

MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 18, 2023

FINAL

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, May 18, 2023 in the Hal Fraser Conference Room, 140 W. Pine St., and via Microsoft Teams at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

Board: Karl Englund, Tasha Jones, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock, Jack Lawson

Staff: Ellen Buchanan, Annie Gorski, Annette Marchesseault, Tod Gass, Jilayne Dunn, Maci MacPherson, Lesley Pugh

Public: John Rimel & Colin Rimel: 1245 S. 3rd St. W; Tony Moretti, Square 1 Architecture; Daniel Carlino, City Council; MCAT

CALL TO ORDER

12:00 pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[April 20, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes](#) were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brock announced that there will be a celebration on June 11th for the completion of the Midtown Master Plan. The Missoula Midtown Association and community partners are having a block party in the Southgate Mall parking lot. A presentation will be given to the MRA Board at the July meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

[1245 South 3rd Street West – \(URD II / Ward 3\) – FIP Request \(Dunn\)](#) | [Power Point Presentation](#)

Dunn said this project at 1245 South 3rd Street West is on the northwest corner of South 3rd Street West and Inez Street. The developers are the Rimel family and their partnership is JDR Enterprises, LLC. John Rimel is the principal. He and his son, Colin Rimel, along with

their architect, Tony Moretti, were present to answer any questions about the project. The Rimels are requesting a Façade Improvement Program (FIP) grant.

Dunn reviewed photos of the existing building. It is a steel framed and sided Butler building that hasn't had many improvements to it over the years. MRA's FIP provides businesses and property owners with assistance for a greater level of improvement to their building facades, increased energy efficiency and enhanced appearance of the overall building and area. The URD II FIP allows for grants up to 25% of the total project cost, or \$50,000, whichever is less.

The project scope includes façade and interior improvements to offer a new commercial space in the front part of the building that will allow the existing business currently in the rear of the building, Xplorer Maps, to expand and open a retail space. Dunn said the interior work will also include the creation of two offices, additional storage, updating of the existing office and restroom for customer use. Exterior improvements will include work on the north and west facades to meet the City's Design Excellence standards and ADA accessibility. The total estimated project cost for both interior and exterior work is \$215,300.

Dunn showed renderings of what the project would look like with and without FIP assistance. Without FIP assistance they would just repaint the building and replace some materials. To do a larger façade project with FIP assistance they would increase glazing, replace windows and doors for increased energy efficiency, add horizontal and vertical barnwood accents, add cementitious panels and exterior lighting.

Dunn said there will be signage on the building for Xplorer Maps. Colin Rimel showed renderings of the Xplorer Maps logo that will be a metal cut-out sign with potential backlighting. The sign will be about eight feet and will comply with all City regulations on signage.

This project meets four of the components of the City's Strategic Initiatives as outlined in Dunn's memo. It is also in alignment with MRA's adopted URD II Plan and the URD II 9-Year Strategic Exit Plan. Additionally, there are plans for recycling with this project. Dunn said John Rimel has been intimately involved in the beginning of Home Resource and as many materials as possible in this project will be recycled/reused. Moretti spoke to energy efficiency and said they just got calculations back from their installer. Currently there are two different furnaces in the front unit alone, probably because of the glass and poor insulation. The insulation investment and new glass will allow them to retire one of the furnaces. Dunn said the staff recommendation is to approve the FIP grant to JDR Enterprises, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

Reineking asked if the existing landscaping would be kept as shown in the photographs. John Rimel said it will remain, and there is a newer, small area of landscaping that was put in when the sidewalk and parking area were done in 2020. They did lay sod, but not all of it took, so they will be revisiting that space once the reconstruction is complete.

REINEKING: I MOVE TO APPROVE A FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT TO JDR ENTERPRISES, LLC IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000 FOR EXTERIOR RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING LOCATED AT 1245 SOUTH 3RD STREET WEST AND

AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT CONTINGENT UPON FINAL APPROVAL OF A CITY PERMIT, AND WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT REIMBURSEMENT WILL BE MADE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE PROJECT AFTER SUBMISSION OF REQUIRED PROOF OF EXPENDITURES, CONTRACTOR LIEN RELEASES, AND A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY OR OTHER RELEASE FROM THE CITY THAT WORK WAS COMPLETED ACCORDING TO SUBMITTED PLANS.

Brock seconded the motion.

Reineking noted this is a great example of a Façade Improvement Program project. It meets all of MRA's criteria, it's in a great location and is a good project for energy efficiency and greatly improves the building aesthetically.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).

Emergency Winter Shelter – 1919 North Avenue West (URD III / Ward 6) – TIF Request (Buchanan)

Buchanan said the City has used the building at 1919 North Avenue West for the last few years as an Emergency Winter Shelter. This building was part of the acquisition of the Montana Rail Link (MRL) property in URD III. The building formerly housed Sovereign Hope Church which has since relocated to the former Coca-Cola building on 3rd Street. Buchanan said the need for winter shelter outgrew the Salvation Army and other facilities, and so that need has been accommodated in this building which has saved lives.

