

MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 19, 2008

FINAL

A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held at MRA Conference Room, 140 W. Pine, Missoula, MT 59802 at 12:00 pm. Those in attendance were as follows:

Board: Hal Fraser, Nancy Moe, Daniel Kemmis, Karl Englund

Staff: Ellen Buchanan, Chris Behan, Tod Gass, Jilayne Lee, Lesley Pugh

Public: Jamie Lockman, MRA Rep to the HPC; Rod Austin, MDA; Lori Davidson, MHA; Don MacArthur, MMW Architects; Jason Graf, Crandall Arambula; Don Arambula, Crandall Arambula; George Crandall, Crandall Arambula; Tom Moriarty, ERA; Philip Maechling, HPC; Doug Harby, Public Works

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PUBLIC COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Director's Report

Old Sawmill District/Silver Park

Buchanan said there hasn't been much movement on this project. They're still waiting on the environmental issues to be resolved. She said the new trail is getting a lot of use and the timber frame structures have been published nationally.

East Front St. Parking Structure

Buchanan said this resolution is back on the agenda for authorization of the Alternate Project Delivery Contract. Buchanan said she's done research on which one of the methods would make the most sense in Missoula and her personal comfort level has been with the design-build method. However, she said she's finding out that design-build is not as commonly used as construction manager at risk in the northwest as it is in the southeast. She said her recommendation is going to be to use construction manager at risk on this project and is leaning toward putting out a Request for Qualifications that asks for a design team and construction manager/contractor, but asks groups to join together and bring in joint proposals and do individual contracts. Buchanan asked the

Board what role they want to play in that decision and whether Staff needs to bring it back to the Board before it finalizes the RFQ.

Moe asked what the distinction is between the two methods. Buchanan replied the main distinction is that there's a separate contract with the design team and the contractor for construction manager at risk and they are individually responsible back to the owner. With design-build, the whole team comes in and either the design team or the contractor takes the lead and there's one contract with the owner. Discussion ensued. The Board gave Staff the okay to proceed with an RFQ.

Hip Strip Urban Renewal District

Buchanan said City Council concurred with MRA's recommendation that there were not adequate findings of blight to create a Hip Strip Urban Renewal District.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Buchanan said there's been no change from what was approved a month ago except that the state and federal government have now decided that you can't truncate Russell Street. She said the City was able to find other resources to get it back in the constrained plan without having to kick out other projects.

Wilma Façade Historic Conservation Easement

Buchanan said this went through on Consent Agenda.

ACTION ITEMS

Garden District Housing Project – URD II TIF Request

Behan said last month Lori Davidson, Director of the Missoula Housing Authority, gave a summary of where they want to go with this project and the rest of the former Intermountain Lumber site. In summary, the first project will be the construction of 37 subsidized units within 3 buildings. Total project costs are roughly \$6.6 million. Behan said MHA has applied for \$100,000 in tax increment assistance with the assumption that they or successors may continue to ask for additional assistance as projects move ahead. Behan said the Staff recommends the Board approve up to \$100,000 in tax increment assistance for water and sewer main improvements, work on the irrigation ditch crossing, sidewalk construction and boulevard landscaping.

Moe wondered how much interest the MHA has received regarding sale of the commercial lots. Davidson said their realtors tell them there's been a great deal of interest since they filed the preliminary plat for the subdivision. She said there's interest in lot 5 and one of the commercial street fronts. She said until the final plat is filed in January they can't officially take offers.

Moe asked if the siphoned structures at the irrigation ditch crossings were a safety measure. Don MacArthur from MMW Architects said the issue they have along the west border of the site is that the ditch is elevated from the street. In order to get access to the site there are nearly impossible grades to make to get over the top of the ditch. He said rather than build a road over top of the ditch they are actually putting the ditch down

underneath and using hydraulics to move it into a sunken pipe and it will suck itself through as the water builds up far enough. He said it's basically a way to get the water uphill. Moe asked if there was a safety issue. MacArthur replied at each one of the interest points there is a grate over the top and it's impossible to get in there without heavy equipment.

MOTION

ENGLUND: I MOVE APPROVAL OF UP TO \$100,000 IN TIF ASSISTANCE FOR WATER AND SEWER MAIN IMPROVEMENTS AND EXTENSION, SIPHON STRUCTURES AT IRRIGATION DITCH CROSSINGS ALONG CATLIN STREET, SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION AND BOULEVARD LANDSCAPING, AND ASPHALT AND CURB IMPROVEMENTS ON CATLIN STREET FOR THIS PROJECT AND FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT NO MORE THAN \$57,000 BE DISBURSED IN FISCAL YEAR 2009 AND THE REMAINDER IN FISCAL YEAR 2010. Moe seconded the motion. 4 ayes, 0 nays. Motion passed unanimously. Cates absent.

Englund left the meeting at 1:30 pm.

Kent Ave. Stamped Concrete Islands – URD III TIF Request

Nelson said the Public Works department embarked on a project near Tremper's Shopping Center to do new curbs, sidewalk and street improvements on Oxford, Central, and North Ave. During that project they were approached by the owners of Tremper's and property owners on the north side of Kent Ave. to add Kent Ave. to the project. Public Works went ahead and added Kent Ave. to their project and it includes on-street parking improvements, sidewalks, ADA access and landscaping design. Nelson said those projects will be funded through the Curb and Sidewalk Assessment Program. Nelson said crosswalks were added to the project to facilitate pedestrians and help slow traffic down. She said designing them as raised platforms keeps them consistent with the crosswalks at Tremper's. The estimated cost for the crosswalks is \$7,500 each for a total request to MRA for TIF assistance of \$15,000. Doug Harby from the Public Works Dept. talked more about the background of the project.

Change tape 2 s1/s2

MOTION

KEMMIS: I MOVE THAT THE MRA AUTHORIZE FUNDING TO THE MISSOULA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OF UP TO \$15,000 FOR RAISED, STAMPED CROSSWALKS ON KENT AVENUE BETWEEN RUSSELL STREET AND OXFORD. Moe seconded the motion. 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion passed unanimously. Cates and Englund absent.

Kemmis asked Harby some questions about Front Street. He wondered what project was going on there and also asked if the project would correct the huge drainage problem that's been there for years. Harby replied no, the work is being done by Mountain Water Line to replace an 8" line with a 24" line to increase capacity. Harby said they might

have to do some sump work to help with the drainage problem. He said if there are specific areas piling up the Public Works Dept. needs to know about it.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

Downtown Master Plan – Update from Crandall Arambula

George Crandall from Crandall Arambula reviewed the draft version of the Downtown Master Plan.

Change tape 1 s1/s2

Fraser asked Crandall Arambula what the positive things were that made them have general good comments about Missoula. George Crandall replied Missoula has a healthy Downtown, a department store (Macy's) in the Downtown, an urban grid of streets with good building stock, the Hospital and the University bracket the Downtown, and the bowl-like setting of Missoula with a river running through it. Don Arambula added that Missoula already has tools, such as the Redevelopment Agency, to implement goals and move forward. Tom Moriarty from ERA said the University will constantly feed consumers. He said they don't spend as much as residents, but that's okay because there's a constant turn there. Discussion ensued regarding Macy's and its importance to the Downtown.

Kemmis said he felt it's a good idea to focus a good deal of attention on keeping Macy's and providing the support for it to be here and hopes they stay. He said he has been a little concerned because it comes across that if Macy's makes the decision not to stay then the Downtown is just out of luck. He felt that thinking would be a mistake and didn't think anybody should be that dependent on the decisions of any corporation. Also, Kemmis said he didn't think that was the case and thought Missoula would find a way to adapt if Macy's left. Crandall said a good plan has flexibility in it. He said if Macy's were to leave, it's a great site and could attract other retailers to move into there, especially if the parking structure is built. Moriarty said it's very wise to say it's not make or break if Macy's leaves, it just makes it that much harder down the line because retailers are justifiably conservative and if they see that Macy's has left they may think Downtown isn't doing well even though it may have nothing to do with Missoula and could have been a corporate decision that has to do with something else.

MacArthur asked Crandall Arambula to explain how the "balanced city" concept moves forward. He said the Plan seems very focused on certain parts of the Downtown and wondered what other projects could be moved up to work toward the balanced city concept. Crandall said they tend to look at the amount of retail the population can support, basically 500,000-600,000 sq. ft. in the center. He said what they're talking about doing with the retail strategy is adding 200,000 sq. ft. which will get the number up to 500,000 sq. ft. in the center. He said that's part of the balance strategy so there will be broader offerings for shopping trips. The other part of the balance is employment. He said they're identifying some new office sites and said right now there aren't enough opportunities for employment in the Downtown and they are trying to maximize it. He said if there's a push to lower the building heights it works against the balanced center. Crandall said another component of the balance includes commercial and cultural

entertainment. He said if the retail is done right then the other parts will cluster around it. Arambula said another idea that's not in the Plan is transportation and the use of street cars. Discussion ensued.

Change tape 1/tape 2

Moe asked what the rationale is that supports the convention center. Crandall replied they know that the market isn't there for it today. He said many cities often have a need for a convention center in their downtown and they know Missoula is competing with more and more cities across the country. He said to be competitive the convention center needs to be plugged into the Downtown. He said the centers that are on the outskirts of towns and are disconnected from the downtown aren't competitive anymore. Crandall said the reason for this is that between sessions people want to get out, walk around, go to restaurants and shop. He said the Plan identifies two premium sites.

STAFF REPORTS

OTHER ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Pugh

Lesley Pugh
Secretary II