

POST FALLS URBAN RENEWAL Workshop Minutes

April 9, 2019 – City Hall (Basement Conference Room)

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Jerry Baltzell called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Executive Director Diane Fountain called the roll. Present in addition to Baltzell were Commissioners Larry Carstensen, Len Crosby, Erick Clemensen, Collin Coles and Jame' Davis and Laura Horn. Also, in attendance was Warren Wilson, Bill Melvin, Rob Paulus and Bob Seale from the City of Post Falls. Baltzell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONFLICT DISCLOSURE

None

CITIZEN COMMENT

None

Financial Reports. Director Fountain reviewed the March Financial reports which include updated obligation and carryover balances on the Increment Received Worksheet and the 6-month Budget vs. Actual.

Crosby noted that the Agency has used only 39% of the budget in the first 6 months. The CD at STCU matured on March 29th and those monies have been transferred to the LGIP account which is currently earning 2.56% interest which is much higher than investing in a one (1) year CD.

Discussion on New Urban Renewal Districts. Commissioner Crosby attended the 12th Annual Coldwell Banker Local Real Estate Market Update meeting and shared the information from that event as follows:

- Post Falls current population is approximately 38,000 (Dept. Of Labor)
- Projected population for Post Falls by 2040 is 105,000 (Dept. Of Labor)
- Average single-family home prices in Post Falls have increased from \$215,000 in 2016 to \$267,500 – an increase of 52,500 while wage growth has been either stagnant or growing only 2% per year.
- The median home price (new construction) in Kootenai County increased from \$252,300 in 2016 to \$314,750 in 2018.
- In the past ten years, the 65+ population in Kootenai County has grown by 75%. The relative level of that percentage growth is anticipated to continue in the next 10 years, as an increasing number of “baby boomers” retire and relocate to smaller metropolitan areas with quality of life aspects and access to good medical care.
- The City of Post Falls is the fastest growing area of North Idaho.
- We need more industrial space. Current vacancy levels for industrial properties is 2.8%.

The key growth corridors for the region were cited as:

- (1) Highway 41 Corridor (Tech Park URA District),
- (2) Atlas Mill Site (Urban Renewal),
- (3) Rathdrum Prairie (Rathdrum’s proposed urban renewal district)
- (4) CDA proposed Medical Corridor (proposed urban renewal district)
- (5) Infill sites within CDA and Post Falls

All of the speakers emphasized that “**DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWS INFRASTRUCTURE!!**” Clearly the benefits associated with urban renewal agencies providing an opportunity to expend infrastructure is being noticed by those in the real estate industry.

1. Over the next three years, a majority of our existing urban renewal districts will close out. As we did with the new Tech Park District; we should do some advance planning and give some serious consideration to areas in our Community that would benefit from the formation of a new urban renewal district.
 - a. Potential districts could include the Post Falls Medical Corridor (Mullan and Polston).
 - b. West Post Falls along Pleasant View going north from the I-90 interchange
 - c. How can the URA help encourage infill development in areas where vacant land is already zoned and served by utilities?

2. The URA should seek the advice of our local developers and planners. Perhaps a series of workshops with specific and targeted folks in the Community to give us the benefit of their thoughts and advice.
 - a. A workshop with City Planning Staff
 - b. A workshop with the Planning Commission
 - c. Gather advice from local developers who have been involved in our existing districts (Steve White of Copper Basin, Greenstone, Tom Stoesser of Jacklin, Jim Watson, Centerpoint Partners, LLC).
 - d. While it might not be beneficial to talk with Liberty Bankers Life Insurance Co. who owns the Post Falls Landings site it might be worth speaking with investors that have shown interest in the property but have not moved forward on a project there.
 - e. Thoughts from Parkwood Business Properties in Coeur d’Alene.

3. Once a potential area for a new URA District is targeted, the URA should consider engaging the Urban Land Institute to do a comprehensive study. This was done for the proposed “health care district” being considered in Coeur d’Alene, and the community response from the findings of that report were extremely positive.

Crosby stated the City has talked about engaging with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) on a study for the City Center District. Commission can set up some workshops within the next year to engage ourselves and the community to look at future City growth and how the URA can help.

Discussion:

Clemensen: Is there any indication why Liberty won’t cooperate?

Crosby: Nothing except the previous owner defaulted and it is sitting on their balance sheet. They could potentially be holding on for a higher price for the land to recover their loss.

Coles: The areas of land mentioned to consider, it seems the ones where infrastructure is lacking are Pleasantview and coordinating with CdA on the Seltice Way corridor. I’m not sure if the medical and City Center are viable. We have spent a lot of time on City Center and most of the infrastructure is already in place in the medical corridor.

Baltzell: Recently the City put on a nice forum for the City Center. A local businessman/realtor was in attendance – he has property on the east side of Pleasantview that runs north of Seltice to Prairie

encompassing over 200 acres. It was suggested to work with the City to get the property annexed into the City and then work with urban renewal and any other players to put in the necessary infrastructure and turn it into a nice industrial area.

Seale: The City is meeting with Mr. Singer to discuss those properties soon, then reach out to Diane to discuss it further. It is in the master plan to run sewer out there, but the timeline is twenty (20) years out due to the cost and the extent of the project. In order to do it sooner, it would cost millions of dollars. There may be a way of working with the master plan and trying to get it done sooner.

Baltzell stated that he and Fountain attended the Jobs Plus (CDA EDC) luncheon yesterday. A key item that is standing in the way of industrial growth is the availability of having "shovel ready" sites. Post Falls has the Technology District, Expo and Center Point which are all ready for development. The availability of skilled workforce is also an issue which Kootenai County can look at and see what skills are needed and work with NIC and KTEC.

Bill Melvin discussed the City Center Parking Plan and future needs in the City Center area including a signal in the Landings site. Coles inquired on any choke points in the sewer system that need to be addressed. Melvin stated the 12th Avenue sewer station and force main is a major need for growth in the northeast portion of the City.

Coles: Is there a big one on the west side?

Melvin: There are a couple on the west side, one is outside of the City limits north of Beck.

Coles: Are there any infrastructure challenges between Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene on Seltice Way?

Melvin: When you look at the beautification that has been done along Seltice Way, as the Post Falls grows from Ross Point Road to Huetter, the City will look at matching up that corridor.

Coles: Are there any rough plans on that?

Melvin: There was discussion.

Crosby: The quandary for urban renewal is the infrastructure has to be funded from new development. We have to look at the amount of vacant land, current zoning, etc. before we can consider infrastructure projects. We are fortunate that the URA is able to fund infrastructure projects in the EPF District. Where are the projected parking areas in the City Center, the URA advocated for on street parking along Spokane Street and there are only 5 spaces that aren't even marked yet?

Melvin: The ROW's east of Spokane Street vary in width from 8 to 60'. The City has tried to maximize the parking by using angled parking or parallel where they can, mostly on the side streets. The parking will include pedestrian and bike uses also.

Baltzell: Since there are minimal businesses in that area is it wise to invest several hundred thousand dollars in parking spots?

Seale: While it is empty now, there is a burger/brew type business on the corner of 3rd and Spokane, the Filling Station recently opened near Railroad and someone is interested in the property at Railroad and Spokane Street. There is another restaurant that wants to locate near the burger/brew and a medical building in the Landings site that would want some commercial or retail. There is also a restaurateur looking at locating in the Landings. Investors look at what the infrastructure will support them locating to an area. The master parking plan will encourage development in the City Center.

Clemensen: Has there been any discussion or should there be in exploring Beck Road area north of Seltice Way for future URD due to its close proximity to I-90 and the Center Point and Expo Districts. It is comparable to Pleasantview. Would there be any major impediments to exploring that?

Baltzell: To my knowledge there hasn't been any discussion on that. The types of industries would have to be compatible with the race track environment.

Davis: Wasn't there some environmental issues in that area, such as mining and other special use permits?

Crosby: Beck Road has railroad crossing and significant change in grade. Hagadone has industrial buildings where boats are stored. There have been tremendous pieces of land that have been pointed out that have proper zoning and utilities for light industrial or retail but we don't have anything for

heavy industrial. Heavy industrial and mining are on Pleasantview which is why our focus has been there, however Beck Road could be explored.

Seale: The City views that area as County land with future industrial use. Pleasantview is closer to the City limits and easier to annex.

Davis: Also, there has been more interest in Pleasantview area.

Coles: The Kootenai County Comprehensive Plan has been updated and is now on their website.

Baltzell: Is there anything the City can do to help with infill development in the City Center area, encourage renovations, sell vacant properties, etc.?

Melvin: The City Center Parking Plan can help with that development. The public forum was designed to get people together and gather ideas about what they wanted to see in the City Center and get suggestions on what to do with the area.

Coles: A reduction in impact fees could help.

Seale: From Spokane Street east to Idaho Street there are pockets that can be filled with higher density residential or commercial mix zoning. There are a lot of narrow lots that a developer could build higher density housing. In trying to create a downtown core, the City would like to see the population within that core rise which is needed to support the commercial businesses wanting to located there.

Carstensen: Can the City do anything with the County properties north of Mullan Ave?

Seale: The City can't force annexation.

Coles: The City has missed many opportunities to annex properties into the City, which is unfortunate because we are subsidizing those people who live in the City, but aren't in the City.

Commissioner Email Discussion. Fountain contacted nine (9) URA's in Idaho and received eight (8) responses. There is only one (1) Agency in Eagle, Idaho that currently use separate Agency email addresses for Commissioners. Lewiston is looking into setting up URA emails for their Commissioners, all others use personal or work email. Fountain noted that in PFURA history, the Executive Director is usually cc'd in all emails, there has only been public records request that would include Commissioner emails in the past 9 years which was never released due to the cost. Bredeson noted that in the fifteen (14) years he has been with the agency there have been approximately 10 total public records requests.

Clemensen: What is the extent of Lewiston's response to setting up emails due to lots of lawsuits from Nez Perce County?

Baltzell: It could be due to the makeup of the Commission, many Agency's have members of City Council on their boards.

Coles: I think it is a new wave to set up separate emails, Kootenai County recently did it for the Commissioners and the Planning Commission. It simplifies records requests and insulates private from Agency emails.

Fountain: Pete, isn't the main thing that Commissioners would have to understand is if there were a public records request, their personal email would be subject to that.

Bredeson: Correct, the content matters would be subject.

Chairman Baltzell postponed this matter for future discussion.

Bredeson asked Wilson how the City handles Council emails. Wilson stated they have separate City email addresses and are encouraged to do their official work on their official email account.

Clemensen: If an inquiry came about who would be the arbiter of what is pertinent and what is not pertinent?

Wilson: Potentially a Judge.

Baltzell had to leave the meeting at 9 am and Vice-Chair Carstensen took over.

Monthly Meeting Discussion. There has been discussion on whether or not to hold the monthly Commission meeting when the only thing on the Agenda is the Consent Calendar and the meeting only lasts six (6) minutes. Fountain showed the past two (2) years history of Workshops and Commission meeting and how long each lasted. Baltzell stated that there really weren't that many short meetings, and was concerned that there could be citizens that would want to show up and provide comment.

Clemensen: If there was a situation where we knew it would be a very short meeting, we could use technology and conference call into the meeting. The media center should be consulted to make sure it could be recorded.

Bredeson: There would still have to be one Commissioner present.

Crosby: It's an issue of transparency. We are growing beyond our expectations, but we are still a small town. People want to know that they can come to a meeting and voice their opinion or watching the meeting on TV and see that we are actually looking at the financial statements. I don't mind showing up for a short meeting or staying for a long meeting for that matter.

Davis: I agree.

Carstensen: I think we are all up and ready in the morning and we should leave it as is.

Fountain: My concern is the financials; the checks are done once a month and approved and signed at the monthly meeting – that still needs to happen.

Bredeson: There has been a situation where the Workshop and Commission meeting were combined, back in December of 2017.

Collin: I don't like to have workshops and then discuss the same thing at the Commission meeting, it is a waste of time.

Davis: Is a reason we can't have the discussion we have at the workshop at the televised meeting?

Bredeson: The workshops started when during construction of the Greensferry Overpass when there was so much information that the regular monthly meetings were lasting up to two (2) hours, we tried to get some stuff done at the workshop so the monthly meetings weren't so long.

Fountain: Just thinking of this workshop, when items such as Commissioner Emails or Meetings come up, it could be discussed at a Communications, Property and Personnel Committee meeting, then brought to full Commission.

Carstensen stated that things will be left as is and it can be discussed at a future meeting if necessary.

Staff Report. Fountain reminded Commission of the Joint Workshop next Tuesday, April 16th @ 4:30 pm. and requested the Eligibility Study from the City to provide to Commission.

Commissioner Comments

Carstensen thanked Commissioner Crosby for putting together the information for the discussion on New Urban Renewal Districts. It was done in an easy to understand format which is much appreciated.

Adjournment. Carstensen asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Coles made the motion, seconded by Crosby. All in favor by voice vote. Meeting was adjourned at 9:16 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane Fountain, Executive Director



Jerry Baltzell, Chairman