

THE SPRINGS REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

Minutes for Regular Meeting

Thursday, November 5, 2009

Boys and Girls Club of Valley of the Moon

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Stephen Cox called the meeting of the Springs Redevelopment Advisory Committee (RAC) to order at 6:59 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Stephen Cox, Ellen Conlan, Donna Hays, Richard Lee, Kara Olness Reyes, and David Whiteley. Ryan Lely was absent (excused). Also present were Redevelopment Manager Cas Ellena, Redevelopment Associate Al Lerma, Redevelopment Assistant Jennifer Howze, and approximately two (2) members of the public during the course of the meeting. This meeting was recorded by SVTV-27.

3. Minutes

Richard Lee made a motion to approve the September 3, 2009 minutes and Kara Olness Reyes seconded the motion; the minutes were approved 6-0-1 (Lely absent for vote).

4. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Sioux Messinger
Brett Sacket
Bob McMenemy
Camerino Hawing

5. Correspondence

None

6. Monthly Reports

Redevelopment Manager Cas Ellena invited Kevin Howze, Engineering Manager for Public Works, to review the final steps for Highway 12 Stage II Phase I. Mr. Howze explained that the final safety and maintenance walk through was completed and there are very few items which will need correction. The main item to correct is posting barricade and signage in areas without crosswalks to direct pedestrians to a crosswalk where they can safely cross the road. The proposed "filterra" storm drains are facing issues surrounding the sampling plan. Once a sampling schedule is sorted out, the greenery will be planted and the drains will be activated.

Public Works is currently waiting for the last change order to come through after which they will finalize the budget and a final claim period will take place. Once the final claim period has expired the project will officially be closed.

RAC member David Whiteley asked about whether the stretch of road from Donald Avenue to the Palms Plaza will get curbing and sidewalks. Mr. Howze explained that while that stretch of road is not currently slated for further work,

a project could most likely be arranged for sidewalks and curbs to be constructed under a separate agreement if the RAC was willing to fund it.

Ms. Ellena reviewed the remaining monthly reports and then introduced Patricia Talbot, CEO of Sonoma Valley Community Health Center to provide an update for the Health Center Project. Ms. Talbot explained that SVCHC had a topography map made and soil testing done. She also said a pre-application was just filed with the Sonoma County Department of Permit and Resource Management. SVCHC has not heard back on whether they will be receiving money from the grant for which they applied, but they are moving forward with developing a plan so they can pursue other types of funding should the grant fall through.

7. Old Business

A. Gateway Arch Art Project

Ms. Ellena described the current situation with the Gateway Arch Art Project. She said that while the artist is still interested in completing the project, he would require a renegotiation of the agreement since he no longer lives in the area and the cost of materials have gone up since he originally gave an estimate for the project. RAC members discussed the issue and came to the general consensus that the project had lost momentum, and while they would like to see public art in The Springs, they no longer felt that this was the best way to do that. They agreed to de-obligate the funds for the Gateway Arch Art project but would like staff to research other possible art projects that the funds could be reallocated toward.

Public Comment

Patricia Talbot

Chairperson Steve Cox called for a motion.

Motion: Rich Lee moved to de-obligate the remaining funds for the Gateway Arch Art Project. Seconded by Donna Hays. Motion approved 6-0-1 (Lely absent for vote).

B. MIG Workshop Discussion

Ms. Ellena opened the discussion about the MIG Workshop by having each member of the RAC give a brief overview of what they got out of the Workshop and how it matched up with their expectations of what they would get from it.

Ellen Conlan and Donna Hays both expressed frustration regarding the contents of the Workshop. They felt they wanted more ideas and specific steps to take in order to be proactive towards reaching the goals of the project area using the limited funds remaining.

David Whiteley and Kara Olness Reyes felt the Workshop went as they expected it to, and both developed new ideas based on the conversations that took place.

Rich Lee and Steve Cox agreed the Workshop was a good forum for revisiting the Strategic Plan and affirming that it is still current and in line with the goals

of the Project Area. They felt they got exactly what they expected from the Workshop.

Ms. Ellena then went over tools that CDC staff took away from the Workshop which included:

- Improved coordination with Sonoma Valley Economic Development Partnership and Chamber of Commerce on business assessment activities including:
 1. Ongoing communication with local real estate brokers on opportunities for business attraction and retention.
 2. Accessing data resources on sales, foreclosures, and vacancies to inform business development process.
 3. Conducting periodic business surveys and commercial corridor walks to identify business needs and barriers.
- Adding information sharing to monthly RAC Agenda for RAC Members to encourage more discussion.
- Preparing a Redevelopment Project Flow Chart Outlining the Project Development Process to educate and inform members on the development process.
- Providing regular updates on vacancies, blight removal activities, building permits, and other data that informs our decision making process.

Ms Ellena also went over the tools MIG was prepared to deliver under their existing contract, including:

- Develop Short Term Action Steps: Putting Actions-To-the-Actions.
- Providing a process tool for effective use and review of the Strategic Plan on a regular basis.
- Mapping of vacant parcels and opportunity sites to inform decision making process.

Lastly, Ms. Ellena asked RAC members what additional information and research tools they would like staff to provide members. The main items included:

- Identify what types of businesses have the most immediate impact.
- Identify what businesses generate the most economic activity in terms of jobs and sales tax.
- Identify what types of businesses the Project Area needs.
- In order to address blight issues, staff should provide the following: site mapping of blighted parcels, parcel data such as size, ownership, and current use. This would be used to inform decision making process.
- Identify what programs we have to address blight: ex. Commercial Rehab Program.

- Rank/ Prioritize blighted parcels for redevelopment.
- Encourage mixed-use development that includes commercial and affordable housing.
- Consider using a scattered housing strategy (smaller projects disbursed throughout area).
- Want to be more pro-active.
- Consider the pros and cons of being a neighborhood serving or visitor serving economy.
- Housing Rehab Program- identify current barriers to use, explore other options to current guidelines to jumpstart program.
- Review traffic & parking needs and issues for the project area.
- Encourage more discussion at Springs Task Force Coordinating Committee (STFCC) on other community activities such as cultural events, farmers market etc.
- Encourage a hybrid model between more research based decision making process such as identifying possible businesses that would locate in project area and trying to attract them versus finding a property/business that needs assistance and then determining what use might go best there, all the while maintaining a community based input process on potential project opportunities in the area.
- Encourage a balanced approach moving forward.

Public Comment

Patricia Talbot

8. Agenda for Next Meeting

Call to Order; Roll Call; Minutes of October 27; Minutes of November 5; Public Comment; Correspondence; Monthly Reports; Update on the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center Project; Old Business: Potential Banner Program, MIG Workshop Consultant Write-up; New Business: Donald Avenue to Palms Village project discussion, Possible Art Projects discussion; Agenda for Next Meeting; Adjournment.

9. Next Meeting

December 3, 2009, 7:00 p.m., Boys & Girls Club of Valley of the Moon, 100 Verano Ave., Sonoma.

10. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.