

CITY OF SILVERTON
CITY COUNCIL AND URBAN RENEWAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINT WORK SESSION MINUTES

Silverton Community Center – Council Chambers – 421 South Water St.

April 15, 2019, 6:00 PM

I. OPENING CEREMONIES – Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call

Mayor Kyle Palmer called the Work Session to order at 6:01 p.m.

City Council Present: Mayor Kyle Palmer, Council President Jason Freiling, Jim Sears, Matt Plummer, Dana Smith, Crystal Neideigh, and Laurie Carter

Urban Renewal Advisory Committee Present: Jason Freiling, Steve Kay, Stacy Palmer, Sheldon Lesire, Terry Caster, Aaron Huddart, Greg Gossack, Milla Eubank, Bill Miles

Staff Present: City Manager, Christy Wurster; Community Development Director, Jason Gottgetreu; Public Works Director, Petra Schuetz; Account Clerk II, Sheena Kroker; and Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk, Angela Speier

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mayor Palmer announced that the potential Special City Council meeting scheduled for tonight has been cancelled.

2.1 Discuss Urban Renewal Grants and Loan Programs and how funds should be allocated

Community Development Director Jason Gottgetreu explained the current Urban Renewal Grant and Loan program was adopted in 2016 and consists of Building Improvement, Façade Improvement, and Job Creation programs. He said that 11 projects have been funded through the programs adopted in 2016 and there is a \$437,484 left to spend. He provided an overview of the matching requirements for each of the current programs. The goal for tonight's Joint Work Session is to look at potential changes to the program that will best utilize the remaining funds. He explained that in the past there have been projects funded that replaced older buildings, which has had a significant impact on increasing the tax base in the District. The Façade improvements have had strong visual impacts while having a relatively low cost. Some projects have improved the structural integrity of the building while having little outside evidence of a project being undertaken, but these expand the life of the historic buildings.

The members provided feedback on the following potential changes to the program.

Increase the amount of private match for grant funds to facilitate more investment per dollar spent.

Councilor Carter stated that she would like to see the agency award more loans and grants should only be given if the applicant has no other way to accomplish the project. Councilor Freiling would like to see the matching requirement increased to 4 to 1. Member Terry Caster said there is a limited amount of money and by offering more loans some of the money would come back in. Councilor Carter would like to see the Façade Improvement requirements strengthened to ensure that historic values are met during the reconstruction. Applicants would be able to utilize the loan program for their match requirement.

The members decided to keep the Façade Improvement Program at a 1 to 1 match, but amend the Building Improvement Program to require a 4 to 1 match with no tiers.

Cap the maximum request to a lower number to facilitate a high number of projects to be done with the remaining funds.

Members decided to reduce the cap on individual requests to \$100,000.

Require a stronger return on investment criteria for requests larger than \$20,000 to increase the impact on the tax base of projects.

Member Stacy Palmer feels that there needs to be a focus on what the return on investment would be and there hasn't been enough emphasis on trying to build up the tax base. She would like to see the applicant address what the return of investment would be to the community in their application. Discussion ensued on this idea and the need to keep it fairly subjective, but require the applicant to provide a narrative on how their project is going to provide a return on investment and ask them to explain the impact to the assessed value, with a credible review. A façade application could require a narrative on the impact the improvement will have on the community and why it will be good for Silverton. Then through the competitive process the URA will be able to weigh the projects based on this criterion.

Have a grant cycle, two application windows per year with a yearly cap.

Director Gottgetreu explained the debt requirements for urban renewal agencies and their typical lifespan. Councilor Sears explained it is his understanding that the district dissolves once all the revenue is collected. Staff will clarify the timing of district disbandment with the City Attorney. The members decided to institute a cap of \$100,000 per year for all grant and loan programs, which was amended to \$150,000 later in the Work Session.

Keep the façade grant program as is.

