



APPROVED: October 21, 2015

**CITY OF ALBANY**  
**Central Albany Revitalization Area Advisory Board**  
**City Hall Council Chambers, 333 Broadalbin Street SW**  
**Wednesday, September 16, 2015**

**MINUTES**

Advisory Board Members present: David Abarr, Russ Allen, Rich Catlin, Bill Coburn, Floyd Collins, Loyd Henion, Rich Kellum, Sharon Konopa, Ray Kopczynski, Mitch Langjahr, Dick Olsen, Mark Spence, and Maura Wilson

Advisory Board Members absent: Bessie Johnson (excused).

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rich Catlin called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

August 19, 2015

MOTION: Ray Kopczynski moved to approve the minutes. Rich Kellum seconded the motion, and it passed 13-0.

**SCHEDULED BUSINESS**

Business from the Public

There was none.

Small Grant Request

*223 Second Avenue SW (Dick & Lillian Juntunen) (\$1,250)*

Urban Renewal and Economic Development Director Kate Porsche directed the Board's attention to the application on page 6 of the agenda packet. The proposal is for a new awning with LED lighting on the old Sears building. The proposal is built on the lower cost estimate on page 13. The applicant is requesting \$1,250, which is the minimum amount for this type of request. Bill Coburn said the two estimates are \$10,000 apart, which makes him wonder if the bidders were looking at the same job. Perhaps one estimate is extra high and one is extra low. He wonders what the true cost is. He also said that because they're using public monies, the Board can't require a local contractor; but both bids are from out-of-town contractors. He thinks the applicant would have more support from the Board if they used an Albany contractor, although he knows that sometimes there isn't a local who can do the work.

Russ Allen noticed that the "application complete" box on page 11 is not checked. Is the application actually complete? Porsche said yes. Allen asked what are the merits of the application, given CARA's program goals? Porsche said that's a tough question, which could be asked of many small grant projects. She suggests the question to answer is: Will it help transform the downtown? She is doubtful about the LED lighting. No other downtown awning has it. Allen said it would be helpful to have a picture in the packet.

Kellum said the two bids use two different products: aluminum and stainless. There is quite a difference in cost. Coburn said if you take out the difference in cost, there is still a big difference between the bids.

Mark Spence asked if there are requirements about lighting and awnings as there are for signage. Porsche said they would be Planning requirements, which she's not familiar with.

Dick Juntunen, 1753 Elk Circle, Albany, explained the difference in the bids. He said he asked five contractors for bids. Three looked at the building, and only one submitted a bid. Contractors are doing well now and don't need work the way they did two or three years ago. He suspects the larger bid came from someone who didn't really want the job. He said the awning looks exactly the same now as it did in 1945. It may have been replaced since then, but it's old and rotten. He is trying to replace it exactly as it is.

Kellum asked if it was possible to repair the awning instead of replacing it. Juntunen said no. He plans to take everything off and do whatever is needed to refurbish the I-beam supports. He showed pictures of the way it looked in 1945 (see agenda file).

In response to the question of where the lights would go, Juntunen said they would be placed underneath. They would be recessed lights.

Sharon Konopa asked what the awning looked like when the building was built in 1920. Juntunen said his pictures are the oldest he could find. Chair Catlin added that the photos are from the newly digitized Potts' collection.

Allen said the request must fit within CARA's criteria or the Board wouldn't be looking at it. He asked what is the advantage to CARA. Juntunen said the project will make the building more attractive. The building is currently leased to The Fun Zone, so people are coming and going. The awning would add to its curb appeal. Mitch Langjahr said the quote is for \$1,000, but the grant request is for \$1,250. Juntunen said the \$250 is part of the contractor's overhead.

Floyd Collins asked if the business is open after dark. If not, why would CARA consider lighting? It may become a policy question: Will CARA encourage lighting in all awnings? It isn't historically accurate.

Spence said people coming in and out of Novak's and JP's would see the lighting. He doesn't want to go back to the 1920s with electrical wires strung all over like spiderwebs in October. And one goal is to have more people downtown at night. Kellum said these lights aren't needed for safety. The redo of Second Avenue will include street lighting. This lighting seems similar to advertising. It doesn't contribute to safety or do anything for the overall ambience of Second Avenue.

Konopa said having the downtown lit is very attractive, even if businesses are closed. It makes the downtown look alive. A little more lighting in that spot would be a benefit. Lloyd Henion asked if the lights would be on during the day when the business is open. Juntunen said there are occasional parties in the building in the evening, and the lights would be on then.

**MOTION:** Kopczynski moved to approve the application. Spence seconded the motion.

Kellum said the project's purpose appears to be to bring attention to this specific business, and that's not the taxpayer's responsibility. Coburn said he is inclined to approve partial funding for the awning only. He suggested that the application be reworked and come back to the Board for that. Allen agreed. Spence said CARA's code says the Board can stipulate for part of a project. This project has two parts: an awning and signage. The applicant could change the project and still ask for the same amount. He would like to approve the application as it stands. Dick Olsen said the lighting is not appropriate. Maura

Wilson said she could go either way. It doesn't make sense to make the applicant rework the application for the same dollar amount and bring it back in October. It isn't worth the delay. Catlin said this is one of the few solid awnings downtown. He doesn't care if it's lighted or not. Determining historical accuracy isn't part of CARA's purpose.

VOTE: On a roll call vote, the motion failed 6-7, with Allen, Coburn, Collins, Henion, Kellum, Langjahr, and Olsen voting no.

MOTION: Olsen then moved to approve the application without lighting but with the same dollar amount. Wilson seconded the motion.

Kellum said the project would go down to \$900. Olsen asked about the minimums for the Small Grant program. Catlin clarified that there is a \$1,250 minimum and minimum 50 percent match, which the applicant meets.

Coburn said there's a safety issue. The awning needs to be rebuilt.

MOTION: Coburn moved to approve the application at \$2,500.

Catlin reminded the Board that there was already a motion on the table.

Olsen clarified his motion to approve \$1,250 to repair the awning without the lights, and the clarification was agreeable to the seconder.

Coburn asked for clarification whether the motion was to approve \$1,250 on a total of \$9,000 or \$1,250 on the project. Olsen said his motion was to approve \$1,250 on the project as is, without the lights.

Porsche said she will work with the applicant to revise the application so it matches the motion passed tonight. Allen said the process is illogical: CARA insists that the owner spend less, CARA will give them more, and they could go ahead and put in lighting with their savings. Catlin said the motion is to approve a grant of \$1,250 for an \$8,015.23 awning not including LED lights. Allen asked if the motion prohibits LED lights. Catlin said no. Porsche suggested that the applicant discuss lighting when they go before the Landmarks Advisory Commission. Juntunen said that Bill Ryals, who is on the LAC, recommended the LED lighting.

Catlin added that the project's successful bidder, Higby, is local, although he has a Stayton address.

VOTE: A vote was taken on the motion to approve \$1,250 to repair the awning without the lights, and it passed 13-0.

Catlin asked if CARA had received any other small grant requests that didn't make it on tonight's agenda. Porsche said no. She heard from two applicants for the previous round of storefront grants, but they found it very hard to get bids. Those applications were due June 30. She suggested that the Board consider whether the current timing is working.

Lloyd Henion left the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

#### Wayfinding Signs Presentation from Consultant

Ken Ambrosini, Ambrosini Design, 1631 NW Thurman Street, Suite 102, Portland, showed slides of a wayfinding signage program for the downtown area (see agenda file). He said he was retained by the Albany Downtown Association Design Committee to develop a signs program to biddable format. His firm has been doing this for 30 years, and he is also a licensed general contractor. He showed a map of the study area and defined primary, secondary, and third-level wayfinding signs. He said the main focus is First and Second Avenues, but they also need to direct people to the Amtrak station. Priority will be given to direction to public parking, historic elements, the carousel, the park, etc. The aim is information

that doesn't overwhelm the visitor. He showed two fonts and a color family. Primary signs are proposed at First and Lyon, First and Ellsworth, and at the exit from Highway 99 into downtown. The third-level signs were developed to attach to existing streetlight poles, but he has learned that may conflict with the hanging flower baskets. The sign system could be extended to bike and pedestrian trails.

Wilson said she noticed that some of the designs said "Historic Downtown Albany" at the top but others didn't. Will they be consistent? Ambrosini said the extra element can clutter smaller signs. He likes it at the entry points and on larger signs, but maybe not on smaller signs. It could be applied later; the panels are made of cut vinyl, which is reflective, inexpensive, and lasts about ten years.

Kellum asked what materials will be used for backing. Ambrosini said he always likes aluminum because it is lighter and easier to maintain. They would use powder-coat paint and digital printing. ODOT uses this method, and Ambrosini has the required printer. Signs made this way can be cleaned of tagging to like new. Kellum said he thinks these elements should all be available locally. Ambrosini said this kind of work is highly specialized and must go to a qualified contractor. CARA could break up the contract and award the metalwork and the graphic work separately. Coburn asked if Ambrosini had ever used anodized aluminum. Ambrosini said yes. He likes it because it shows the grain of the metal. He doesn't know anyone locally who does that kind of work, and it is not environmentally friendly. Coburn said he has seen powder coating come off of aluminum. Ambrosini said the bid package could be done with tight specifications and alternates. Material submittals would be part of the bid.

Spence said he used to work at a college in the Midwest that went through a branding process with a very good local firm, and elements of their distinctive new branding were soon used by a state university. To what degree is this design silhouette distinctive to Albany? Are the specifications replicable so we could do other signs by this specification? Ambrosini said that he has not used this shape before as a designer, and it is not currently used in Oregon. It is based on some of Albany's historic architecture, which may exist in other communities. He can't guarantee that the design won't be copied. The brand is the whole package: color, shape, etc. As to the specifications, anyone qualified to bid a project like this could use these specs. Porsche noted that the design committee got the idea of the arch from the Ellsworth Street bridge across the Willamette and Main Street from the black-and-white historical placards on historic homes. It's a home-grown design.

Coburn asked what the next step is. Porsche said that if the Board concurs in approval of this concept, Ambrosini will finish setting sign locations and design the actual wording. Coburn said he thinks putting the carousel on a sign should be high priority. Porsche said the bias will be toward shoppers and visitors to downtown. Ambrosini said part of his work on this project was to drive through town as a visitor and find everything he thought was worth pointing out.

Kopczynski asked if CARA goes out for an RFP, will we be setting cost guidelines? Porsche said an RFP usually describes what is needed and how many, not price. Ambrosini said when he finishes this stage of the project, he'll know how many signs will be proposed and will be able to estimate the cost. Porsche said CARA has already allotted \$75,000 to this project; it's in the budget. Coburn pointed out that there's always the option of rejecting all bids. CARA might also get a better price bidding the project in January than in July. Wilson asked if the signs could be changed or updated if necessary. Ambrosini said yes; it's a panelized system. Spence suggested that other organizations, such as the Carnegie Library, might be willing to contribute their share of their building's sign. That could be built into the bid process, or CARA could allow other groups to buy their own signs if they wanted them.

The Board expressed consensus to move forward to the next step of the process. Ambrosini said he could have a biddable document ready in four to six weeks. Catlin thanked the Design Committee and Ambrosini.

## Staff Updates and Issues

Porsche updated the Board on several projects:

The streets projects will come to the October 21 meeting. All the streets projects will be discussed, and George Crandall will attend to make presentations.

Cultural signage: After last month's meeting, staff is working with Cathy LeSeur to find private partnerships to help fund the required match for the state grant.

Dave Clark path lighting: The 50 percent design meeting is September 17. The project will bid at the end of September.

CARA code review: Planning Manager Bob Richardson is working on a partnership possibility with University of Oregon graduate students. The students need ten to fifteen projects in one city. Richardson is working with the Directors to see if Albany has enough projects to justify the partnership. If not, we will hire a consultant to start the work. Olsen asked how long it would take to use the partnership. Porsche said she doesn't know. She thinks it would be comparable to working with a consultant. Olsen said the partnership is a nice idea but hopes it wouldn't hold up the project.

Porsche reported that the Lepman contracts have been executed and his permits for the Fortmiller building are ready. Mikesell's documents have also been signed, and work is underway. Novak's is open at their new Second Avenue location.

Economic Development/Urban Renewal Coordinator Nathan Reid handed out information (see agenda file). One is a brochure he put together to advertise grant and loan programs available through CARA. He is working with the Albany Downtown Association to get the word out. The second handout relates to the newly approved Historic Homebuyer Loan Program in the Hackleman Historic District. Reid said he researched homes on the market in the Hackleman District and found several that were eligible for the program. Real estate agents were interested and will contact the owners. He also plans to send the information to owners who have bought in the district in the last 12 months.

Porsche said an idea came from the last CARA meeting to create a CARA CIP document. Reid has met with Senior Accountant Jeff Babbitt (Public Works) to discuss the idea. He handed out an example page for a CARA CIP (see agenda file). CARA needs a way to document future projects so the Board can prioritize them over one to five years. Porsche explained how the CIP would help the Board understand expenses on each project.

Porsche said she has a conflict with the scheduled November meeting date. Her preference would be to move the meeting to Thursday, November 12. She asked the Board members to let her know if they have conflicts. Allen said he is not available on that date.

Porsche said the Board will discuss the streets projects, which are part of the public infrastructure projects at the October meeting. On the public/private partnerships side, the line item has \$879,500 remaining.

## **BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD**

Spence said he has heard some things that indicate misunderstanding of CARA's role in a couple of community issues. He heard that CARA and the City were renegeing on parking issues at Novak's new location, and that CARA's help to Mikesell had destroyed Bo-Mack's BBQ. These stories are going around. Is there a way to counter them? He also asked if CARA has any kind of presentation to offer to businesses downtown with uninviting storefronts. Porsche said yes, a presentation called "Extreme Storefront Makeover," through the Downtown Association's Design Committee, has been given to several businesses to inspire renovation, but it's awkward to make an initial approach to a building owner who hasn't requested it.

Peggy Burris, Director of the ADA, said they have a couple of ways of talking to people about sprucing up storefronts. They are currently talking about how to approach several businesses they're talking about.

Porsche said the issue of angled parking at Novak's isn't settled and will come back for discussion again. She said Bo-Mack's had been considering changing their format and scaling down to catering and a food cart. They had a very amicable parting with Mikesell, in no way influenced by CARA.

#### NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, October 21, 2015.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair Catlin adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Submitted by,

Reviewed by,

*Signature on File*

*Signature on File*

Allison Liesse  
Accounting Specialist

Kate Porsche  
Economic Development & Urban Renewal Director