

**MINUTES
MOSCOW URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
MOSCOW CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP**

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 2nd Floor City Hall – 206 E. Third Street

Weber, Krauss, McCabe, Mayor Chaney, Lamar, Sullivan, Steed, Carscallen

Riedner, Belknap, Pfiffner, Palmer, Kalasz, Burns (7:45)

Raffee, Mack, David..., Demeerleer, Keim, other members of the public

McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

1. Introduction and Welcome – John McCabe, Chair

McCabe welcomed everyone and explained what is on the agenda for this evening. He explained the basic purpose of the Legacy Crossing Plan. Mayor Chaney welcomed everyone and said she looks forward to seeing the possibilities for this project. McCabe said he is the Chair of the Moscow Urban Renewal Agency and he works for Wells Fargo Bank. Tom Lamar, John Weber, Brandy Sullivan, Walter Steed, Dan Carscallen and Wayne Krauss all introduced themselves. McCabe said Robin Woods, Jack Nelson and Steve Drown are on the Urban Renewal Agency Board but are not in attendance this evening. He said there has been some concern about URA projects by the County Commissioners which is why one now sits on the Board. Gary Riedner, Stephanie Kalasz, Jen Pfiffner, Pat Raffee and Don Palmer all introduced themselves.

2. Legacy Crossing Presentation – Gary J. Riedner

Riedner gave an overview of the process and encouraged questions to be asked so answers can be prepared for the public hearing at Council. He explained the benefits of an Urban Renewal Agency. It is a vehicle for economic development; rehabilitation of deteriorating and deteriorated areas; enhance opportunities for public infrastructure; and encourage desired development. He explained each of the areas and gave background on the Moscow Urban Renewal Agency. He said a URA can do just about anything that is a benefit to the public and he gave some examples. He explained how a URA functions and listed the steps to implement a project. He gave background information on some of the Legacy Crossing properties and why the Moscow Urban Renewal Agency decided to pursue this project. The City Council must approve any plan before it goes into effect. A map of the district was displayed and Riedner explained the boundaries. He said the revenue allocation area is the same size as the project area. Revenue allocation area and tax apportionment were explained. The maximum time limit is 24 years for an urban renewal plan. It is invisible to the people within the tax allocation area.

Riedner discussed the history and current conditions in the proposed Project area. He described the problem of a barrier between the University of Idaho and downtown. He explained some of the suggestions that have been given for the area. He said the project needs to be financially viable so it can pay taxes for increment to move the project along. New development should also generate new jobs. He said University of Idaho Architecture Students developed some great ideas for mixed use development in the area. He explained what needs to be renovated in the area. He said there is some potential for brownfield or remediation because of the previous use in the area. He explained some of the constraints for the project. He discussed the benefits of becoming involved with this project and explained some language recently changed at the suggestion of the Moscow Arts Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission which included public art, multi-modal transportation options, water conservation/ sustainability and natural resource preservation.

Riedner displayed a map of the property with the current zoning and the proposed zoning. He explained why Central Business District is not appropriate for the area. The reasoning behind the proposed changes was discussed. He displayed the Redevelopment Index Map and explained how the assumptions were made. He said the URA can pay for some infrastructure in the area and said there is a spreadsheet on the internet for people to see the types of projects that are being considered and the cost. The money does not have to be spent on these amenities. He said additional improvements include relocation; soil and groundwater remediation; multi-modal and other; public spaces and art. He gave examples of some of the projects that could be included with this project. He displayed a list of dates when public information sessions that have been held in regard to this project. He explained the idea of a PUD overlay zone which allows for flexibility to get the best project possible.

3. Question and Answer Session – John McCabe

Carscallen asked what happens to the funds if they are not used by the end of 24 years. Riedner said there is a plan that would allow for the funds to be rebated to the taxing districts. Carscallen verified that any projects have to go through the regular City process. Riedner said if the Council approves this plan, then developers will be encouraged to follow the Legacy Crossing Plan.

Krauss verified that Legacy Crossing can go a maximum of 24 years. He asked how long Alturas has been in place and was told 12 years. Riedner said the district could be dissolved in advance of the 2016 date. Krauss asked what would happen if none of the developers decided to take advantage of the Plan. Riedner said the developers will develop but the question is how they will develop. There was further discussion on how the increment would work.

Steed asked if the schools still get their taxes and Riedner said no. The new assessment rolls are now not included. Levies after December 31, 2007 are not subject to a URA district but it has to be a voter approved bond vote. There was more discussion about what would and what would not be include as a part of the allocation area. There was some discussion about the proposed zoning.

4. 8:00 p.m. Presentation from University of Idaho's Art and Architecture Students

McCabe explained that there would be more public meetings prior to approval of the proposed Plan. Randy Teal from the University of Idaho, College of Architecture introduced the 4th year architecture students. The class students each presented their vision for the Legacy Crossing area with depictions of their ideas.

Mayor Chaney said landmarks were mentioned several times and asked about the vision for creating some in addition to the silos. She was told that focus points could be created in other areas. Mayor Chaney asked if they would be tall buildings or sculpture, etc. One gentleman said that Friendship Square is a focus point but is not tall but serves a purpose. One student said she didn't see it as necessarily being something large but something that is known and you would give direction from. Weber asked about the idea of leaving the silos in the area and if there was any idea of rejuvenation of them. A student said she left them in as is and did not consider the cost. Another student said they are physically tangible and interesting for the area. It is nice to keep the character of Moscow intact. It is about Moscow's history.

Mayor Chaney said this is most impressive and definitely includes a sense of place. She said everything was beautifully presented.

The presentations will be displayed on June 13th for the Art Walk.

5. Conclusion

McCabe concluded the meeting. There was a question from someone in the audience about State regulation of the size of the project. Riedner said the area can be amended at a later date if it is deemed appropriate. The area deemed to be the most critical at this time is the area in the current Plan area. The citizen asked how this would affect current property/business owners. If this encourages people to come to the area, it is more likely that people will be drawn to downtown as well. The citizen asked if CDBG funds could be obtained for some of the improvements. Riedner explained what projects have been funded through CDBG funding and said it is a very competitive process. Mayor Chaney explained that there may be some funding available through the EPA as well. Riedner said other states have better economic development taxing monies available. There was further discussion about how the increment funds can be used and how urban renewal areas work in Idaho.

The meeting concluded at 8:56 p.m.