

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021
URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY MEETING 6:00 pm
Council Chambers
33568 East Columbia Avenue
Scappoose, OR 97056

Call to Order

Chair Scott Burge called the Urban Renewal Agency meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Chair Scott Burge; Megan Greisen (arrived at 6:06 pm); Joel Haugen; Brandon Lesowske; Tyler Miller; City Manager Rains; Interim Police Chief Davis; City Recorder Reeves; Assistant to City Manager Butman; and Legal Counsel Watts (arrived at 6:05 pm).

Remote: Josh Poling; Pete McHugh (joined at 6:39 pm); Consultants Elaine Howard and Scott Vanden Bos and Amy Prince (joined at 6:53pm).

New Business

Follow up on Downtown Store Front Improvements Program

City Manager Rains explained this is a follow up to the last Urban Renewal Meeting that was held where you all discussed a downtown storefront improvement program that you would like to see as part of the plan. She gave a brief overview and explained the consultants have brought back today essentially results that reflect feedback they received from Council. The consultants are just looking for additional feedback and ideas to see how Council would like to move forward.

Scott Vanden Bos, consultant, explained this whole process started with staff approaching them about designing a storefront improvement program and then after the meeting Elaine had with the City and the results of the survey, they discovered that perhaps the term storefront improvement program didn't describe the goals of the program desired by Council. He explained they took a look at those survey results, and they decided to develop two programs. He gave an overview of the two different developments.

Business Development

The business development program allows the urban renewal agency to provide funds for improvements, equipment, and other incidental services required to complete the applied for improvement as detailed in the attached program description. Examples of improvements from programs such as this include but are not limited to exterior renovations including windows, doors and awnings, painting, and signage.

New Development Incentives

The new development incentives program allows the Agency to increase the likelihood of developing desirable tax lots or existing structures to their highest and best use. Examples of incentives provided by programs like this include but are not limited to site preparation, providing necessary infrastructure for development, and cash incentives paid from future property tax revenues generated by the new development itself.

Next Steps

Upon incorporating the feedback from Agency review we will prepare applications for the programs. The minimum feedback needed from the Agency is the specifics on matching percentages, minimum (if any) cost of projects for each program, and any desired criteria for the new development incentives program concerning the cost of improvements or amount of cash incentives.

Elaine Howard, consultant, explained Scott Vanden Bos researched a number of different programs and put together a list of the types of things that can be done under the Business Development program. She explained you can't pay salaries of staff or pay those kinds of expenses that aren't leading to a capital expense.

Scott Vanden Bos explained you also can't pay maintenance expenses.

Brandon Lesowske asked about asset purchasing to help, is that something that is common, or would it be recommended that we not incorporate that type of language?

Elaine Howard replied it is actually common because it is so expensive, but it's understood that those stay with the building if they are purchased with Urban Renewal funds.

Josh Poling asked about the approval process.

Scott Vanden Bos replied, the ultimate selection will always be up to you the Agency. He explained another city's process. He explained if he were to make the process it would be an informal sit down, just getting the rough ideas of is this what we want or not, then there is the more formal process, what are the details of this so you can make sure it's something you want.

Elaine Howard explained as great as these are most cities only do two to three of these a year because of the budget they have and because it is hard to get these businesses to come in. She explained you do have to work with the businesses and encourage them that doing something is good for everybody.

Tyler Miller asked if we know what the percentage is of multi-tenant buildings within the City versus stand alone single businesses because obviously the building owner would have to be on board and how does that impact this?

Elaine Howard replied they actually have seen these types of grants and participation where one side or store front in a building is improved and not the other. She stated Tyler Miller is right, it would be better if both of them get improved.

Scott Vanden Bos explained a little more about the New Development Incentives program.

Elaine Howard explained this program is very flexible. She explained this program seems to get the most votes from people when they did the survey and interest.

Scott Burge explained he doesn't think this should be site specific.

Scott Vanden Bos asked the Agency do they feel like they have a basic understanding of these programs, and do you feel like each individual program is headed in the right direction and would you like them to pursue more specific details on perhaps the application process and to give the Agency some information on what matching percentages look like?

Chair Scott Burge apologized for not running this as an Urban Renewal Agency meeting. He asked for an approval of the agenda.

