



**Downtown Development Authority of Colorado Springs
Board of Directors Meeting
May 12, 2020 at 8 am
Remote Zoom Meeting**

Board members present: Carrie Bartow, Aaron Briggs, Jordan Empey, Jeff Finn, Jill Gaebler, Chris Lieber, Dot Lischick, David Lux, Darsey Nicklasson and Tony Rosendo

Staff: Alex Armani-Munn, Jan Branham Susan Edmondson, Len Kendall, Laurel Prud'homme, Claire Swinford and Ana Valdez

Guests: Bill Butler, Bo Chapman, Trent Conner, Melissa Ricksecker, Ryan Tefertiller, and Peter Wysocki.

Welcome and call to order

Tony Rosendo called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

Minutes

Board reviewed minutes dated April 14, 2020. Following a motion by Chris Lieber, seconded by Jill Gaebler, minutes were approved unanimously without change.

Financials

Board reviewed financials dated April 30, 2020. Susan noted that financials are on track and nothing extraordinary to report. TIF payments will be coming due, so will be expending a lot from TIF fund. Board reviewed Accounts Receivables for COVID Grants. Susan explained that we have only received 60% of TIF payments so far. Payments are behind slightly due to current circumstances, not a reason to panic, but be mindful to not overcommit to financial obligations. Carrie recommended adding the COVID Donations (from Pinnacol Assurance and others) to the tracker.

Dave Lux joined the meeting at 8:14 a.m.

Governance

Susan reminded the board that one to two board seats will open us this summer. Dot Lischick will be ending second term and Dave Lux will be completing one term. Board discussed some possible candidates to approach.

Jordan Empey joined the meeting at 8:24 a.m.

Petition to expand DDA Boundary

Lowell Ventures LLC & Randall Hinton Development LLC request board to consider extending the southern boundary of the DDA to encompass a property just south of Rio Grande, directly contiguous to the existing DDA boundary. Susan explained that Lowell was originally an urban renewal area and therefore excluded from the DDA boundary, since at the time of DDA's creation it was primarily viewed only as a TIF mechanism and not also a meaningful way to define a natural pedestrian boundary of the Downtown.

Tony called for a motion to expand the DDA Boundary to Lowell. Arron Briggs made a motion to approve presenting the appeal to expand the DDA boundary to City Council. Jill Gaebler seconded the motion and unanimously approved with none opposed.

TIF Reimbursement Application

Bill Butler of Randall Hinton Development, presented his project to develop a multifamily apartment complex on 345 Rio Grande Street. Plans call for 62 larger-than-average units which will be affordably priced to attract tenants who are currently priced out of the Downtown market. A local architect (Echo Architecture) and Colorado-based builder are involved in the project.

Board agreed that the applicant's development plans meet the goals of the Experience Downtown Plan. Chris Lieber made a motion to authorize the applicant to pursue a full TIF Reimbursement application. Carrie Bartow seconded the motion, and all were in favor with none opposed.

Alex introduced Bo Chapman of Greystar. Mr. Chapman showed examples of projects Greystar has completed in Denver. Melissa Ricksecker then presented Greystar's most recent plans for a market rate multifamily development on a one-acre parcel at 410 E. Pikes Peak Ave. Current plans call for 275 units, 361 parking spaces and 9,000 square feet of amenities such as gym, community kitchen and common areas. Greystar hopes to have approved plans to present to the board in July. Estimate project completion date of spring 2023.

Board asked if a variance will be required for number of stories. Ms. Ricksecker explained that current plans call for six stories which may not require a variance. Board agreed the project aligns with the goals of the Experience Downtown Plan.

Tony Rosendo made a motion to allow Greystar to pursue a TIF Reimbursement Application, seconded by Jeff and unanimously approved with none opposed.

Bo Chapman, Melissa Ricksecker and Trent Conner left the meeting at 8:48 a.m.

DDA Small Business Relief Fund

Susan gave background on the process for the DDA Small Business Relief Fund grant applications. Board reviewed the scoring metrics provided in the packet; staff scored all the applicants on objective factors such as square footage and years in business. Jordan Empey and Sarah Gonzales helped compile the financial health metrics of each applicant. Three review committees each focused on restaurants, retail and an "other" category, respectively. The "other" category consisted of bars, breweries, distilleries, salons, fitness centers and tattoo parlors. The review committees scored on qualitative factors, such as vibrancy and unique character, with several factors to consider in determining such attributes. Tony pointed out that Survive & Thrive Grant committee adopted many of the DDA's process of scoring and ranking candidates. Susan noted Alex is to be commended for his work on this effort, as he stewarded the master scoring sheet and spent a significant amount of time on processing grants. Dot wanted to thank Downtown Partnership staff for their work on the grant effort. Susan addressed the question of chains and franchises – chains were excluded but locally owned franchises were allowed to apply. Funding is a combination of unallocated TIF funds, halt on some portions of the Gateway project, waived job incentive grants, and generous donations, including \$250,000 from Pinnacol Assurance.

The board reviewed the proposed grant funding amounts from the review committee, noting by industry type such as retail or restaurant, but with all business names redacted. Susan made note that there was a healthy balance of industry types in the highest funded category of \$20,000.

Carrie Bartow made a motion to approve payments to the 95 grant applications as presented, seconded by Dot Lischick and unanimously approved. Total appropriation is about \$670,000 and \$2,500 to Downtown Ventures for a Virtual First Friday matching grant.

Susan stated that grantees will be contacted as soon as possible and announcement of grant awards will be made on Wednesday. A future fund may be considered, which could take a different format such as a low-interest loan format or loan guarantees. Chris Lieber congratulated the team on a job well done.

Business support initiatives

Laurel shared recent marketing efforts. The Mother's Day promotion was a resounding success, with plenty of earned media. Staff has increased communication efforts with weekly e-news and weekly merchant news.

Susan shared that free parking is extended through May and likely will resume in June.

Staff is also supporting speedy implementation of outdoor dining options. If restaurants can only open with 30-50 percent capacity, they need some creative options. Surveys show that the public is more comfortable dining outdoors vs. indoors. It is vital to increase outdoor dining with temporary use permits. Closing Tejon from Colorado to Pikes Peak Ave on one or two nights a week is an option to consider. There are numerous issues and roadblocks to overcome, such as alcohol laws and the Palmer Deed.

Old business

Susan provided an update on Artspace. While there has been frustration with the pace of the project and the seeming lack of urgency from Artspace team, now that Artspace's Ridgway project has been greenlighted for LIHTC, Colorado Springs' project moves to the forefront. And now that the committee has determined that the larger scale project of approximately 65 units is preferred, work can begin on architectural design, complete pro forma and securing the capital stack.

Susan also shared that staff is planning a June 4 virtual State of Downtown event.

Floor was opened for comments. Tony said the board is more quiet than usual today because all the presentations make sense and these are all great initiatives. Board thanked staff for all their work getting the grant applications prepared.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.