

MINUTES
Downtown Advisory Board
 Thursday, September 24, 2009 – 12:00 P.M.
 350 Commercial St NE

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present	Guests
Dana Vugteveen - C Jeff Corner Bill Davis - VC Darr Goss Brian Moore Anna Peterson Allan Pollock	Jim Bauer - E Sylvia Dorney - E Debra Edwards - E Jim Lewis - E Suzi Bicknell	Jill Corcoran – UD Todd Klocke – UD Anita Sandoval – UD Jim Upham - UD Sheri Wahrgren – UD Kevin Hottmann - PW	Paul Gehlar Sara Bratcher

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Vugteveen called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM, noting a quorum of appointed members was present.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A. **September 24, 2009**

Ms Peterson **made a motion** to approve the agenda of September 10, 2009, as presented. The motion was seconded and **carried** unanimously.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. **September 10, 2009:**

Mr Corner **made a motion** to approve the minutes from September 10, 2009, corrected as follows: Page 4, Paragraph 1, last line should read – ...“it already is between Commercial and Front”. The motion was seconded and **carried** unanimously.

4. **REPORT ON COMMITTEES:**

A. None

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No guests or visitors were present to address the Board on issues other than what appeared on the agenda.

6. **ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Letter of Support – EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant – Jill Corcoran
 Ms Corcoran reported the City is applying for an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in partnership with the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, and the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Salem (coalition). An application was submitted last year, but was rejected. The EPA again has money available for Brownfield Assessment Grant funds and has suggested the coalition reapply by October 16, 2009, for a lesser

amount. They have suggested ways to restructure the application, and the coalition will reapply for about \$400,000.

The funds are designed to help property owners that own contaminated sites pay for a Phase I assessment, and if necessary, a Phase II assessment and a clean-up plan. There are other grants funds to assist property owners with the actual clean up. The focus is on the Riverfront area, which is the oldest part of City and has many old industrial sites. The funds should be sufficient to assist 30-40 Phase I and 10-20 Phase II assessments.

A Technical Committee will be assembled to help review applications, and a Brownsfields outreach team will help get the word out. Staff will likely recruit members for the Outreach Team from DAB, Neighborhood Associations, SEDCOR, Go Downtown Salem!, etc. If the coalition is award the grant, funding would be expected next summer.

Q - Are there any strings attached?

A – There is no match; only need to return unused money.

Q - If a purchaser needs a Phase 1 or 2 for funding, can they still use the funds, or does it have to be the current property owner?

A - Don't know, but will find out.

Q - Could money be used for Minto Brown testing?

A – It's staff's understanding if the City was going to purchase it, perhaps. If Boise wanted to use the funds, then probably not because they were the owners at the time of contamination.

Q - Are you going to establish criteria in advance of a review committee before marketing?

A - Yes, before marketing, but not before funding. The coalition will set goals for how many petroleum contaminated sites to assist (Petroleum clean up is relatively less expensive), and how many sites with other types of contamination to assist.

Ms Peterson, **made a motion** to provide a letter of support for the EPA Brownsfields Assessment Grant. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS:

A. Liberty Parkade Capacity Update – Jim Upham

Mr Upham provided a brief history of the permit sales. Three years ago the sales of permits were brought down to parking services; they used to be done through Community Development. Liberty Parkade used to have waiting list for 200 going back years. Letters were recently sent out to all those on the waiting list with around 50% still wanting a space. Over last two or three years, they have increased the maximum sale in Liberty from the available 326 spaces to a 17% oversell of 382. The reason the Parkade does not appear to be full is because of the number of transient clients. These

clients come and go several times every day. The other reason is several businesses buy permits in bulk, but may not be using them all. Because of those reasons, the survey showed usage at only 69%.

Earlier this month letters were mailed out to 30 people on the full time waiting list, and 10 who wanted part time. They have until September 29 to respond. If all of them still want a space, it would leave nine full-time and 13 part-time still on the waiting list. The waiting list is very fluid in nature.

The price is \$70 for a full-time permit; \$40 for a part-time/swing permit, and \$23 for a motorcycle permit. Currently there are 311 fulltime permits, one job share, and 22 part-time permits sold. Permit holders are automatically billed. Another notice is sent after 15 days if they haven't paid, and a third after 45 days informing them their permit has been terminated.

The 17% oversell is the highest of all parkades. This fall Facilities will be refurbishing the top deck, painting, restripe as is, and putting up permit only signage.

Q – Is Liberty Parkade the overflow for visitors of the Salem Conference Center (SCC)?

A – No, participants of the SCC are instructed that overflow parking is on the roof of Pringle Parkade. However, at night or weekends Liberty Parkade is more available for SCC overflow. Currently the signage to direct cars to Pringle is not adequate. Staff will be working with the SCC to find solutions for marketing and signage to the overflow parking areas.

B. 2009 Parking Utilization Study Follow-up

The Board discussed how to proceed toward possible next steps regarding parking, or what additional information is needed to make decisions in the future. The Study provides historical data, but provides no recommendation.

Q – Earlier consideration was given to filling the parking gaps with the potential Colson and Boise redevelopments. Are there more thoughts on that?

A – The Colson redevelopment is still on hold. The Boise site redevelopment team is building a surface lot for employee parking. They intend to utilize all parking structure spaces for proposed uses, so general public/employee parking at that site won't be available.

Discussion continued regarding parking as part of the infrastructure to support future development downtown rather than just a stand-alone project. It was suggested a new parking facility should include aspects of transit and electrical charging stations.

Staff gave a brief update of the proposed Marion Parkade project. WOU executed a lease with Marion Park LLC to take the 24 student housing units and 30,000 square feet of ground floor space for a continuing education center. Marion Park LLC is still working on a financing package. According to the agreement with the City, they have three years to start construction.

The Board posed the question regarding the feasibility of some kind of economic status analysis for downtown. The results of such a study would be a good foundation for the parking question. Staff will research options and estimated costs to bring back to the DAB for consideration. There are already over 30 studies looking at vision 2020 goals. It would be good to try to align the priorities.

C. Commercial Street Restriping Update – Kevin Hottmann

Mr Hottmann reported a staff report will take forward two issues to Council later in October. Issue number one will be whether or not to change Commercial Street to three lanes instead of four. That's important, because if it remains four lanes, the issue of a bike lane becomes moot. The second issue will be a bike lane vs. sharrows. Staff have met with bike shop owners and cyclists who have voiced a support for "sharrows" rather than specific bike lanes.

Earlier the DAB supported a recommendation for the three lanes plus a bike lane. Mr Hottmann requested a revised recommendation on each issues.

Q – Why does the bike community have a preference for the sharrow?

A – A lot of the focus of Vision 2020 group was to get a lot of bikes downtown. They would like to be treated more like a vehicle and be able to use the lanes to benefit them in circulation. In the past staff had assumed bike lanes would provide more of a comfort level. Instead staff is hearing the biking community is more comfortable using sharrows so they can be in whatever lane they need to be in.

Q – There were some other traffic changes that were planned, such as removing the double left, if the striping went to three lanes instead of four. If you keep the four lanes, will those changes still occur?

A – They are limited to 71 feet to work with. Staff have assigned 15 feet on either side for angled parking spaces, which are not very deep. The four lanes would have to stay within that same configuration. With three lanes (if no bike lane) you can make the lanes wider and parking deeper without larger vehicles impacted the flow of traffic. If four lanes remain, then all the turn lanes would remain the same. Curb extensions will still be constructed.

Q - How will making State between Liberty and Commercial two-way affect lanes?

A - If State turns two way, they would need to accommodate by having a left turn lane from State onto Commercial, it could potentially affect Commercial is striped, but it could be accomplished.

Q – It's difficult to know how to make a recommendation because I don't know technical impacts of flow and engineering issues.

A – Staff did a traffic count based on which lanes cars used, and how they would have to react based on which lane they are in. Staff also did travel modeling and a capacity analysis, and are comfortable that three lanes can handle the traffic. The fourth lane is problematic because one lane drops off every couple of blocks for the double left turn,

and the shallow parking spaces impacts the fourth lane. If parking didn't affect the fourth lane, then it would be a different issue. Staff also looked at traffic stacking at Ferry and Trade and feel believe three lanes will handle the capacity.

Q – What the reason you started looking at three lanes vs. four?

A – It came out of the Vision 2020 bike group. Due to the fact that Commercial was going to be repaved and restriped, this would be a good opportunity to look at the change.

Q - Was it the bike merchants, or the bike group that provided the input?

A – They were the merchants, co-workers, bike racers, experienced bike riders. Staff asked about other users, such as teens and families. They still supported the idea of sharrows rather than bike lanes.

Q – If the bike users aren't anxious for bike lanes, why not just keep the four lanes?

A - The issue of moving to three lanes is an operational and safety issue. Over the years there have been problems with people hitting parked cars. The fourth lane is not utilized because of parking. The bike issue has dropped out of the question and is just whether or not to move to three lanes.

Q - Do we have any data from the police on downtown crashes?

A – Staff can obtain that information.

Q – The primary concern of merchants has been a potential loss of parking. A transition to three lanes would not negatively impact parking, correct?

A – Correct. From a safety standpoint, it would be better to have parallel parking if there are four lanes. That would be a parking loss. Three lanes would allow parking to remain and more easily utilized.

Q – What do the business owners want, three or four lanes?

A – Staff have not specifically asked that question. The original question included the bike lane.

There has not been closure to the petition that was circulated regarding this issue. The Board requested staff take the question back to business owners and come back to DAB with feedback.

D. Riverfront-Downtown URA Priority Discussion

This agenda item has been moved to a subsequent agenda.

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. ADJOURN:

Chair Vugteveen adjourned the meeting at 1:30 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is October 8, 2009, at noon.