

Urban Renewal Agency Meeting
Special Meeting

October 21, 2010

7:00a.m.

Driggs City Hall

Members Present: Hyrum Johnson (conducting), Guch Lombardi, Aaron Myler, Kathy Rinaldi, and Isabel Waddell.

Others Present: Harlan Mann and Ryan Armbruster.

Work Session Regarding Possible “Buxton Ashley” amendment of Urban Renewal District.

Mr. Johnson began the discussion by stating he felt the addition to the district should not be completed at this time. He explained that the devaluation of the city was not the issue, but the lack of development within the district. He did not feel the Urban Renewal Agency should commit to the expansion.

Mr. Johnson explained the reasons for proceeding with the expansion were because of timing with the legislation. He felt the agency had a lot of projects that could be complete without adding another section to the district.

Ryan Armbruster explained the changes that may take place in the legislation. He stated it would be hard to predict what would take place but due to the past actions, it may be easy to understand which way future legislation may go. He explained the issues that might change. A bill was being proposed that Urban Renewal Commissioners be elected officials. He further stated that there had been proposals that would prohibit an urban renewal plan amendment. The reason for this was because some agencies did not close out the project areas but continued to amend them.

Mr. Armbruster stated that the process to bring in a new project area under the existing plan would be changed. A project being proposed by the Urban Renewal Agency may have to be approved by the other tax entities, Mr. Armbruster explained. For new plan areas there was an effort to try and reduce the time period from 24 years to 20 years. He stated protection for existing cities with existing plans was a priority of those who lobby at the legislation.

Mr. Armbruster felt that the agency was at risk, but could not determine how that risk would play out in the future. The process at the minimum would require a lot of steps, including having a formal meeting and public hearings. Mr. Armbruster did not feel the Commission was at an advantage to get the expansion complete before the end of the year. This process would have to run smoothly without missing deadlines or postponing any step. Mr. Armbruster stated there was an eligibility report that was good for an indefinite period of time.

Harlan Mann stated that the existing district had not had much activity since the last amendment in 2007. He felt that once the Colter building was full with tenants, the tax

base would increase. However, nothing else was proposed and that would not help increase the base. Ms. Rinaldi questioned if devaluations affected the district. Mr. Mann stated that so far it had not had an affect.

Mr. Armbruster stated that it appeared the agency had an extensive list of projects and that priority decisions would need to be made. This may be harder to do so if the district was expanded. The values were nowhere near what was predicted for the area at this time, Mr. Armbruster stated.

Aaron Myler made a motion to table the consideration of the amendment of the Urban Renewal District to be looked at in the future. Guch Lombardi seconded the motion.

Isabel Wadell stated she felt the Commission should continue to evaluate the areas and questioned if a broad based amendment could be considered. Mr. Armbruster stated that the consultants could look at the priorities and continue the dialog to expand the district but not set a date to do so by the end of the year.

Isabel Wadell made an amendment to the above motion to suspend the timeline for the amendment of the Urban Renewal District but complete the document.

Mr. Myler stated he did not see reason to finish a document that may or may not be used once the process to expand the district began again in the future. Ms. Wadell was concerned that the agency would not have something to present to the public on the intent of the Urban Renewal Agency. Mr. Myler did not feel the Commission should consider future projects when projects for the existing area had not begun.

Mr. Armbruster stated that the agency was not bound by the project list. However, the agency could not develop a brand new project that was not on the existing list or in the budget.

Isabel Wadell withdrew her amended motion. A vote was cast and all were in favor of the original motion.

Mr. Armbruster stated that conversations with Wells Fargo regarding the loan for the grant should take place and inquire if additional financial capacity could be given. A priority project list could then be developed. Ms. Wadell was concerned that the projects listed in the past may not be the priority of the present time.

Mr. Johnson felt that a work session should be scheduled to discuss the above and determine the list of priorities.

Ms. Lombardi requested an update regarding the Scenic Byway Project Advisory Committee. Mr. Johnson explained the committee was still working on the final draft of the RFQ. He stated the committee was concerned with the amount of control ITD had with decisions. The RFQ should be approved at the next meeting and be published shortly after that. By early December, the approval rating process should begin.

Mr. Johnson then discussed the possibility of an independent audit.

Changes in the Bylaws would be on the next agenda, Mr. Johnson stated. Mr. Armbruster has asked that the City Council establish a number of Commissioners, either 5 or 7. Ms. Lombardi asked that the request for a City Council Member and a member with a financial background be forwarded for the vacant seats on the Urban Renewal Board.

Adjournment

Isabel Wadell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Aaron Myler seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:

Secretary

Hyrum Johnson
Chairman