



Minutes

Present: Chuck Beaty, Bruce Blomdahl, Patrick Brien, Ian Davidson, Gerald Douglas, John Field, Michelle Freeman, Bill Gardner, Jeff Kraus, Nanci Larsen, Katie Leal, Shalini Lockard, Stan Morrison, Bob Nagle, David St. Pierre, Sergio San Martin, Charity Schiller, Cara Swearingen, Justin Tracy, Kris Whitehead, Shelby Worthington, Lou Mondale

Excused: Rafael Guzman, Wolde-Ab Isaac, Brian Pearcy,

Absent: Cherie Crutcher, Marco McGuire, RJ Rodriguez

Ex-Officio ABP / City Council: Henry Ayala / Mike Gardner, Andy Melendrez

Staff: Janice Penner, Kate Stovicek

1) Call to Order

David St. Pierre called the meeting to order.

2) Self Introductions and Public Comments

Conducted

3) Minutes of December 14, 2016

Motion: To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of December 14, 2016

Motion made by: Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:** Chuck Beaty

Motion carried

4) Chair's Report

There was no report.

5) Items for Discussion

5a) Items from Land Use Committee

i) Proposed Project at Main and Ninth – Recommendation of support

Janice Penner said that RDP had been asked to provide a letter of support for the proposed project going before the Cultural Heritage Board on January 18th. She said the letter was in the package for the Board's approval and noted that it had been reviewed and approved by the RDP Executive Committee and the Chair of the RDP Land Use Committee. She said that at the November 16th Land Use Committee meeting, Cliff Ratkovich of Ratkovich Properties gave a presentation on the proposed project and that the Land Use Committee was in favor of the proposed project.

Motion: To support the mixed use residential / commercial development proposed by Ratkovich Properties for the current parking lot at Main and Ninth.

Motion made by: Patrick Brien **Motion Seconded by:** Shelby Worthington

Motion carried with John Field abstaining

Stan Morrison stated that Ratkovich Properties was highly professional and hoped that RDP would support the project unanimously. Janice Penner added that RDP had supported the Imperial Hardware Loft development and noted that the developers had been very responsive to requests such as allowing RDP to put signage on the construction fence. She reiterated Stan Morrison's comment that the Ratkovich organization was responsive to the community's needs.

ii) Downtown Issues Survey – Recommendation for next steps

Janice Penner said that the recommendation taken to the December 15th Land Use Committee meeting was that the committee monitor the actual need for additional police and security programs and identify potential funding such as allocation of Measure Z dollars, additional assessments through the BID on hospitality establishments, and funding from hospitality establishments through a redirection of security personnel costs. She said that the Land Use Committee agreed to do so and to include the Security Committee in the monitoring.

Councilman Mike Gardner stated that he would argue to City Council that the Safety Ambassador Program should be funded within the year as he believed it important to have those individuals on the street. Lou Mondale commented that the Chamber agreed and that he believed there was support from the business community beyond downtown. Councilman Mike Gardner stated that there was a special City Council meeting on January 31st to discuss Measure Z funds and the allocation. He commented that there could be some difference in how to allocate the funds such as paying off debt or funding programs. Janice Penner stated that once Councilman Mike Gardner and Councilman Andy Melendrez could update the board, RDP would discuss the recommended allocation and possible support.

iii) Downtown Parking Study – Recommendation for RDP support

Janice Penner said that the Downtown Parking Study – Strategic and Implementation Plan would be discussed at the RDP Land Use Committee January 19th meeting for recommendations/comments. She said that it was recommended that a flat fee for evening parking be implemented as soon as possible rather than deferred to 2018.

Shelby Worthington said that the start time should be changed to 9 pm to not deter restaurant patrons, noting that bar patrons usually came downtown after 10 pm. She said that charging people and having someone staffing the structure would be a deterrent. Bill Gardner inquired if the \$5 charge would be enough. Shelby Worthington replied that it would be as evidenced by the impact of a \$5 cover charge. She stated that the individuals who are looking for a cheap place to party and cause problems would not pay \$5 for parking or a cover charge. Cara Swearingen inquired how the funds would be allocated. Janice Penner replied that they would be used to cover staffing the parking garage.

Motion: To recommend that the City adopt a \$5 charge for parking in garages 1 and 2 from 9 pm to 3 am on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday as soon as possible to deter people parking to ‘party’ in the late hours.

Motion made by: Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:** Nanci Larsen

Motion carried with John Field abstaining

Janice Penner said that the Board could defer a discussion on implementing a discounted monthly parking permit fee of \$25 for minimum wage earners. Justin Tracy commented that subsidizing minimum wage employees would be subsidizing employers who pay minimum wage. Shelby Worthington stated that many of the employees in downtown entertainment establishments are paid minimum wage as they get tips which can be substantial and not always reported.

Motion: Adopt a discounted monthly parking charge of \$25 for minimum wage earners as soon as possible.

Alternate Motion: Defer a decision on the motion until a recommendation comes forward from Land Use

Motion made by: Charity Schiller **Motion Seconded by:** Bill Gardner

Motion carried

Bill Gardner commented that his understanding from shopping center design was that parking should be provided no farther than 600 ft away (two blocks). He suggested that the report state that parking be provided within two blocks and not three to make it comparable with private parking standard. He reiterated the statement in the report for the need of a parking structure on the east end of downtown.

6) Items for Information

6a) Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

Janice Penner said the letters were sent to the award recipients on December 14th. She said the invitations would be prepared once the Roy Hord Volunteer of the Year Award recipient had been selected and go out in mid-January. She said the ticket price had been raised by \$3 but there was a \$5 discount per ticket if purchased prior to January 31st.

Bill Gardner inquired how many award nominees there were for the Roy Hord award. Janice Penner replied that there were 4 solid nominees. She also said that in the future it may be in RDP's best interest to broaden the eligibility and not focus on volunteering for youth programs.

6b) Nominating and Board update

Janice Penner said the ballots for the officers and the four candidates running for the at large director positions had gone out, and were due back by January 13, 2017. She said the final Board Slate would go to the Board for approval at the February meeting.

6c) RDP activities

Janice Penner said that RDP was participating in the Riverside Community Hospital's Red Dress Fashion Show and Health Expo slated for February 18th at the Riverside Convention Center.

Janice Penner stated that the Riverside Doors Open event would be in May. She said other planned events included Concerts at City Hall, Restaurant Week, Movies on Main, A Taste Of Downtown, the Fall Fashion Show, and Riverside Zombie Crawl.

7) Financial Reports

7a) Financial report at December 31, 2016

Katie Leal reported that the month of December showed a deficit of \$6,562 compared to an expected deficit of \$15,455. She said that for the year to date, the report showed a surplus of \$29,495 compared to an expected deficit of \$34,362 due largely to BID levy income being higher than expected by \$68,141.

Katie Leal reported that RDP reserves included three CDs with Pacific Premier Bank totaling \$233,533 and one with Provident Bank of \$83,858.

Katie Leal advised that RDP would be submitting its City of Riverside Sponsorship Application for July 1, 2107 to December 31, 2017 this month as well as its application for the County District 2 CID Funding.

Motion: To approve the financial report as of December 31, 2016

Motion made by: Stan Morrison **Motion Seconded by:** Bill Gardner

Motion carried.

Bill Gardner stated that there was a need to increase membership of the group and that he would like to target specific businesses to invite them to join as members. David St. Pierre stated that the Executive had discussed encouraging memberships and a drive would be launched in March, likely with a mixer and incentives.

8) City Council Updates

8a) Ward One

Councilman Mike Gardner stated that the Festival of Lights event went well overall. He said that some changes were made for opening night including leaving the two lanes closest to the Mission Inn open in case emergency vehicles needed to get through. He said that the 2017 event would be the 25th anniversary and plans were to make it bigger than previous years.

Councilman Mike Gardner said City Council would meet on January 31 to discuss uses for Measure Z funds, and asked that people share their thoughts. He added that there would be an update on homelessness on January 17 including a proposal to implement the 'Housing First project' to provide housing to homeless individuals before they get into rehab and other programs. He said the program had been implemented and successful in other cities. He stated that individuals with a mental illness who feel comfortable and safe in the facilities provided are more likely to stay off the streets.

