

MINUTES

COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY BOARD MEETING

November 21, 2023

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

- PRESIDING:** Tim McGlothlin, Vice Chair
- BOARD PRESENT:** Staci Coburn, Walter Denstedt, Darcy Long (joined at 5:54 p.m.),
Marcus Swift and Ben Wring
- BOARD ABSENT:** Scott Hege, Dan Richardson, and Shanon Saldivar
- STAFF PRESENT:** Director and Urban Renewal Manager Joshua Chandler, Economic
Development Officer Dan Spatz, City Attorney Jonathan Kara,
Secretary Paula Webb

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair McGlothlin at 5:38 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair McGlothlin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the October 17, 2023 minutes were struck from the agenda.

It was moved by Coburn and seconded by Denstedt to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 6/0; Baker, Coburn, Denstedt, Long, McGlothlin, and Wring voting in favor, none opposed, Hege, Richardson and Saldivar absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Wolfe, 4752 Simonelli Road, The Dalles

Mr. Wolfe stated he had collected glulams and approximately 36,000 bricks from the Tony's demolition site. He is hoping to find a use for them in the community.

ACTION ITEMS

Urban Renewal Plan Work Session and Board Guidance

Economic Development Officer (EDO) Spatz presented the staff report. He directed the Board's attention to the following items for discussion:

- Has the Urban Renewal Agency achieved its purpose? What problems was it designed to address?
- Have those problems been resolved?
- Do goals and objectives still reflect guidance of the Agency Board?

EDO Spatz explained the types of amendments:

- Minor amendments – Minor changes to the Urban Renewal Plan can add or drop projects, clarify language, and change project scope as long as those changes do not alter the Plan's goals and objectives. Minor amendments can be approved by the Board.
- Major/Substantial amendments – Substantial amendments expand the district boundaries, change goals and objectives, increase the maximum indebtedness. These amendments can be proposed by the Board, but require City Council approval.
- City Council approved amendments – City council can make Substantial Amendments on its own, without URB recommendation.

EDO Spatz reviewed past amendments.

Chair Long arrived at 5:54 p.m.

Steve Lawrence, 2017 View Court, The Dalles

Mr. Lawrence shared an update on the Civic Auditorium restoration. The remaining tasks include an update to the sound and lighting for the theater and balcony. Other than that, everything is complete. Urban Renewal provided approximately \$1.3 million over time.

EDO Spatz continued review of the amendments.

Board Member McGlothlin asked if brownfield projects and urban development are integrated or separate funding. EDO Spatz replied they have separate funding sources. EDO Spatz is the manager for the Brownfield Program, an EPA funded project. The original grant was received three years ago for \$600,000 and is almost fully expended; a separate proposal for \$500,000 was submitted two weeks ago. The Columbia Economic District just received a \$1 million grant for use over five counties. This could result in two different funding sources.

Board Member McGlothlin asked if the demolition of a structure at 800 E. 2nd Street was a brownfield project. EDO Spatz replied yes, along with Urban Renewal.

EDO Spatz is planning a detailed study of accomplishments.

EDO Spatz noted that earlier in the Agency, one goal was, *"To make strategic investment of funds and engage in various urban renewal activities which increase the value of properties within the district."* Is that the sole criterion – increasing tax values? Should we also look at other leveraged funds, or broader social benefits? Now the focus is on return on investment (ROI) and taxes. While not inappropriate, should it be one of many, one of several, or the sole?

EDO Spatz continued with the goals, stating there was greater interest in urban renewal in the early decade. The danger now is that we forget what was accomplished.

EDO Spatz would like to secure a heavily revised Plan by March, 2024.

Board Member McGlothlin asked if the financial audit was complete. EDO Spatz replied it will be completed in December.

Board Member Denstedt stated the Fire District does not look favorably at Urban Renewal. Funding restrictions, noting the challenge of affording competitive wages for medical personnel. EDO Spatz replied the fiscal impact, in terms of increased tax value due to Urban Renewal, is a key point of the planned summary report. Also, what has been the increase in value, and is that relative to investments made? What differences have occurred in district boundaries through time?

STAFF COMMENTS / PROJECT UPDATES

Director Chandler stated he intends to waive the conflict of interest on behalf of the Agency for the City’s Attorney’s review and dual representation of the City/Agency IGA coming up for the E. 3rd Street parking lot. This item will go before City Council on Monday [November 27, 2023]. This is an agreement for the new parking lot. The City Attorney will be representing both the City and the Agency. Board Members had no concerns.

Tony’s Building – Director Chandler stated the demolition crew is finished. An archeology team was at the site last week; their report will follow. The Agency is in the process of receiving grant funding; the Brownfields Program funds, through Business Oregon, will assist in the clean-up of the Tony’s site. After the holiday, the demolition crew will return and begin backfilling the site.

Incentive Program – EDO Spatz listed some active commercial grants:

- 315 Federal Street, formerly The Dalles Chronicle, will become a grocery store. The store will contain a commercial kitchen and other businesses.
- The Foley, 106 E. 4th Street. A center, front column is held in place by a large strap. Repair is an Urban Renewal project.
- Recreation Building, 213 E. 2nd Street. Stucco is now on the building and on track for a March conclusion followed by transfer of the property.
- Sunshine Mill, 901 E. 2nd Street. An agreement is in the works for interior improvements: electrical, heating, lighting on east side, and an additional door.

Mint Building, 710 E. 2nd Street. Conversations continue with the three parties involved. Progress is hampered by the cost of a sprinkler system.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS


None.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

Submitted by Paula Webb, Secretary
Community Development Department

SIGNED: 
Darcy Long, Chair

ATTEST: 
Paula Webb, Secretary