Buchanan said there were life safety improvements including replacing sprinkler heads and installing an air exchange system needed in the building in order to be able to use it as an emergency winter shelter. The costs were anticipated to be funded when ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money was available due to the COVID pandemic. There was hope that a Missoula County Crisis Services levy on the November ballot would provide funding for services for the unhoused population and take the place of the ARPA funding stream, but the levy failed. The City and County are now faced with how to continue providing services. The City has some ARPA money left and is trying to focus it for FY24 while they look for more permanent solutions to at least be able to provide some level of service next year. City Administration has requested that MRA cover costs for the life safety improvements that had to be made to the building so they can use the ARPA funding next year. Buchanan said this is an appropriate use of TIF funding in a City-owned building that provides a public service. The staff recommendation is that MRA reimburse the City of Missoula for life safety improvements to the Emergency Winter Shelter in an amount not to exceed \$55,836.35.

Jones asked if the long-term plan for the property is still to redevelop it. Buchanan said yes. Staff does not know what the relationship between the Emergency Winter Shelter and redevelopment might be at this point, and are taking that one step at a time. Right now it is the best option for emergency shelter. Jones asked if the other building on the site that is still occupied is Camp Mak-A-Dream. Buchanan said it is. They have a lease on the building and may want to be incorporated in redevelopment of the property when that happens. Jones asked if the City removed vacant buildings on that property to improve the

safety of the area. Buchanan said they removed one building because there were transients getting in it and setting fires. The wooden buildings in the back are occupied by a non-profit organization that is still doing work there and the City is realizing some revenue from that.

Englund asked if there is any thought of cleaning up the temporary fence around the property in a way that makes it look nicer. Buchanan said the City probably doesn't want to invest a lot of money in doing permanent or semi-permanent fencing there. What is there now is leased construction fencing. It was put up at the request of adjacent property owners to buffer them from the activities that go on in that area. Englund said aesthetically it is an eyesore and wondered if there had been any discussion about it if the property is going to be used in the foreseeable future. Buchanan said it is hard to make investments in anything that is not essential, and leasing the fencing is relatively inexpensive. Englund asked when more long-term decisions will be made. Buchanan said she wasn't sure; it is a matter of funding and what the community's priorities are.

Brock said she is completely in favor of approving funding for this and there is funding in URD III to get it done. The Emergency Winter Shelter had well over 100 people nightly and it is so important. She asked about the difference between MRA giving money retroactively versus Proceed Without Prejudice, and asked if MRA has done something similar to this before. Buchanan said MRA has probably done something like this before, and this is appropriate because it is a City facility and a public space. MRA is responding to circumstances, and it has no impact on URD III in terms of lost opportunities.

JONES: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION TO REIMBURSE THE CITY FOR LIFE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EMERGENCY WINTER SHELTER AT 1919 NORTH AVENUE WEST IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$55,836.35 AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO TRANSFER THE FUNDS FROM THE UNOBLIGATED CONTINGENCY IN URD III.

Reineking seconded the motion.

Daniel Carlino, City Council, thanked MRA for taking up this item. He said he hopes MRA seeks out and finds more opportunities that help Missoula with the growing issues around trying to make sure everyone gets their basic needs met. The City is referencing lack of funds for closing of the Johnson Street shelter and authorized camp site. He said TIF requests get upwards of \$1 million or more and it would be great to see that kind of money going towards non-profits or things that benefit the community like shelters, etc., and any amount of money is a positive direction forward. Carlino said he understands things like this or the Food Bank don't generate tax revenue, however when MRA is helping within the private sector with millions of dollars for projects like Stockman Bank or AC Hotel, the community is expecting to see millions of dollars going towards things like this too that were promised. Carlino said from the City Council perspective, they are already hearing a lot of talk about how it is going to be a tight budget season again and there might not be money to keep a low barrier shelter open year-round, etc., and City Council and MRA need to make it a budget priority. He requested MRA seek out more opportunities for things like this.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).

NON-ACTION ITEMS

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report

Buchanan said Sleepy Inn deconstruction is complete. As far as the Legislature, staff is still trying to understand some of the last minute things that were amended and how they impact housing and land use regulations. Englund thanked the staff for their work throughout the Legislative session. He said he wrote a thank you to the MT League of Cities and Towns for the wonderful work they did, particularly Kelly Lynch. Buchanan said it was stressful, but staff went into high gear and did good work. Englund said to do that work and not know what kind of job anyone would have when it's all said and done is extraordinary and thanked everyone. Reineking said reaching out to the community to garner support, comments and visit the Legislature to testify helped and appreciates staff doing that.

Communications Update

MacPherson presented her quarterly Communications update. She said Englund, Gorski and herself have done two presentations to groups for "Urban Renewal 101". They both went really well and she will continue to seek opportunities to give those presentations. She said MRA turns 45 on Monday. The Agency was officially created on May 22, 1978 by City Council. She is planning on doing outreach activities to highlight the work that has been done in the past 45 years with a lot of before and after photos. She said it is a big milestone of work that has been done and wants to share it with the public.

FY23 Budget Status Reports

Dunn said staff plans to bring the FY24 Budget and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to the Board at the June meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OTHER ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh