

MINUTES
Downtown Advisory Board
 Thursday, June 24, 2010 – 2:00 P.M.
 350 Commercial St NE

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present	Guests
Dana Vugteveen Suzi Bicknell Jeff Corner Bill Davis Paul Gehlar Brian Moore Anna Peterson Allan Pollock	Jim Bauer - E Sylvia Dorney - E Debra Edwards - E Darr Goss - E Jim Lewis -E	Sara Bratcher - UD Todd Klocke - UD Courtney Knox – UD Phil Morris - UD Anita Sandoval – UD Sheri Wahrgren - UD	Bill Puntney Councilor Tesler Chris Zahas, Leland Consulting Group

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Vugteveen called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM, noting a quorum of appointed members was present.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A. June 24, 2010

Ms Bicknell made a motion to approve the agenda of June 24, 2010. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 27, 2010

Mr Moore made a motion to approve the minutes from May 27, 2010, with one correction. Page 2, second line from bottom: Change Minot to Minto. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

4. REPORT ON COMMITTEES

A. None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments on topics other than those on the agenda.

6. ACTION ITEMS:

A. N/A

7. INFORMATION ITEMS:

A. Council Tesler Update – Councilor Laura Tesler

Councilor Tesler asked about the upcoming open positions on the DAB and encouraged the Board to recruit potential members. Councilor Tesler discussed possible revisions to the Noise Ordinance and expressed her interest in creating a task force with a broad membership to look at the issue. The proposed Minto-Brown Island Bridge was also discussed as it relates to the perception of public safety. The Board concurred with Councilor Tesler’s support of the continued efforts to make the Bridge a reality.

Ms Peterson asked Councilor Tesler if there was a timeline for the proposed landscaping project at Pringle Plaza. Councilor Tesler assumed the project would be underway soon because the Pringle Urban Renewal Area plan is set to close in the near future. She suggested City Manager, Linda Norris, would have a precise answer.

Councilor Tesler reminded the Board she is available by email and will plan to attend Board meetings quarterly.

B. Progress Report #1 – Downtown Strategic Action Plan – Chris Zahas, Leland Consulting
Chris Zahas gave an update on the progress of the Downtown Strategic Action Plan. Leland and Otak held meetings on May 17 with staff and toured the Riverfront Urban Renewal Area. Stakeholder interview sessions were held June 11 and included property and business owners, developers, DAB members, etc. Topics of the discussion included barriers, opportunities, and other key issues to consider.

Mr Zahas noted stakeholders were of varying opinions without much consensus. There was, however, agreement that zoning and overlays made downtown development challenging, and more housing is desired. Stakeholders also agreed there is a need for more anchor stores, restaurants, and adult entertainment, such as the new Cinebarre movie theatre.

Mr Zahas pointed to a number of good things happening downtown, and yet the message isn't getting out. He suggested more promotion and marketing, not just locally, but state wide.

Transportation and parking were also identified as big issues. Stakeholders commented on a lack of bike and pedestrian friendly options. Also mentioned were the one-way streets – some would like to see a change to two-way streets. There was no consensus regarding parking issues. Some thought longer hours were needed on the street with more garage space; others didn't think there was a parking problem; and developers noted parking is an economic challenge for development.

Mr Zahas recommended breaking the area into districts and focusing on each unique situation - historic, riverfront north, north downtown (area near car lots), and the Pringle creek connection between the university and River. The group was responsive to the idea. Ms Peterson asked about the east side of downtown. Mr Zahas agreed that could be the fifth district.

The Board discussed concerns and ideas and looked forward to Leland's input and insight into what other communities have done.

As the process continues, the consultants will plan a workshop for July and during the first part of August. They will take all the information they've gathered, meet with the Subcommittee and bounce ideas off them (July); then apply their feedback and direction. For the August workshop, they hope to have an 80 percent plan with short, medium, and long term projects. The balance of August will be spent refining those projects, and then they will come back in September with a draft set of recommendations for the Board, and finalize it in October.

Ms Peterson asked Mr Zahas to consider West Salem and South Waterfront as part of the connectivity piece when developing the Action Plan.

C. Conference Center Update – Phil Morris

Handouts – Salem Conference Center Events and Marketing; Operating Revenue, Expenses, and Income chart

Mr Morris has been managing relationships with Salem Conference Center since it went operational in 2005. He updated the Board on its events and marketing, as well as the current efforts to obtain LEED Certification. The Conference Center is owned by the Urban Renewal Agency Board.

The Conference Center has had a number of successful events; however, the economy has affected the bottom line. To mitigate the effects of the economic downturn, they have implemented a number of remedies such as a wage freeze, cutting back on catering labor, performing janitorial work in-house, and creative marketing.

Originally, the Conference Center was designed to be LEED certified, but a hold was put on all discretionary expenses in early 2005 to prevent over spending the construction budget. At completion, approximately three years later, a surplus in the construction budget was identified, and the LEED certification was restarted. However, the original application was for LEED for new construction, but because the building was complete, the application had to be redone as LEED for existing buildings. For existing buildings, the focus is on how the building is actually operated, maintained, and cleaned rather than the design/ construction of the structure and systems. Policies and procedures are being written to ensure compliance and are nearing completion. The expectation is to complete the LEED application in July or early August. It will probably take a couple months for the U.S. Green Building Council, the organization that sponsors LEED certification, to review the application. Currently, the Conference Center has achieved 22 percent energy savings by implementing the new LEED policies and procedures. The LEED certification will provide a major boost in helping the Conference Center compete with Portland-area convention centers for events.

Mr Morris offered a special thank you to Chrissie Bertsch, the Conference Center General Manager. She took on a huge work load in the LEED process.

Councilor Tesler noted the crossing at Ferry and Liberty Streets near the Conference Center is dangerous. She would like to get more aggressive on addressing that issue. If anyone has ideas, she asked they contact her.

8. NEW BUSINESS

N/A

9. ADJOURN

Chair Vugteveen adjourned the meeting at 3:20 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is July 22, 2010, at 2:00 PM.