

City of Mt. Pleasant

Mission-Pickard Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

May 11, 2017 10:00 AM
City Hall, Conference Room C

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Jeff Smith at 10:02 am.

Present: Thomas Baumann, John Hunter, Tom Krapohl, Doug LaBelle II, Margaret McAvoy, Eric Noeker, Nancy Ridley, Jeff Smith (Vice Chair)

Absent: Tim Coscarelly, Tim Driessnack (Chair), Lisa Orlando

Also attending: (Staff): William Mrdeza

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Krapohl, seconded by Noeker, to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

III. Approval of the April 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by McAvoy, seconded by Krapohl, to approve the April 13, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

IV. Old and New Business

A. Update on the Amendment Process to the DDA District Plan

Mrdeza reported that the City Commission held a public hearing at their April 24th meeting on the amendments to the Mission/Pickard DDA plan and postponed action until they held a work session on the topic. Mrdeza reminded the Board that the proposed amendments to the plan sought to extend the Financing Plan from 2017 to 2025 (concurrent with the Development Plan), and to add three potential projects to the Development Plan (corridor study, alley maintenance, and decorative street lighting). The work session on this topic was held at the May 8th meeting and discussed the merits of the plan amendment. While there were a number of questions during the session, it *appeared* there might be a majority of Commission members willing to support the plan amendment. The item will be on the May 22nd Commission agenda for consideration; Mrdeza indicated he will keep the Board informed of any action that occurs on this topic. Ridley requested in the interim that Mrdeza send out the tax capture

analysis Mary Ann Kornexl provided the Commission at their work session, feeling this might be useful information for the Board members to have.

B. Proposed Retail Market Analysis Study

Mrdeza discussed the concept of a combined retail market study with the Downtown TIFA that would include a supply-demand and gap analysis for both tax capture districts. This analysis would review the existing mix of business uses and, based on data gathered, suggest the optimal mix of merchants and tenants. He indicated that the CBD TIFA Board discussed the project but was hesitant to commit to the full projected cost of \$25,000 alone and instead asked staff to check with the DDA on a potential cost sharing option with them and possibly the City Commission. Mrdeza explained that one advantage of the study would be to allow staff to work with the local development community to recruit the types of businesses not currently in the community but where the study indicated a market for such business types was shown to exist.

The DDA Board questioned the need for such a study and instead felt that local developers and property owners already had sufficient knowledge of the market to recruit appropriate businesses to available properties. They further questioned the value of the study and felt that most developers and lenders would commission their own specific market study rather than rely on a more generalized study prepared by someone else. After some additional discussion, it was moved by Krapohl, seconded by McAvoy, to not participate in the cost of a retail market study with the CBD TIFA and possibly the City Commission from General Funds. **The motion passed unanimously.**

C. Corridor Improvement: Street Tree Planting Program

Mrdeza introduced the suggestion of the DDA undertaking a more aggressive street tree planting program along the Mission Street corridor in the right of way and where there was interest, on private property. He reminded the Board that such a program would continue to implement the City's commitment to find ways of reducing traffic speeds on Mission Street as well as to make the corridor more attractive as a business rather than a transportation corridor. Mrdeza indicated that one way of impacting traffic speeds along Mission was to incorporate more height and pedestrian-scale design elements and therefore make the corridor feel smaller than it actually was. Tree planting is one tool to help accomplish this goal over a shorter time period at less expense than requirements regulating the height and placement of buildings along the street. Mrdeza further mentioned that improvements to the Mission Street corridor (which included slower traffic speeds, making it safer and more friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists, and improving its aesthetic appeal) was the most often cited issue identified by the 300+ attendees at last November's Planapalooza event which kicked off the new zoning ordinance process. He also mentioned that business owners along the corridor almost unanimously support slower traffic speeds on Mission Street.

Board members expressed concerns regarding additional tree cover along Mission Street. The most often cited of these included safety (due to possible obstructions to drivers) and

visibility of businesses (trees obstructing buildings or signs). Another concern expressed was potentially not having adequate space available in the right of way or on adjacent private property to plant trees. Overall, Board members were not interested in supporting the use of DDA funds at this time to plant additional trees along the corridor, citing the above concerns.

Ridley discussed the City's annual street tree planting program, indicating that was a free program through the Public Works Department. The Board discussed the details of the program further and recognized the merits of working with businesses and property owners interested in participating in the program as opposed to having trees planted in front of businesses whether or not they were interested. As a result, it was the consensus of the Board to have staff work with businesses along the corridor to 1) make them aware of the availability of the program and 2) for those that were interested to work with the Public Works Department to schedule trees to be planted as part of the City's street tree program. The Board suggested trying this approach to determine what the response was.

D. Update on Enhanced Intersection Lighting at Mission/Preston and Mission/Bellows Streets

Mrdeza provided the Board with a brief update on the above enhanced intersection lighting project. He reminded the Board that the project included adding eight L.E.D. lights to both the Preston and Bellows intersections, similar to the treatment completed last year at Broomfield and Mission. Due to the lower than projected cost estimates provided by Consumers Energy (approximately \$7,000 for both locations), the Board had previously authorized the project be completed in 2017 rather than wait until 2018 as originally planned. At this time Mrdeza reported that the City Engineer was working with the Consumers staff to finalize a contract and schedule the work to be done in the coming months. He indicated that additional updates on the project would be provided as they became available.

V. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered by the Board.

VI. Public Comments

There were no public comments received or offered.

VII. Adjourn

There being no other business, **the meeting was adjourned at 11:02 am.**