

**MINUTES**  
**URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY**  
**November 27, 2007**

Commissioner McCabe called the Moscow Urban Renewal Agency meeting to order at 7:00 a.m. Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2007 in the Moscow City Council Chambers.

***Attendance:***

Commission Members	City Staff Present	Others Present
John McCabe, Chair	Gary J. Riedner, City Supervisor	Walter Steed
Jack Nelson	Don Palmer, Finance Director	Jon Kimberling
Robin Woods	Alisa Stone, Grants Coordinator	Pat Raffee
John Weber	Anne Clapperton, Asst. Comm.Dev. Dir.	Dan Carscallen
Steve Drown (7:13)	Stephanie Kalasz, City Clerk	Paul Kimmell
		Mayor Chaney
		Tom Lamar
		Dave Glasebrook

Absent: Aaron Ament

**1. Approval of Minutes - November 8, 2007**

Nelson moved and Weber seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Review of Public Information Process - Gary J. Riedner**

Riedner said five public information sessions were held, one was for the downtown businesses and one for the County Commissioners. He said there will be a meeting in the future for the taxing districts. He said people in the district were concerned that this would raise their taxes and it was explained that only the allocation of taxes is changed. He said there was a comment that the area is too big and that it is moving too fast. He said a flyer was distributed to every downtown business inviting them to the meeting.

Nelson said Moscow just passed an override so people in the district will pay a higher tax. The increment from inflation, entities collect their full 3% increase because there is a smaller base. There will be a discussion about the size of the area at a future meeting. Weber said it may increase taxes because of increased property value. It will increase the property values and be a benefit to the community. Nelson said the Commissioners are concerned about the raise in taxes. It is small but it is an increase. Mayor Chaney said she was asked if there is a model where a general increase in property value is left out of the district. Riedner said there is no such model that he is aware of.

Nelson said previously, the County was allowed to include new construction in the budget but they no longer have that option available. He said this is the first year that the County will be effected by an urban renewal project.

Riedner said the URA will need a legal description of the project area which is something Raffee will not be providing under her agreement. He said Les MacDonald will assist with the description and bring something to the Board.

**3. Review Agreement with Pat Raffee - Gary J. Riedner**

Riedner discussed the proposed contract. He said compensation is \$60 per hour up to a maximum of \$20,000. Weber asked if this was less than what was expected. Riedner said yes but there are a few items that are not included that the URA will have to pay for as well. He said there was no concern by anyone at the public meetings regarding the proposed use for the project area.

However, with the mixed use, there will be a mix of potential projects in the area. There will have to be an estimate of what the land price will be depending on what can be developed. There is a firm out of Denver used by many URAs throughout the state but they are very expensive. There are people in Idaho who are capable of doing it as well. He said an economic feasibility study is required.

Nelson said economic feasibility depends on how much you are going to spend. He asked if the study is done from the back so you know how much you have to spend on the project. Riedner explained how the study is handled. He said Alturas was different because it was a simplistic project. He said for Alturas, there was an incorrect assumption that all of the lots would be built out in 24 months. It took much longer than that and there was a big lag before money started to come in from the increment. For the new project, they can only estimate the value of what might be developed. The URA can look at an individual project and decide what can be spent on the project.

Weber moved to approve the Agreement with Raffee as written. Woods asked how this contract compares with Post Falls. Raffee said the contract with Post Falls included her services as Executive Director as well. Woods seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Riedner distributed a URA District Plan Approval checklist which included due dates.

#### **4. Naming of URA Project - Gary J. Riedner**

Riedner asked if there should be a specific name for the area. He asked everyone to think about possible names and send them to him via email. He said the idea is to keep political issues out of it. Raffee said it is good to keep the project area open so there aren't limited ideas of what should go there. She said calling it the railway project area might make people focus more on transportation than on business development, etc. She said there was a suggestion for installing light rail in the area. Riedner said the light railway is very expensive and it likely would be difficult to fund. Experts have commented that we don't have the population density to make public transit work efficiently. Nelson asked about the trail system. Riedner said the railway only works to Line Street.

Woods said from a marketing standpoint, if we want to attract people, a good name is important.

Mayor Chaney said with the Latah Trail, the line was abandoned and the Latah Trail Foundation acquired property and easements to have the trail so the chance for rail could be restored if the property owners agreed.

Drown said the name needs to be given good consideration because it really is critical.

Riedner said Raffee is attending the meetings and she will be seeking direction. He asked if any of the Commissioners have a concern about the way this project is going. Nelson asked about size and timeline. Riedner explained. Raffee said if you expand or put in another project next to this one, another feasibility study would need to be done and the entire process needs to start over again. Mayor Chaney said the URAs consideration about this space fits well with the Comprehensive Plan revision and she hopes that the community's wishes are considered as well.

Woods said the Board needs to make sure that the development in the area pays for the improvements. Riedner said an overlay zone is being worked on by Moscow Community

Development Staff. If economic development is supposed to be promoted, it needs to be a consideration in the process.

The next meeting will be on December 6.

Steed said if more public parking can be created, the northern area needs to be left in the project area. We need some as close as possible to downtown businesses.

Mayor Chaney said the piece at the north end is important and affordable housing is unlikely to generate tax increment but is necessary. The parking is also an important component. The opportunities are terrific and has a great potential benefit. Nelson said the Commissioners think the project area can be increased later if necessary. There is a tax shift with this and they are concerned about the County budget and the general taxing district. The Legislature is looking at urban renewal agencies because it is taxation without representation. The people paying the school levy tax will pay more over the next year. Riedner discussed the Dumas building and said the building will likely be destroyed in the next year so something will be developed there. Woods asked about Alturas coming back into the tax rolls early and was told yes it was possible if financial obligations have been met. She said she would like to keep the project as laid out and then eventually add area B. Nelson said the City may be responsible for handling parking out of its budget rather than an urban renewal project funding it. Riedner said the City forgoes its taxes as well but the project improves the City. Mayor Chaney said this is a rare opportunity to work on a contiguous piece of property with the same vision. She suggested shortening the time period of the project. She said we don't want to lose the opportunity now for the increment. Woods said she doesn't want to shorten the years because we don't want to get in trouble but the Board can say it will retire the project early if possible.

Carscallen asked if property can be put back on the tax rolls after it gets developed. Riedner said possibly but he hasn't heard of piecemealing out the increment. He said the Legislature may be considering whether the URA could decline part of the increment so there may be something in place that could be considered. The reasoning is that in order to get the type of development you want in the area, there needs to be money available for improvements.

Steed asked about the amount of tax increase on the little old lady in Viola that Nelson used as an example. Nelson said it is probably a few dollars. He said he would be happy if the Legislature would give the new construction back then this would not be a problem for the County.

There was more discussion about the project area. Riedner explained how the area was originally drafted. Lamar suggested walking along the edges to make sure the details are taken care of to ensure what is included. Drown said the current proposed area suggests a continuity of the entire area and he thinks the entire proposed project area will be beneficial to everyone. The relationship between the University, residential and mixed use area is good and he has seen it work well in other cities.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 a.m.