Councilor Carter would like to tighten up the requirements and ask the applicant to be more specific and demonstrate the benefit to Silverton. She doesn't feel that remedying construction defects should be an allowed expense. Director Gottgetreu said that staff can better define the criteria and make it clearer what primary street frontage is.

Encouraged the excellent loan program, but the city must be in first position.

Member Milla Eubank explained the loan process and that the City would not be in the first position. Councilor Carter recommended changing the wording to encourage the excellent loan program, but that the applicant must demonstrate that if the City were in a lower position that there would be enough equity in the project to protect the City.

Create a LEED loan forgiveness program.

Councilor Carter explained that getting the LEED certification is very expensive and could be cost prohibitive for smaller projects. What the City should be encouraging is sustainability, so she would like to see the applicant demonstrate that they are using sustainable building practices. Discussion ensued on how that would be determined and if it would be viable for every project. Public Works Director Petra Schuetz suggested requiring a condition that the applicant must take an EarthWISE Assessment which is a free assessment through Marion County. If the applicant is adding solar panels in conjunction with their project, then they could explain the benefits in the return on investment narrative of the application. Discussion ensued on if the EarthWISE Assessment would be required prior to the application or after the grant/loan award and if it should be required for façade applications as well. Councilor Smith explained that EarthWISE program and how reaching a level of certification can take years, so obtaining a certification should not be tied to a grant or loan. The members agreed that the assessment should be encouraged at the application level and those applications that have gone through the assessment could be looked on more favorably in a competitive environment. An assessment would be a condition when the loan/grant is awarded, if the applicant has not already gone through the assessment. Staff said in some cases the building isn't functioning as a business, so in those cases the assessment would be tied to the final payment. Councilor Carter would like to see a sustainability statement in the application.

Create a Living Wage Loan Forgiveness Program that is more defined than the current program.

It was decided to remove this program as an option.

Incorporate a statement of non-collusion into the application process.

The members were in agreement with adding a statement.

Require projects adhere to a timeline.

Members agreed that a timeline makes sense and requested staff review the average length of projects and base the timeline on different classes of major construction verses minor construction.

Do not allow the same project to receive funds multiple times.

Members were okay with allowing the same applicant to receive funds multiple times. They decided the funding should be awarded based on the project and not on if the applicant had been awarded funding prior.

Member Steve Kay voiced his support for the grant cycles which will make the program more competitive. He would like to see the development of a scoring tool that can be used as a guide to rank the applications. He would also like to see a minimum score that must be met in order for an application to be considered. The Urban Renewal Advisory Committee will develop a scoring tool for their use, but the Urban Renewal Agency has the authority to make the final decision and would not utilize a scoring mechanism.

Member Kay would also like the City to bring in the State Main Street Coordinator to perform an assessment of the downtown. The Main Street Coordinator would know how much money the City has to invest in downtown and could assess which projects would give the City their best return on investment. This would promote economic development, remove blight and improve the quality of downtown. The property owners would be approached and perhaps more incentives could be offered for their project. If they decided to submit an application those could be prioritized above the other applications. City Manager Wurster explained that the City is working towards achieving the Associate Level of the Main Street Designation which would allow the City to utilize this type of program. Members decided that the cycles for the grant applications should be January and July of each year. There would not be enough time to complete the Main Street Assessment and modify the program requirements to be able to open the cycle this July, so the City will start accepting applications late fall for a January 2020 award. Staff will create a framework for the application that includes information about the priority projects identified through the Main Street Assessment and how those will be funded. The members decided to increase the annual cap for all grant and loan programs to \$150,000 instead of the previously discussed \$100,000.

The Urban Renewal Advisory Committee members were excused from the Work Session at 7:54 p.m. and Council took a break and reconvened the Work Session at 8:03 p.m.

2.2 McClaine Street Reconstruction Project Design Revisited

Councilor Sears thanked the Council for revisiting this project and apologized that he was unable to attend the meeting last month when it was discussed. Prior to the meeting he distributed a memo to Council on why he feels that the design of McClaine Street needed to be discussed further. At the March 18th Work Session Council agreed to move forward with a five foot sidewalk on one side of the street and an eight foot multiuse path on the other side. He would like the Council to consider the more traditional approach of having a bike lane, travel lane, and sidewalk similar to what was done on Steelhammer Road. He explained the 2008 Transportation System Plan (TSP) calls for bike lanes on McClaine Street and he is concerned about circumventing that process. Lastly, Silverton received a bronze designation from the League of American Bicyclists and should be encouraging more bike facilities throughout town. It isn't desirable to have bicyclists and pedestrians on the same path on only one side of the street. If bike lanes were to be added into the design then the greenway would need to be smaller to accommodate them.

Councilor Carter said that she is in favor of the shared multiuse path that allows for a larger greenway. Councilor Freilinger said that he feels that both concepts could be accomplished by constructing smaller sidewalks and using the minimum standard for the travel lanes and bike lanes. Councilor Smith agrees that the TSP process should be followed, but would like to see the greenway because it will help slow down traffic while providing environmental benefits. Mayor Palmer indicated that he is in favor of making

the sidewalk smaller and adding bike lanes on both sides, because it would be the best way to honor what the Council has been trying to accomplish bicycle wise in the community.

Mark Owens, Engineer with Keller and Associates distributed a design concept that adds 5 foot bike lanes on both sides of the street. This design includes a seven foot sidewalk and greenway, a 5.5 foot bike lane, and an 11 foot roadway. Mr. Owens distributed ODOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guide that allows for 10 foot drive lane and a five foot bike lane. Councilor Carter reminded Council that last month there was consensus that the Council wanted more greenspace and this new concept is less greenspace than the original plan. She would still advocate for the multiuse path. Councilor Sears indicated that bike traffic should be traveling in the same direction as cars and the multiuse path is not as safe for cyclists and pedestrians. Mayor Palmer inquired about the possibility of adding an island into the street design. Councilor Plummer said he sees a lot of families that are biking together and not very many commuter cyclists which is why he would like to see separation between the bike path and cars.

Councilor Sears presented pictures of a variety of bike lane options for consideration. Council discussed the various concepts, ways to create separation, and possible adjustments to the current design. Council decided to modify the design to have ten foot drive lanes, five foot bike lanes, which would allow for a five foot sidewalk and a four foot greenway. They would also like to see islands incorporated where possible. Staff indicated that those traffic calming components can be incorporated into the RFP for final design. The RFP could be written in various ways to encourage adding these types of elements into the design.

Becky Ludden, 1501 Crestview Drive. Ms. Ludden said that she has lived in communities where there has been greenspace separating the two lanes of traffic and it becomes a nightmare to drive around the barriers, especially for people who live on the street. Since McClaine Street has a number of residents who can't park on the street, creating that type of barrier would make it harder to pull in and out of their driveways. She urged Council to be considerate of the residents living on McClaine Street.

Council summarized their vision for the design and ways to make it more pedestrian friendly.

III. CITY MANAGER UPDATE

City Manager Wurster said that City staff met with Andy Bellando, Superintendent of Silver Falls School District who indicated that the district is facilitating a plan for the closure of the gate to their parking lot off Grant/Western and are working through the traffic flow issues during peak hours. Staff did ask them to accommodate the closure prior to the end of the school year so the City can better identify, through the circulation study, whether the flow of traffic will be working as it was originally intended with the original approval.

Public Works Director Schuetz provided an update on the South Water project. She said ODOT has agreed to use the existing resources within the fund to do infill sidewalks focusing on ADA ramps on the east side of the street. They think they should be able to add sidewalks down to Quall Road, but will work their way south as far as possible. She said that they will also look at street preservation work during the next round of STIP.

IV. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS – none given.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Freilinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mayor Palmer adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

/s/Angela Speier, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk