

# MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

## CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 19, 2020

FINAL

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, November 19, 2020 via Zoom in the Council Chambers, 140 W. Pine, at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

**Board:** Nancy Moe, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock

**Staff:** Ellen Buchanan, Chris Behan, Annette Marchesseault, Tod Gass, Jilayne Dunn, Lesley Pugh

**Public:** Larry Sloane, LF Sloane Consulting Group; William Sloane, LF Sloane Consulting Group; Allison Segal, City of Missoula Public Works; Heather McMilin, Homeward; Ashley Strayer, City Cemetery; Jeremy Keene, City of Missoula Public Works; Ashley Grant, Homeward; Lori Davidson, Missoula Housing Authority; Missoula Parking Commission; Missoula Access Community Television (MCAT)

### CALL TO ORDER

12:00 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 19, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moe announced the numbers to call in for public comment. There were no public comments.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### Trinity Apartments (URD II) – TIF Request (*Behan*)

Behan said the Trinity Apartments project is a multiple site project rolled into one financing scheme. He recognized that this is one of three or four very large and impactful housing projects for the City of Missoula that MRA has been able to be involved in. The financing for many of these housing projects is very complicated. Although the MRA participation request is not as high in this project as it has been in some of the other projects, like Villagio Apartments and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), it is still very important, because every dollar counts in every one of these projects.

Behan said the Trinity Apartments project will be located on two sites. The larger site, referred to as the Mullan Site, was donated by Missoula County and is adjacent to the County Detention Center off of Mullan Road. The other site, referred to as the Cooley Site, is just south of the Burns Street Bistro. It is in the location of the former Skyview Trailer Park. Homeword purchased the Cooley Site using some local talent and excellent financing work from Clearwater Credit Union and other local entities.

Behan said the Cooley Site will be relatively dense with some green area. The residential target population will be residents making less than 70% of area median income, with chances of the income being substantially less that. The developers are calling it “come as you are” low-threshold housing, which is needed in that rental range.

The Mullan Site will be three different projects in one. One hundred (100) units will be for those making less than 70% of area median income, similar to the Cooley Site housing. Thirty (30) units will be dedicated to long-term homeless folks. They will have a series of programs associated with their residency that will help address the reasons they may be homeless. Although there are certainly individual reasons for everyone that might be in that situation, there are some groups they can deal with in terms of mental and physical health, job training and other things. The third piece will be the Navigation Center. It will be the lower building on the Mullan Site and will be house an expanded version of the services for the 30 units just described. The Navigation Center will be available to whoever comes in and needs assistance on how to proceed with their life and move away from the status they are in right now. Behan said this has been highly successful in other communities around the country in terms of providing a variety of targeted services. The final set of services is still under review. The City of Missoula will be the master lessor of the Navigation Center and now is working on a Request for Proposals (RFP) to get a consultant on board to come up with the final set of services that would be most helpful in Missoula and western Montana.

Behan said homeless camps are beginning to expand all over. The areas they occur are sometimes mixed in with criminal activities and/or unsavory people, and those folks are mixed in with families and a lot of folks who have mental health issues. These homeless camps can be scary to the neighborhoods because of that, and can impacts decisions about reinvestment and redevelopment in those neighborhoods.

At this point, MRA is being asked for help only within URD II in the West Broadway right-of-way (ROW). The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) request is for sidewalks, curbs and drainage. Behan showed a rendering of existing conditions, and a proposed site plan with a better drainage system, and sidewalks and curbs that are ADA-compliant. The cost of the sidewalks, curbs and drainage is \$53,255.68. Of that, a very healthy portion is labeled as engineering and design. That also includes a lot of work that has to be done with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the amount of setup the space needs including rerouting traffic. Behan said the Board packet includes a much more in-depth description of the project. He said the developers, Homeword and the Missoula Housing Authority (MHA), will be using Blueline Development, Inc. as their financing and construction management consultant. Blueline Development, Inc. was also involved with the Villagio Apartments project.

Heather McMilin gave some history as to why Homeword is in a partnership for this project. She said while they know the project will help the homeless need in Missoula, it is not going to solve the whole picture. She said the Cooley Site is a component to this project because they are using the low-income housing tax credit program, a 4% bond project, and this is a non-competitive tax credit where about 40% of the project costs get covered with equity. They have to find soft financing and loans for the rest of it. It is complex and every penny counts. She said over a year ago, Homeword was able to secure the Cooley Site. They worked with the neighborhood as a group and they really wanted to see a project come together. Homeword worked with partners and secured the project through partnership with some private entities and Clearwater Credit Union who is the majority holder on that. McMilin said Blueline Development, Inc. and MHA were working on a donation from the County and doing a permanent supportive component of homes and the Navigation Center. She said they had enough land and size of a project that was too big for a 9% low-income housing tax credit competitive ask because that is easy to fund. It is very competitive but there is more equity. However, McMilin said both of the projects were too small, so they decided to combine forces and projects and do a standard site. That means that MHA and Homeword are owners and developers, and Blueline Development, Inc. is a co-developer with them and that project team is critical.

McMilin said MHA has a lot of experience with the particular vouchers associated with the 30 homes on the Mullan Site. She said permanent supportive homes are basically homes with services attached. Those services are integral to those homes, and for people coming off the street there are a lot of intensive services including physical and mental health. All of those components are right there in that safe environment. Blueline Development, Inc. has used this model in other parts of the country, but not here in Missoula.

McMilin said they will try to design the space at the Navigation Center so that the services can evolve over time. The mental health component going out on Emergency Services responses was just rolled out by the City and that should save a lot of people from going to the emergency room or jail inappropriately. She said hopefully it will make the responders' jobs easier and add capacity versus duplication.

McMilin said normally Homeword's projects are targeted at people making 60% of area median income and below. With income averaging they can go up a little bit and open their bandwidth due to a new Internal Revenue Service (IRS) statute. This will allow them to serve more Missoulians. Intrinsic Architecture of Bozeman are the architects. They have built over 350 homes with Homeword in different parts of the state. The developers are also working with WGM Group who have taken on the work with the entitlement.

McMilin said the developers worked with the City, MRA and MDT to make sure the sidewalk improvements make sense. They did not want to send fully accessible paths out into the middle of Broadway Street, they will instead just cross Maple Street. She said there will be a lot of people living at the property and a lot of people coming and going out of the Navigation Center. There will be several pedestrian connections from Mullan Road all the way through onto Maple Street and up to the bus stops on Broadway Street. This piece of the project is very important for pedestrian, bicycle and circulation in general.

McMilin said overall the partnership between Homeword, MHA and Blueline Development, Inc. is strong. Partnerships with the City are also strong. She said they went before the Land, Use and Planning (LUP) Committee on their first submission of the subdivision. They were unanimously approved and it is going on the City Council Consent Agenda. She said the City staff have been amazing and helped them with their very strict timeline of closing in February 2021. They were able to lock in a financing number of \$0.93 on the dollar which is unheard of right now in the country. They are very excited that the City helped them through that minor subdivision process.

Brock said this is a very exciting project. She said every time the MRA Board sees Homeword and MHA they are coming up with more innovative ways to solve a problem that desperately needs to be solved. She thanked them for their work on this. Lori Davidson, MHA, said Homeword and MHA have been hoping to be able to work together for quite a while.

Reineking asked about the supportive housing at the Mullan Site. She asked who it is primarily aimed at. McMilin said the YWCA's project takes a bandwidth of homeless families. The design there for what is being built now will be more conducive to families. The Mullan Site has more one bedrooms and studios. It is a smaller space and designed for a different bandwidth of potential users. She said they can't predict exactly who will occupy it. Davidson said the one bedroom units can very easily accommodate two people, perhaps three if there is a small child. She said there are occupancy guidelines they have to follow both through City code and regulations that govern the permanent supportive housing vouchers. She said the Cooley Site has larger, two and three bedrooms that are low barrier housing and could very well include people who are homeless. Davidson said MHA's Cornerstone Project is going to be leasing up shortly. That project has 12 one-bedroom units designed to house people who are homeless and are most in need. They will have supportive services available for those residents. They can house up to two people and/or a couple with a small child.

Davidson told a story of a homeless couple who was living in an encampment on the river. They applied to live at the Palace Apartments that are owned and managed by MHA. MHA was able to get them through the admissions process quickly and they are happily living there now. She said they anticipate that is what they will be doing both at Cornerstone and Trinity Apartments. Reineking thanked Homeword and MHA for all of their projects. She said she is glad to see the city making progress in dealing with the housing situation in Missoula.

Reineking said she asked about adults versus families because Behan's memo and the letter that came with the packet described the supportive services that were going to be offered and they didn't include educational services for kids who might be going to school. She said it is likely not anticipated because they don't anticipate any children over the age of six. Reineking commented that McMilin mentioned every dollar being critical to this and said she sees there is a \$1.5 million contingency which sounds like a lot of money, but it's only about 3.5% of the overall project which is not a lot. She said every dollar is critical. McMilin said part of this is that Homeword, MHA and Blueline Development, Inc. earn a developer fee and are taking \$1 million of the paid developer fee out of what would normally go to their operations and putting it into a reserve to backstop those operations with the

Navigation Center and permanent supportive homes. She said that is one risk mitigation point from an operational standpoint. McMilin said the other part is that after 18 years at Homeword and telling the Department of Commerce that the lowest qualified bid is the most economical way to do business, they gave the developers a waiver on this project. They have their general contractor on board right now and they are working with the design team and doing value engineering. It is very impactful on how they deliver the project.

Moe asked Behan about the intersection work. She asked if the County or State are doing work on Broadway Street that coordinates with this bit of intersection work and might cause them to destroy any of the work done to complete what they are going to do. Behan said his understanding from the City engineer is that the sidewalks out there are relatively new and water and sewer are more available on this side of the street versus the other side. He said from an infrastructure standpoint it doesn't look like there will be disruption to what is built, although there is no guarantee. Moe asked if the contract for the project will do this work that MRA might authorize today. McMilin said yes, they will incorporate that. She said the work itself is required per their minor subdivision process. It is beneficial that they build the project through their general contractor because any dollars they spend generate tax credit basis and money put in will get a little bit more equity in for the project. McMilin said the developers worked closely with City engineering and they didn't want to have to do the other side of Maple Street because that is the undeveloped side. MDT required that little component to be taken care of. Behan added that one reason he didn't actually say Trinity Apartments, LLLP in his recommendation is because the decision hadn't been made whether Trinity or co-general partner Homeword would be the second party to the development agreement.

Davidson thanked McMilin and Ashley Grant from Homeword for shepherding the subdivision process through the City. They did an immense amount of work and a fabulous job.

Buchanan said MRA's mantra has become that this is probably the most important project going on in Missoula right now. She said it kills her that it is not in an URD, but is glad MRA can do a little bit to help out. Also, City staff has really stepped up and created a team that has worked through the complexity of this quickly. It has a timeline that really matters. McMiliin said the mathematical impact is millions of dollars if they don't close in February 2021. She said they went into a pandemic in the middle of this and moved everything to virtual and Development Services was half staffed. They helped shepherd it through and have had a project captain. Mary McCrea in Development Services is training Cassie Tripart, who is a newer planner, and she became their champion and ran it through every department promptly. She said WGM Group was shocked at how efficient it was. Everybody has stepped up across the board. This may become a template for how Development Services can build in efficiency and improvements, creating a larger impact.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE TIF ASSISTANCE IN AN AMOUNT OF UP TO \$53,255.68 FOR THE TRINITY APARTMENTS PROJECT, WHATEVER ENTITY THAT MAY END UP BEING, FOR PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY IMPROVEMENTS ON WEST BROADWAY IN URD II SUBJECT TO REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT MEETING THE STANDARD CONDITIONS FOR ALL MRA ASSISTED PROJECTS AND**

**AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN THE RELATED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

Dunn posted the information for the public to call in and comment.

**No further discussion. No further public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).**

**URD III Northern Sidewalk Project, Phase 2 – Request to Approve Professional Services Budget Amendment (Gass)**

Gass shared a map of the project area. The request today is to amend the Professional Services Agreement with MRA and WGM Group regarding the URD III Northern Sidewalk Project. As they were going through the preliminary design phase last year it was determined that there was some overlap with this project and the Brooks Street Corridor Transportation-Oriented Development (TOD) Infrastructure Study that is currently underway. In order to not muddy the waters on the Brooks TOD, it was determined they would swap out some parcels on Brooks Street and bring in some sidewalk segments that were further south. Gass said when the preliminary costs for the project began to take shape it became apparent that the cost of the project was exceeding more than what MRA was comfortable budgeting for in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. The decision was made to split the project into two construction phases so the construction cost could be spread out over two budget cycles.

Gass said Phase 1 of the project was completed last year. Phase 2, highlighted in red on the map, are the sidewalk segments to be completed. He said the ROW width on Benton Avenue between Washburn and Russell Streets is only 30 feet wide. WGM Group worked with the property owner to acquire an additional 30 feet of ROW so the entire street can be placed within public ROW. WGM Group will finalize and record the ROW acquisition and any other easements required to complete Phase 2. MRA and WGM Group have negotiated a Scope of Services and a budget of \$56,600 for professional service to complete Phase 2 construction. That number is right in the pocket of the median cost expected for this phase of construction. WGM Group's work will include finalizing and recording ROW acquisitions and easement acquisitions and finalizing design work over the winter. Gass said they plan on bidding the project around late February for construction in the summer of 2021.

The staff recommendation is that the Board approve a budget amendment to the MRA/WGM Professional Services Agreement for the URD III Northern Sidewalk Project Phase 2 in an amount not to exceed \$56,600 for final design and ROW easement recording, engineering, construction administration and project close-out.

Moe said the budget still has construction and design open on the budget report. She asked if this was part of that or an additional authorization. Gass said it is included in the FY21 budget and is not an addition.

**BROCK: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE A BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE MRA/WGM PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR THE URD III NORTHERN SIDEWALK PROJECT PHASE 2 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$56,600 FOR FINAL DESIGN AND RIGHT OF WAY EASEMENT RECORDING, ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECT CLOSE-OUT.**

**Reineking seconded the motion.**

Dunn posted the information for the public to call in and comment.

Moe asked if this was coming out of contingency funds. Gass said it is coming out of Public Works Contingency for URD III. Moe asked if there are funds available. Gass said yes.

**No further discussion. No further public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).**

### **NON-ACTION ITEMS**

#### **City Cemetery Strategic Plan (North Reserve-Scott Street URD) – Presentation by L.F. Sloane Consulting Group & Jeremy Keene, Public Works Director**

Behan said the North Reserve-Scott Street (NRSS) URD Master Plan treaded lightly around cemeteries, mainly because both St. Mary and City Cemetery were quite concerned about the Plan and the changes it was suggesting. They felt they needed more time and more specific work to be able to come up with responses to some of the things that came up during that planning process. Not long after the Master Plan project ended, the City Cemetery released a national RFP and selected L.F. Sloane Consulting Group to do a City Cemetery Strategic Plan to look at short and long-term needs and make recommendations. He said he, Keene, and Buchanan attended some of the working sessions with L. F. Sloane Consulting Group. He said the Strategic Plan was done very professionally and L. F. Sloane is well respected in their profession. Behan said the highlights mentioned in his memo pertain to what MRA could be involved in and/or have interest in how it fits with the overall development of the area.

Moe said page 12 of the Cemetery Strategic Plan regarding surplus land evaluation does have a small conflict with the NRSS Master Plan. She asked if MRA was being asked to do anything with the NRSS Master Plan because of that. Behan said the NRSS Master Plan lays out the direction it could go that would be acceptable, but there needs to be a more specific plan to make sure things are being done in conjunction with the needs that have been researched for the Cemetery. Behan said the NRSS Master Plan says more planning needs to be done, which is what they are doing. He said he will go back and look at specific language in the NRSS Master Plan to see if there is any need to amend it or just move forward with the Cemetery Strategic Plan. Staff will make sure that happens if necessary.

Will Sloane and Larry Sloane from L.F. Sloane Consulting Group presented the City Cemetery Strategic Plan. W. Sloane said he and L. Sloane are cemetery consultants. He said they love cemeteries and it is something they really feel passionately about. They believe Missoula has a beautiful community resource that can only be expanded upon if it so chooses. L. Sloane said one of the central questions they were asked was whether the

Cemetery has adequate land, and if it does, is there some that may be surplus. Cemeteries throughout the U.S. are facing significant headwinds because their world has changed. L. Sloane said he has been working in cemeteries for over 40 years and that change began in the 1990s in earnest and has not subsided. The first significant change is that a large percentage of people are now choosing cremation as a step in the funeral process. He said in 1971 when he spent his first day at a cemetery office the national cremation rate was 3%. Today it is 54%. In addition to that, they have seen lifestyle changes. In the last 20 years there have been significant divorce rates and fractured families. There is also a generation that, for the first time, has the ability to relocate in retirement. Many families live in different states or countries. With all the demographic changes, cemeteries have had a tough time remaining relevant. L. Sloane said a lot of their clients are historic cemeteries like Missoula's City Cemetery. They work very hard to keep them relevant to the community, while also making them arboretums, having tours and historical events, and making them important places for walking, jogging, etc.

L. Sloane said specifically in Missoula there is a state Veteran's Cemetery that offers burial to veterans, their spouses and dependent children at no cost. There is also a very well run Catholic Cemetery and for-profit Cemetery which is affiliated with the major funeral home in the community. He said the City Cemetery is at a significant disadvantage from a marketing perspective and has seen decline in its operations. Its market share 50 years ago was 85% and today it is 10%. In those contexts, L.F. Sloane Consulting Group sees that there is certainly excess land in the Cemetery. The Cemetery Board acquired land as a form of investment, as did the Catholic Cemetery, trying to merge the two sites together. That is something that never actually occurred. L. Sloane said there is a lot of excess land there that could be incorporated into the master planning for that land use on that side of town. L. Sloane said their analysis is very clear that there is excess property at the Cemetery.

W. Sloane showed a map of the land. The blue area is developed Cemetery property today. The left side of the major thoroughfare that goes through it is the historic Cemetery, specifically its original 14 acres. He pointed out the newest development, near the Cemetery office and maintenance garage; it is a less mature site. It is a site that will hopefully slowly start to near the left side over time. The green area is undeveloped and is utilized by Public Works and a myriad of other things including utilities. He said they did their land use analysis and concluded that there are 7,000 unused graves in the Cemetery today. The City Cemetery is absorbing graves at a rate of 35 per year, which leaves over 200 years of active life. That is certainly sufficient given their inability to predict, outside of the next 20 years, what will happen with the Cemetery. From L.F. Sloane Consulting Group's perspective, there is more than enough land that is developed and usable that the entire green area could be used for development that is beyond Cemetery purpose.

W. Sloane said as they went further and looked at the NRSS Master Plan. They saw some roadways that are looking at coming through the Cemetery. He said they came to the conclusion that while you could take the entire green area that existed previously, they would recommend leaving a utility buffer that would allow for a pump house, storage, and a slight corridor. They also recommend using the orange area for future Cemetery development. W. Sloane said that is more to keep the Cemetery contained and to have it be that unique green space that, while it is surrounded by industry and challenging uses for



a cemetery, it is a very serene place. It is extremely well maintained and very popular in the community. They are hoping that these slight adjustments can allow that to continue.

L. Sloane spoke to the financial component. He said they want to be clear that even portions of the Cemetery that have already been laid out could be taken. With 7,000 spaces and using 35 per year, there is significant land that already has been plotted in the area to the north of the orange area. He said it creates an integrity to the site and it is important to maintain the Cemetery for its historical use and keep it as tranquil as possible. Within their report they recommend a myriad of options for what City Cemetery should do on the borders to protect it from the current industrial uses. There are many cemeteries with excess land and L.F. Sloane Consulting Group is asked regularly to help sell that land for alternative purposes. When that occurs, there is a windfall and they're getting money. In this case, that is really not the case. The City owns it all and it is not a typical arrangement where a not-for-profit or religious cemetery is selling property. He said they are hopeful that a portion of the redevelopment value could be recommitted to the Cemetery. Right now, the City Cemetery has a chapel that really doesn't function as a chapel. It has an office that was a residence and really doesn't function as an office. L.F. Sloane Consulting Group thinks that removing the old buildings and building a new building in the orange area and incorporating all of the activities could be a tremendous step for the Cemetery to make it a much more viable location and more user-friendly as other community uses are added such as tours, arboretum and botanical garden area.

L. Sloane said the hope, as MRA and other groups work on this area, is that they try to keep the Cemetery in mind as one of the beneficiaries, not just getting housing to the community, but to finish the Cemetery in a way that really makes it whole and maintains it as the beautiful site it is. The trees and historic section are lovely and it is a wonderful place to walk. It's just hard to get to. As the green area is developed as residential, there will be people who want to go into the Cemetery and have a pathway and connect to outdoor activity.

Jeremy Keene, Public Works Director, added that there is a lot going on in the Scott Street area. The Cemetery Strategic Plan and Public Works Facility Plan are two pieces of that puzzle that help to implement the overall NRSS Master Plan. As Behan stated, they are working forward with the NRSS Master Plan and developing those additional details that they need to understand how to move forward. They appreciate MRA's support in helping them do that with assistance in funding for both of those studies. Keene said the Cemetery Board has reviewed the City Cemetery Strategic Plan and made comments. They would like to meet one more time in December. Public Works will take comments to City Council in January and ask for approval of the City Cemetery Strategic Plan. Keene said it is a high-level strategic plan and has a lot of suggested tasks and next steps. Those aren't detailed out yet and there will be additional work to design those features and find out the specific details. It does give the City a good direction that helps internally with the Cemetery and externally with what is happening around it.

Reineking referred to the orange area on the map. She asked if the property below it is the Hutton property that is referred to in the Report. L. Sloane said it is a concrete manufacturing facility for burial vaults. He said it is an eyesore and they would like to at least see the barbed wire removed. Behan said it is the Hutton property. They make burial

vaults and a lot of other concrete manufacturing there. Reineking said she read the Report and thinks it is great. She said a lot of the suggestions are great and she is glad the Cemetery Board agreed to do strategic planning. She said she hopes if the City decides to divest of the excess land that a portion of it would be used to implement the Strategic Plan, including the community center and the idea of an arboretum and opening it up to the public along with Stories and Stones, birdwatching tours and things like that. Reineking said she understands the Cemetery Board still has some concerns about roads within the Cemetery and their historic designation, but hopes those can be worked out going forward.

L. Sloane said there is sufficient land not to close roads in the Cemetery. He said the purpose of the road closures, as consultants, is to look at eliminating liabilities that have future costs. With a road, it has to be plowed, salted and repaved. If you can get rid of a road and make it grass, that is really good at a Cemetery and easy to handle. If you don't have a building, you don't have a roof and all of the insurance that goes with it. He said L.F. Sloane Consulting Group always looks at liabilities to eliminate them because at some point the Cemetery is going to be dormant and there is only taxpayer support. There is no endowment fund to maintain it in perpetuity. He said that is a cornerstone of what they are looking at. If roads are removed the liabilities are eliminated and desirable locations are created for families to purchase burial lots in the old part of the Cemetery. Also, the land doesn't have to be used when it could otherwise be used for public housing or some other purpose.

Brock asked if the dwindling market share the Cemetery has will change with the finalization of a Plan. She asked if there is uncertainty in the market of what will happen with the City Cemetery, causing families not to choose it as an option. L. Sloane said the City Cemetery is not different than other urban cemeteries. The community is relatively homogenous with 70% of the community choosing cremation as a step in the funeral process today. That number will likely grow to 85%. What is needed in the Cemetery are relevant places to put cremated remains and to memorialize loved ones. He said that is the arboretum, part of it is public access and part of it is having a new center where you can come to the office and have a space to do business, and have a nice chapel instead of a chapel that doesn't function. He said all of those things tie to try to make it more productive. L.F. Sloane Consulting Group believes in shared services. There is the Catholic Cemetery up the street and a for-profit Cemetery. They should be talking to each other about having a single backhoe between all three cemeteries and try to do things that make economic sense. L. Sloane said it was raised in the Cemetery Strategic Plan, but not emphasized because outsourcing can be controversial, particularly in municipal settings. He said they are very sensitive to public employment issues.

Moe thanked L.F. Sloane Consulting Group for their report. She said Behan will take a look at the NRSS Master Plan to see what the expectations were for the area. Once the Cemetery Board has their final adoption from City Council, if there are requests to MRA for action to take, the Board will look forward to hearing what those are. Keene said there are some differences amongst the Cemetery Board and the recommendations in the Plan. They need to make sure when it goes to City Council those are pointed out and expressed. He said the Cemetery Board will likely come out with some final comments on the Plan and he is not sure at this point whether changes to the Plan will be made or not.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Director's Report**

#### *MRA Communication Plan*

Buchanan said Spider McKnight from Six Pony Hitch, LLC has started interviews for the MRA Communication Plan. Dunn said McKnight has completed interviews with staff. McKnight has reviewed all of MRA's documents. She will be interviewing MRA Board and City Council members next and out of those interviews will compile a list of other stakeholders in the community to interview. Buchanan said she spoke with McKnight about the upcoming session of the Legislature and messaging that MRA may be able to create around TIF that might resonate with newly elected officials.

#### *Scott Street Property*

Buchanan said the Mayor's office is going to make a referral this afternoon to get on City Council Committee Agenda for December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Staff is working on a partnership with a group that wants to redevelop the 9.8 acres that has been cleaned up to residential standards. The City stands to gain some impactful permanently affordable housing as a result of this partnership if they're able to consummate that relationship. It would include a component that is ownership of permanently affordable housing where the land would be vested with a Community Land Trust. She said this is one piece of the puzzle that is most challenging to address in terms of housing affordability and citizen's needs. They will be working with Opticos Design, a design firm out of California that specializes in missing middle housing. It is a series of products that don't necessarily exist in Missoula's market and is a step-up way of approaching getting density on a piece of property that is more compatible with what is going on in neighborhoods around it. The neighborhood across Scott Street is very active and supportive. They do have concerns about impacts of density on their quality of life and their ability to get in and out of their neighborhoods. She said those are some of the things they will need to deal with and folks will be looking to MRA to help solve some of those access issues internally with this development if it is able to move forward, and externally in terms of the 200 units going in at the Villagio Apartments with Scott Street being the only primary way of getting in and out of that area.

Buchanan said the other piece of this that is exciting is that this group brings an investor to the table who would take advantage of the fact that this land is in an Opportunity Zone (OZ). There would be a significant investment made through that tool. Certain things have to be done by the end of December in order for those benefits not to expire under the current regulations. It will go very quickly to City Council if everything falls into place. A number of months ago MRA allocated funding to the Missoula Economic Partnership (MEP) to try to attract OZ investment and they brought this deal to the City. That investment with MEP may very well pay off in spades. MRA allocated \$50,000 to MEP and if this deal goes through it is upwards of a \$20 million investment.

Reineking said it is great that MEP brought that investor. She is happy to see the collaboration between all of the parties on this.

#### *Development Services Realignment*

Moe asked if there was a time period when the realignment will be adequately staffed and trained and Buchanan will no longer be involved. Buchanan said she sent out an email about that this morning putting everybody on notice that the City needs to move forward as

quickly as possible with the recruiting to fill the Deputy positions. She said the job descriptions have been drafted and posted. One of her concerns was how the uptick in COVID infections and positive testing is going to impact the City's recruiting and onboarding of new staff members. She said they put everything on hold on the front end of COVID and a lot of departments had vacancies they needed to fill and couldn't. Buchanan was told this morning that the two Deputy recruitments are moving forward unimpeded by COVID and there is already a viable candidate. She is hoping by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year she is relieved of those duties.

#### *AC Hotel*

Buchanan said she spoke with Andy Holloran, developer, and he is on schedule to open AC Hotel in March. She said the building looks good and will be a nice addition to that corner downtown. Brock said Radio Central also has some work being done on their building and it is exciting to see everything coming together in that area. Buchanan said the upper floor on Wren Hotel visually and aesthetically changes the street. Between those three projects, ROAM Student Housing, Conflux Brewing and the new Library, exciting things are going on there. Buchanan said the challenge continues to be the northwest corner of the Main and Pattee Streets intersection (Century Link building). She said there is a fair amount of energy around working with Century Link to do something about that area.

#### **Budget Reports**

Dunn said she is working on the FY21 Budget Reports. She is currently working with the auditors on the audit. The FY20 Reports that were included with the packets should be the final version, but if the auditors have changes to certain things then she will have another final version.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **OTHER ITEMS**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh