



**CITY OF THE DALLES
Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Agency Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, April 15, 2014

5:30 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

313 Court Street

The Dalles, OR 97058

Conducted in a handicap accessible room.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Zukin called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chris Zukin, Gary Grossman, Steve Kramer, Linda Miller, Greg Weast, Jennifer Botts, John Nelson

Members Absent: *Robin Miles

Staff Present: City Manager Nolan Young, City Attorney Gene Parker, Administrative Fellow Jon Chavers, Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

Also present: Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) Loan Fund Manager Eric Nerdin

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Zukin led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Grossman and seconded by Weast to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously; Miles absent.

*Note: Miles joined the meeting at 5:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Weast and seconded by Grossman to approve the March 18, 2014 minutes as submitted. Zukin, Grossman, Botts, Kramer, Miller, and Miles voted in favor, Nelson abstained; the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCUSSION ITEM – Urban Renewal Projects for Fiscal Year 2014-15

City Manager Young presented the highlights of his April 9, 2014 memorandum regarding the proposed budget for Urban Renewal (UR) Projects.

A correction to the report was noted in the last paragraph of Page 1, under the property rehabilitation program; \$200,000 was committed to the *Granada Theater* project, not the Civic Auditorium project. City Manager Young advised that there was a remaining UR fund balance of \$463,360. He proposed three UR projects listed on Page 2 of his report for the Committee's consideration for use of these remaining funds.

Kramer asked if there was a final figure, or plan, for the Civic Auditorium project. Young stated the Urban Renewal Agency (Agency) was in the process of providing funds for preliminary engineering, then the Civic would have a better idea of what funds were needed. The Agency's \$300,000 would provide seed money to obtain other grants, Young said, and the Civic would be involved in substantial fundraising to obtain the remaining estimated three million dollars.

Zukin asked if the new "For Profit" Property Rehabilitation Grant Program was designed for façade restoration only, or if there were previous discussions on including interior restoration to enable second story usage. City Manager Young said the Agency used the loan interest buy down program for interior restorations. Zukin said he personally felt that, between the three suggested project options listed for the remaining Agency funds, the Property Rehabilitation Program for the downtown area was the most attractive because it would increase private property value, put unused space to use, and promote the downtown businesses. He said he would eventually like to see a more robust Property Rehab Program that would include 100% interest buy down for property owner loans, include some interior restoration money, and increase the allocation of Agency funds.

City Manager Young advised that the Committee could suggest providing some funds towards moving the Main Street Coordinator position forward to be an advocate for urban renewal to go out and promoting available urban renewal funding programs, come alongside the owner to assist in asking for funds, and possibly increasing funds for that position to help write grant applications. Linda Miller asked if the façade program itself would generate education and incentive to other businesses. Young said it would help, but having assistance to move forward with applications and grant writing would bring it to the next level. Botts indicated she would like to see assistance with building interiors; otherwise buildings eventually would not be suitable for purchase. Young suggested giving the current program a year to see what interest is generated, then re-assess. Miles emphasized the need to advertise available UR funding programs to the businesses. MCEDD Loan Fund Manager Nerdin stated that in the past there were more applicants than funds available. He said at times it becomes a balancing act—applications versus funds.

Weast advised that he, as a commercial property owner, realized rent prices could not increase. He said he struggled with wanting to improve his façade that would increase his property value and property taxes, knowing that he should and could not raise the rent. Grossman commented

that the lack of participation in the façade program could be due to a lack of motivation, such as Weast faced, rather than the lack of information.

The Committee discussed the suggestion of allocating funds to the West Gateway project. City Manager Young advised that funds could be used for the design work and remaining funds could be used for other West Gateway elements later on.

Young also advised that there were opportunity driven funds of \$100,000 that could be available now, prior to fiscal year 2014-15, if the Committee saw an immediate need. Botts asked Young if he knew of any immediate project need for using funds before the end of the fiscal year. Young said he recommended any one of the three suggested projects in his report . Staff could begin work on any of the three immediately, he said.

Miles suggested allocating an additional \$200,000 into the Property Rehabilitation Program, some of which would be used to facilitate a Main Street Coordinator to promote the UR funding programs. Nelson said the face-to-face contact from a Main Street person was a far better idea than advertising. After further discussion, it was the general consensus of the Committee to suggest funding an additional \$200,000 into the Property Rehabilitation Program, for a total of \$400,000.

The Committee considered allocating funds to the West Gateway project. Kramer suggested that staff partner with North Wasco County Parks and Recreation District to coordinate and move the project along. Botts gave a recap on the pool project. The design work was completed, engineering work was underway. The completion date for the project is May 2015. It was the general consensus of the Committee to have staff assess the West Gateway project costs, place some funds towards engineering, and hold some funds under the UR undetermined opportunity driven line item to be used at a later time as necessary. Any remaining UR funds would be rolled over into the next fiscal year.

PROJECT UPDATES

Rapoza representative Michael Leash presented the following updates for the Granada Block Redevelopment project:

- His business partners are preparing for a May 12 presentation to the Agency.
- Developers are working on the development's timeline and details.
- A new rendering is close to completion.
- A Portland-based restaurant and bar group will be visiting the site in April to consider The Dalles market.
- Discussions with investors continue, one out-of-state prospective investor will be visiting The Dalles in May.

City Manager Young gave the following update on other UR projects:

- The Agency approved the "for profit" grants program and the IOOF façade grant. Both were approved as recommended by the URAC.
- Two minor amendments are on the May 12 Agency meeting agenda: 1) an amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan to include language stating that increasing property values was

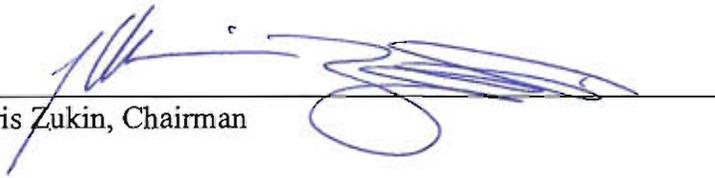
one of the goals of the Agency; and 2) an amendment to implement the “For Profit” Property Rehabilitation Program.

Young announced that the URA budget meeting was scheduled for May 5 at 7:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Zukin adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman.


Chris Zukin, Chairman