

MINUTES OF THE URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY OF THE CITY OF COOS BAY

May 11, 1999

The minutes of the proceedings of the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held in the Manager's Conference Room at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

Those Present

Those present were Board Chair Joe Benetti and Board Members Cindi Miller, Don Spangler, Kevin Stufflebean, and Joanne Verger. City Staff present were City Manager Bill Grile, Community Services Director Bill Finney, and Codes Specialist Cinda Arney.

Director to Proceed on Urban Renewal Projects

City Manager Bill Grile advised the Agency there would be adequate funding to support all of the proposed urban renewal projects and staff needed direction on prioritizing the projects.

Downtown Projects. Don Spangler recommended prioritizing projects the City has already started. Joanne Verger expressed her opinion that the Boardwalk is a catalyst and the City needs to keep going and finish what was started. She suggested the Agency move on with property acquisition and infrastructure for the Front Street Redevelopment Project. Mr. Grile explained the benefits of "front-end loading" (funding the majority of the projects now, rather than later). Joanne Verger commented that putting money into enhancing the City now will attract private investment quicker than funding one project at a time. Don Spangler added that by waiting to start projects, the City could also be looking at construction costs increasing by as much as 6 percent. Kevin Stufflebean recommended moving the Marshfield Sun Museum into the "V" in front of Front Street project. Bill Grile mentioned the possibility of the opening of the Iron Works and Maritime museums also. Don Spangler questioned whether, in the absence of the bond, if the City would still be financially able to go ahead with the Front Street property acquisition. Bill Grile responded the City would have approximately \$425,000, but that there are other ways of funding the projects besides bonding.

Chair Benetti brought up the issue of tearing down the Sportsman and Joanne Verger suggested with proper lighting in the parking lot, it wouldn't be necessary to tear down the building to attract people to park and utilize the area behind the Sportsman. The Agency agreed to fund the Fifth Street Plaza project, recommending an expenditure of \$100,000 instead of \$75,000. Bill Grile will request a proposal from Randall Tosh, and if Randall is not able to prepare a proposal within two weeks, the Agency may recommend retaining someone.

The Agency agreed to forego the expenditure of \$410,000 for underground utilities on Front Street. Bill Grile stated that if you take out the \$410,000 for underground utilities, there is enough money for all the other projects. The Agency discussed period lighting. Joanne Verger is in favor of lighting to Curtis, all the other members were in favor of going to Elrod. Chair Benetti requested that Mr. Grile obtain a dollar figure for the difference and come back with more details. Joanne Verger suggested the Agency look at areas on Market and Fourth Street, beside U.S. Bank, to make sure that they would rather spend money on period lighting from Curtis to Elrod than add improvements in other places. The Agency agreed unanimously on parking lot period lighting, at least to Curtis Avenue.

Kevin Stufflebean brought up the "V" section (entrance to Front Street) again, as to what might be appropriate to place there. The Agency is concerned that property owners on Front Street will not have guidelines to go by when building new structures that may or may not conform to Front Street improvements. Mr. Grile recommended not adopting the Front Street Master Plan because of complex zoning issues, but rather implement specific portions of the plan into the City's existing zoning laws.

Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency Minutes — May 11, 1999
Page 2

Chair Benetti requested the Agency consider tearing down the Sportsman building. Joanne Verger opposed tearing the building down and recommended a public hearing. Cindi Miller said that it had been discussed at the Downtown Association meeting today and all members were in favor of looking into this issue further. The Agency unanimously agreed to forego expenditure of \$25,000 on parking lot access lighting at this time.

Empire Projects. The Agency unanimously agreed to earmark \$500,000 for property acquisition in Empire. Joanne Verger urged Agency members to keep in mind that the purpose of urban renewal projects are to attract private investment. All present agreed that a “field trip” of Empire should be scheduled after the weather improves.

Theme Development. Mr. Grile suggested the Agency take the standards of the Front Street Master Plan and apply them to Empire area, and offer no interest or low interest loans for improvements, or could take a heavier handed approach and force businesses into compliance. Don Spangler was not in favor of a heavy handed approach and favored making the funds available for improvements and making improvements “do-able”. Joanne Verger commented it has worked well for Sisters to apply a design standard, and agreed this could be applied in the Empire area as well. Mr. Grile asked the Agency members if they were in favor of requiring businesses to meet new criteria when the use changes. The Agency agreed unanimously on that issue and also reached a consensus that the City should use or adapt Front Street standards and develop a system to encourage businesses to improve.

Gateway Theme. The Agency agreed that a gateway structure should be placed in the Empire area. Kevin Stufflebean and Cindi Miller were in favor of placing the structure at the Y. Joanne Verger encouraged members to look at other possible sites. Members will research other areas and discuss more in the future. **Newmark Streetscape - Phase II.** The Agency agreed this should be a top priority, right after property acquisition, and should be initiated now. **Empire Boulevard - Landscaping.** The Agency agreed to defer landscaping for now and look into grants to aid in funding. **Building Improvements - \$322,000.** Chair Benetti recommended, and the Agency Board agreed, to designate \$160,000 for establishment/operation of building improvement program and designate the balance of \$162,000 for property acquisition. Mr. Grile asked for and received confirmation that the Agency was unanimously in favor of immediately starting Newmark Streetscape Phase II, zoning amendments, and property acquisition. **Waterfront Monument - Acquisition.** Current in process.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Benetti adjourned the Urban Renewal Agency meeting.

Joe Benetti, Chair
Urban Renewal Agency of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon

ATTEST:

Don Spangler, Secretary
Urban Renewal Agency of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon