal of the Plan and was not considered during development of the program. She said the purpose had been to repair and improve infrastructure to improve an aging part of the City. She said taxes wouldn't increase until there was an increased demand for space within the district. Wood said increased taxes came from people making improvements to their buildings.

Chair Lawrence said the Best Practices Guidebook on urban renewal said the number one reason for having an urban renewal district was to increase values. He said this should be included in the Plan for The Dalles.

City Manager Young noted that the Plan had made a major shift in 1998 from infrastructure based improvements to a focus on private investment, projects to stimulate investment within the district.

Chair Lawrence asked if the City was aware of "dark store" ordinances. City Attorney Parker said the City did not have such an ordinance, but he understood the purpose of them was to force property owners to maintain their properties at a certain level.

Lawrence said the Redmond Plan specifically named each project and noted how it would increase the value. He said this was vital to the success of an urban renewal district.

Wood said she could support the priority of the projects, but it should be understood that if an opportunity rose to complete a project that wasn't next in line, it should be done while the opportunity existed.

There was discussion regarding some specific projects. Chair Lawrence asked for clarification regarding funding for the proposed parking structure and Granada project. City Manager Young said it was anticipated a bond issuance would help fund the parking structure. He talked about how the Washington Street project had funding from grants and urban renewal funds, but still lacked full funding. He said there was tentative approval from ODOT for \$1.35 million in funding, so the project was still lacking between \$400,000 and \$500,000. He said some of the funding was left over from the 2009 bond issuance, and there was anticipated revenue from the sale of the Granada and Blue buildings.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Wood to add a goal to increase value to properties within the Urban Renewal District to the Plan and to approve the prioritization of projects as recommended by the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee. The motion carried unanimously, Spatz absent.

Other Business

Chair Lawrence asked if there was an update regarding the complaints filed with the City about the Sunshine Mill issue. He said this was a formal complaint, answered by the City Attorney, but the Agency had never been informed about the possible problem.

Dick suggested the complaint or information may be a subject for an Executive Session.

Lawrence said the Agency should not have learned about it in the newspaper and said there should be a policy in place for informing the Agency and City Council regarding complaints.

City Manager Young said it had been a judgment call. He said the City received many complaints, but this one seemed to be about matters outside the concern of the City and about the character of an individual. He said it was a balancing act of when to notify the Agency or Council about complaints.

City Attorney Parker said he expected to hear from the law firm he hired to review documents, sometime this week and would provide a report to the Agency regarding their opinion as to any liability the Agency may have with the Sunshine Mill property.

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ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Submitted by/
Julie Krueger, MMC
City Clerk

SIGNED:



Stephen E. Lawrence, Chair

ATTEST:



Julie Krueger, MMC, City Clerk