



**Downtown Development Authority of Colorado Springs
Board of Directors Meeting
October 13, 2020 at 8 am
Convened via Zoom Meeting**

Board members present: Carrie Bartow, Aaron Briggs, Jordan Empey, Jeff Finn, Jill Gaebler, Stella Hodgkins, Chris Lieber, Dave Lux, Darsey Nicklasson, Ingrid Richter and Tony Rosendo

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

Guests: Bo Chapman, Sarah Humbargar, Elliot Nasser, Melissa Ricksecker, Michael Spekhardt, Ryan Tefertiller, Jason Wallenta and Peter Wysocki

Welcome and roll call

Ingrid Richter called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. and roll call was taken.

Minutes

Board reviewed minutes dated September 1, 2020 and September 8, 2020. Following a motion by Stella Hodgkins, seconded by Jill Gaebler, minutes were approved unanimously without change.

Financials

Board reviewed financials dated September 30, 2020. Susan noted that the TIF fund is rather diminished due to payment of \$250,000 to the Vermijo streetcape last month. Susan advised that other expenses are tracking as usual. The operating fund received \$75,000 from Parking Enterprise in support of alleyway improvements. Marketing expenses will increase toward the end of the year as significant promotion for holiday shopping takes place.

Following a motion by Carrie Bartow to accept the financials, seconded by Chris Lieber, the financial statements were unanimously accepted without change.

TIF Reimbursement Applications

Melissa Ricksecker of Greystar Development Group was introduced. She presented plans for a multifamily project at the corner of South Weber and East Cimarron. The project features 281 units, ranging from 480 to 1,298 square feet; 50 percent of the units will be one-bedroom apartments with 25 percent of units assigned for both studios and two-bedroom units. The project is advanced by demolishing the existing Salvation Army building and assembling adjacent parcels in the block; some portion over the alley will be needed.

Peter Wysocki and Jordan Empey joined the meeting at 8:15 a.m.

Questions and board discussion followed with board in agreement this project meets the goals of the Experience Downtown Master Plan.

Dave Lux made a motion to authorize Greystar to proceed with a full TIF reimbursement application. Aaron Briggs seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Bo Chapman, Sarah Humbargar and Melissa Ricksecker left the meeting at 8:25 a.m.

Grants

Alex presented a grant request from The Garden at 401 S. Nevada Ave., a property that has been vacant for a handful of years. The beer garden concept will increase activation in that area of the New South End. The owners intend to have a food truck onsite and serve a variety of local craft beers, wines and specialty cocktails.

Jason Wallenta joined the meeting at 8:31 a.m.

Applicant and business owner Elliot Nasser shared that he is aiming for a February or March 2021 opening. The owners plan to have year-round outdoor service with umbrellas, heaters and eventually installation of a full tent-like covering over the patio. This is the first such F&B venture for the owners. Total project cost is estimated at just over \$400,000, with eligible costs of about \$75,000 for garage doors, canopies, fencing, lighting, a mural and signage.

Tony Rosendo joined the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Dave Lux made a motion to provide a \$10,000 Building Enhancement Grant to The Garden, seconded by Aaron Briggs, and approved unanimously with none opposed. Chris Lieber recused himself from the vote.

Elliot Nasser and Michael Spekhardt left the meeting at 8:38 a.m.

Alex then provided an overview for a grant request from White Pie Pizza at 330 South Nevada Ave., the former Baby Cotton Bottoms. Total project costs is about \$380,000 to convert the building to F&B service and provide extensive front patio seating; eligible costs of about \$97,000 cover signage, awnings and elements of a 1,500 sqf patio with railings, seating and fire pits. Applicant and business owner Jason Wallenta stated he hopes to open in November, December or January, depending on circumstances. Board discussion followed with some questions about the current plans differing from those that were submitted to the city for approval. Mr. Wallenta stated some plans were changed due to the pandemic and wishing for an enhanced outdoor seating area. Susan explained that while the new business venture and patio is clearly a positive addition to Downtown, it is important that whatever grant monies are approved must conform with the actual plans/design for the property. Alex will follow up with the applicant to secure updated plans.

Aaron Briggs made a motion to approve a grant of \$10,000 contingent upon the DDA receives the current building plans. The motion was seconded by Tony Rosendo and approved unanimously with none opposed.

Jason Wallenta left the meeting at 8:56 a.m.

Special projects

Len provided an update on the Alleyways projects. Most of the alleys are complete or nearing completion. Staff has partnered with the AdAmAn Club to install some permanent art installations in a few alleys. Susan shared that the hope is get some key alleys paved in the next year. Trash hauling continues to be a concern at some alleys. Len then shared updates on the Gateways project. The gateway signs at Cimarron and Pikes Peak avenues are currently lit at night as well as the sidewalk lights on the Cimarron sidewalk. Board is encouraged to check out the lights at night. Staff will be able to program the colors of the lights for holidays or special events.

Old business

Alex provided updates on the Holiday Pop Up shops. The hope is to activate 122 N. Tejon, 14 E. Bijou and 32 S. Tejon with temporary vendors. Some vendors include The Racks, a curated thrift store, a US Olympic Training Center fan shop and a tasting room at the former Thirsty Parrot location. Alex also provided a vacancy update.

Vacancies are actually down 7 percent, which is encouraging news in difficult times. New business openings are maintaining pace with closed businesses. Staff continues to work with landlords to make our vacant storefront more appealing to help neighboring merchants.

Laurel provided updates on holiday marketing. Skate in the Park will open in mid-November with plans to close by end of January. Holiday promotions are starting earlier, with the plan to extend the holiday shopping season to give the public the option to spread out and not cluster Downtown on fewer days. Promotions include "Make Every Saturday Small Business Saturday," which will start the first Saturday in November. The Holiday Stroll will start earlier in the afternoon to help people spread out. The annual Parade of Lights will be held at the Broadmoor World Arena instead of Downtown (as affixed event that patrons drive through). We we are not sure yet what the impact will be to not have the parade this year – it may even prove beneficial. Staff is also working to enhance the online shopping directory. The Elf on the Shelf promotion will be replaced with a much larger activity called Holidays with My Gnomies, an phone-enabled gaming activity that will encourage people to explore multiple shop windows Downtown.

New business

No new business to discuss.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m.