



APPROVED: July 15, 2009

CITY OF ALBANY
Central Albany Revitalization Area Advisory Board
City Hall Council Chambers, 333 Broadalbin Street SW
Wednesday, May 20, 2009

MINUTES

Advisory Board Members present: David Anderer, Rich Catlin, Jeff Christman, Bill Coburn, Loyd Henion, Bessie Johnson, Gordon Kirbey, Sharon Konopa, Ray Kopczynski, Dick Olsen, Cordell Post, Ralph Reid, Jr., and Kim Sass

Advisory Board Members absent: Floyd Collins

Staff present: City Manager Wes Hare, Finance Director Stewart Taylor, Urban Renewal Manager Kate Porsche, and Administrative Assistant Teresa Nix

Others present: Approximately five others in the audience

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cordell Post called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. He welcomed new CARA Advisory Board member Rich Catlin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 15, 2009

MOTION: Gordon Kirbey moved to approve the April 15 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded, and it **passed** unanimously.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None.

R-3 Request to Change Partnership Structure

Urban Renewal Manager Kate Porsche recalled that she gave a brief staff report last month regarding a restructuring of the R-3 partnership and a request from Rick Rebel that he be removed as one of the personal guarantors on the CARA contract for the JC Penney building. At that time, the CARA Advisory Board requested that staff consult with an attorney and provide a full staff report on this issue. Because City Attorney Jim Delapoer's firm represents Mr. Rebel on other matters, Porsche contacted Corvallis City Attorney Jim Brewer. Brewer's response is included in the written staff report. In summary, Brewer recommends that Rebel could be released if the Board is comfortable that there is sufficient security provided by the remaining partners. Porsche noted that the remaining partners fully support this request.

In discussion and in response to inquiries from the Board, Porsche said that CARA holds the only lien on the building. If the Board so directs, staff could look into providing further proof of personal security by the two remaining partners. Post said that he feels a first lien on the building is sufficient security. Several members agreed.

MOTION: Bill Coburn moved to accept Mr. Rebel's request that he be released from his personal guarantee for the CARA loan. Bessie Johnson seconded the motion, and it **passed** unanimously.

Presentation of New Small Grant Requests

Porsche drew attention to the staff report which outlines three requests totaling \$14,754. She noted that \$25,000 has been set aside for the spring round of small grant allocations and that an additional \$25,000 has been set aside for the fall. She will collaborate with Albany Downtown Association Director Oscar Hult to get the word out about these grants prior to the fall round.

Willamette Community Bank – 333 Lyon Street SE (\$4,754)

Porsche briefly reviewed the request from Willamette Community Bank for 50 percent of costs related to purchasing four street lights.

Coburn asked if the lights would be powered off of a circuit in the bank building. Porsche said she does not know but had assumed that the lights would be powered off of a City circuit. Coburn noted that the City paid for the street lights on First Avenue as part of the streetscape program. He thinks it is great that the bank is willing to pay for half of the cost for these lights.

MOTION: Coburn moved to approve the request. Ray Kopczynski seconded the motion, and it **passed** unanimously.

Pruitt – 921 Third Avenue SE (\$5,000)

Porsche briefly reviewed the request from Vicki Pruitt, a licensed massage therapist who runs her business out of her residence, for a matching grant for costs related to the exterior renovation of her business location. Porsche said that Pruitt's long-term plan is to have this location solely for her business.

Kopczynski spoke in support of the request which would improve both this small business and the neighborhood. In response to an inquiry from Coburn, Porsche said that the property is zoned mixed-use residential.

Loyd Henion expressed concern about setting a precedent that might encourage someone who needs home repairs to start a small business and then come to CARA for funding. Coburn said that this request appears to be for routine maintenance and would not appear to provide any tax increment. Porsche commented that the small grant program is generally used for repair work, awnings, etc., which do not necessarily create tax increment. She said that the Board could choose to revisit whether it wants to continue this program.

Johnson said that the small grant program can help with small projects which make businesses look better and more appealing and which serve as a catalyst for other improvements in the neighborhood. Dick Olsen agreed, noting that small improvements on one property can create a chain reaction. Henion said that he is persuaded by the comments of his fellow Board members.

MOTION: Kirbey moved to approve the request. David Anderer seconded the motion, and it **passed** unanimously.

Pizza King/Lewis – 231 Lyon Street SE (\$5,000)

Porsche reviewed the request from Ruby Lewis for a matching grant to cover costs related to the exterior renovation of the Pizza King building.

Kopczynski commented that the building has been much improved over recent years; he is in favor of this request. In response to an inquiry from Kim Sass, Lewis said that she would consider adding a street light if it was affordable to do so. Ralph Reid, Jr., said that he would not suggest adding a street light until something has been done with the sidewalks. Coburn spoke in favor of this request, noting that Lewis has been very generous in the community.

MOTION: Coburn moved to approve the request. The motion was seconded, and it **passed** unanimously.

Staff Updates and Issues

Porsche suggested that the Board take the summer months to review the original urban renewal plan and do some strategic planning for the loan funds that it expects to borrow in the fall.

Porsche reported on a recent visit and report by consultants associated with the Main Street Program. She will e-mail the report to Board members. The consultants said that the community has a lot of great assets and they were very complimentary of First Avenue. They did identify some challenges in terms of traffic flow and signage. One suggestion was that First and Second Avenues be made two-way streets. Sharon Konopa added that one thing that came out of the report was the need to readdress the Albany Square Plan.

Reid expressed concern about how two-way traffic on First Avenue might impact businesses on Second Avenue. Coburn commented that many cities have one-way traffic in their downtowns, including Corvallis, Salem, Portland, and Bend. Olsen said that he had the impression that the consultants were impressed with the Crandall plan. He suggested that Crandall be invited to attend a Board meeting as discussions on the Albany Square progress.

Kirbey requested updates on the JC Penney building, the Sears building, and the RCM Homes brownstones. Porsche advised that good progress is being made on the JC Penney building, including work in the basement and installation of new wood clad historic windows. She advised that the City Building Official has condemned the Sears building because repair work was not progressing in the way the owner had promised. Either the owner or the City will need to do the work to make that building safe. Regarding the brownstones, Porsche advised that RCM Homes has had challenges acquiring loans in this economy and that they have recently presented a preliminary plan that would include a more mixed-use component.

BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the CARA Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2009, at 5:15 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair Post adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Submitted by,



Teresa Nix
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,



Kate Porsche
Urban Renewal Manager