Approval of the Agenda

Joel Haugen moved, and Tyler Miller seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion passed 6-0. Scott Burge, aye; Megan Greisen, aye; Joel Haugen, aye; Josh Poling, aye; Brandon Lesowske, aye; and Tyler Miller, aye.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes ~ September 7, 2021

Joel Haugen moved, and Megan Greisen seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the September 7, 2021 Urban Renewal Agency meeting. Motion passed 6-0. Scott Burge, aye; Megan Greisen, aye; Joel Haugen, aye; Josh Poling, aye; Brandon Lesowske, aye; and Tyler Miller, aye.

Chair Scott Burge went back to the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Scott Vanden Bos explained what he and Elaine are looking for is the general approval - do you like where the programs are headed, and do you want the ability to do the things that these programs will allow. He thinks it might be better to get feedback from Council about match percentages after this has had some time to sit and maybe they could even give some examples of projects that happened around the State in these types of programs to give you an idea of

what other cities have been doing in terms of their match percentages, especially new development incentives.

Megan Greisen asked to be excused at 6:36 pm to attend the School Board meeting virtually. She came back to the meeting at 6:46 pm.

Tyler Miller asked have Scott and Elaine if they have seen any cities do different criteria like based on their priorities as Council for different types of improvements, maybe the percentages change in what they will match/contribute?

Scott Vanden Bos replied absolutely.

Tyler Miller stated that might be something for Council to think about based on our priorities for what we want to see happen within the City, that they maybe adjust the contributions based on their priorities.

Chair Scott Burge likes that idea of some sort of ranking system on projects.

Tyler Miller suggested just in the interest of efficiency and saving time, he is wondering if it would be a better use of time for them to task staff coming up with these different packages as a presentation to them. He feels staff has a better idea of what the Agency's expectations are versus the consultants.

Joel Haugen stated he would like to focus on something we can make sure we can get done or at least have a reasonable expectation of it. He would like to take a cautious approach, but he would also like to leverage Elaine and Scott's expertise and experience in this because they have much more broader experience then they do, and knowledge and so forth. He stated maybe working with staff and come up with a list of what elements they see would be the best fit in our circumstances as we launch into this. His personal preference is for store front enhancements.

Elaine Howard replied they can absolutely do that. She explained they will work with staff on what the application and the process would look like.

Scott Vanden Bos asked when speaking of specific qualities of a project getting different amounts of aid is that in reference to both programs or just new development incentives?

Chair Scott Burge welcomed Pete McHugh who joined remotely at 6:39 pm.

Pete McHugh feels we need to come up with a theme.

Brandon Lesowske explained he would rather we keep an eye on the store front improvements, getting the framework on how that application process would move forward and then getting

the word out for our local businesses to utilize those funds. He explained as we develop and continue to increase our funds for the Urban Renewal Agency, he would look at potentially building out with more of a themed aesthetics, but he just doesn't think we are there yet. He would like to really focus on the business development grant and on learning more about how we could utilize that grant application process to fund potential improvements within the URA.

Chair Scott Burge feels we need to move forward with both of these programs.

Scott Vanden Bos and Elaine Howard talked about the theme or aesthetic being a bigger project than what they have the expertise to do, so you would have to hire a designer or an architect or someone who does have that expertise.

Chair Scott Burge explained the City does have a downtown overlay currently and asked does that put us ahead of the game in looking at what we can tweak with that?

Elaine Howard replied, sure.

Legal Counsel Peter Watts suggested a theme of exploring.

Josh Poling stated it might be a good idea to engage the community at the Annual Town Meeting with some of this especially with possible thoughts on design work or a theme.

Scott Vanden Bos feels that a program like this would be best done with computer programming philosophy which is to get a program out there and then iterate from learning from the application process. He stated yes, the aesthetics are very important, but it almost seems as though having a program that can function first and then being able to really home in on those aesthetics might be a better philosophy just in terms of functionality of this program when you really do want to move with the aesthetics otherwise you are starting with this whole iterative process when you could be making a big impact.

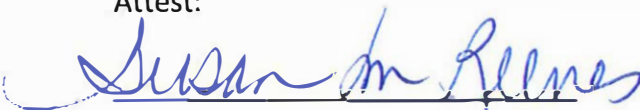
Elaine Howard stated she thinks they can work with staff on your design overlay and see what that gives you.

Chair Scott Burge stated it sounds like we'll move forward on both of these programs.

Adjournment ~ Chair Scott Burge adjourned the Urban Renewal Agency meeting at 6:59 pm.


Chair Scott Burge

Attest:


City Recorder Susan M. Reeves, MMC