Shelby Worthington stated that when she first opened Worthington's Tavern there were many recovery and group homes downtown. She said that the residents would come into the bars and that the owners and managers could not deny them service without a reason. She said that having those types of facilities near to a downtown hospitality district often caused more problems than benefits.

Chuck Beaty commented that, Parks and Recreation was doing a good job of controlling the flooding in the Mount Rubidoux area, but inquired why a consultant had been hired. Councilman Mike Gardner said that the consultant was hired develop plans to restore natural vegetation on the mountain, get people to use trails rather than wandering, and promote the destination for its rock climbing.

Stan Morrison inquired about the river bottom occupants and plans for dealing with flooding. Councilman Mike Gardner said that the police department and fire department had both attempted to contact the occupants to ask them to move to higher ground in anticipation of flooding and added that the fire department was ready for swift water rescue.

Bill Gardner inquired if RDP would be interested in endorsing or requesting certain uses for Measure Z funds. He suggested alley improvements, public restrooms with staffing, and Raincross monument signs at entrances to the city. It was suggested that RDP defer any action until after the January 31st meeting of City Council on the matter.

Councilman Mike Gardner stated that the Sav-a-Minit building had been demolished. He noted that Mark Ruben was speaking with a major grocer about a supermarket on the undeveloped lot on the east side of Market Street.

Janice Penner noted that RTA had EZ-ups out on University Avenue with individuals providing information on the changeover to a grid system for downtown transit routes. She said that based

on feedback from the ambassadors there was still a great deal of confusion about routes and simpler maps were needed.

Councilman Andy Melendrez stated that improvements would be introduced agreeing that first time users found the changeover confusing. He noted that there was a 10% decrease each month in RTA ridership likely due to use of services such as Lift and Uber. John Field suggested an app that would explain where to get on the bus and the routes. Councilman Mike Gardner said that a version of that did exist but not everyone had a smart phone or knew how to use the app.

Michelle Freeman commented that bar/restaurants on property the Freeman Company owned could no longer use space as a loading zone for food and beverages deliveries. Councilman Andy Melendrez said he would have someone contact her about the concern.

Councilman Mike Gardner stated that with RTA vacating the downtown bus terminal, the area would be striped for surface parking. He said that Greyhound should be out by the middle of the year and the Police Department would stay in that building until it was knocked down. He said that City Council was still deciding whether to build the new main library there, noting that it would only take up a portion of the entire site.

8b) Ward Two

Councilman Andy Melendrez stated that they expected additional development in the Marketplace area. He added that the developers of the Missions Loft project were expecting to start mid-March. He said that City Council had been looking at ways to improve Park Avenue, noting that the area's assets included bakeries, restaurants, churches and retail. He said that the City had been speaking with the Riverside Art Museum about an artist residency in the area to encourage development into an arts district.

9) Security Update

Bruce Blomdahl said security was used for the first time for Festival of Lights and he believed it helped. He said that most of the complaints that he received were traffic related and said that adjustments would be made next year to address those complaints.

Bruce Blomdahl commented that the Police Department was preparing for the inauguration so that they could respond to any protests or shows of support. He added that police were also staffing for the Mayor's State of the City address and the Lunar Fest event.

Bruce Blomdahl noted that there would be a shift change on January 13th. He said there had been a sergeant and four officers assigned to the downtown area to handle issues at night but that they would lose the sergeant because of staffing concerns. He commented that staff levels were low and hoped that they could start hiring soon as the interview process, background check, and training could 18 months to two years.

Bruce Blomdahl asked people who observed problems at the RTA to inform him so that he could speak with RTA to address those issues. Janice Penner stated that the ambassadors were keeping an eye on University Avenue particularly from Orange to Lemon due to the bus stops and the hospitality establishments. She said that RDP would keep Bruce Blomdahl and Councilman Andy Melendrez (the RTA representative) informed on any problems.

10) City Community Development Department Update

There was no update as Rafael Guzman was unable to attend.

11) Arlington Business Partnership Update

Henry Ayala thanked RDP for its support that they give ABP and said he hoped that it was reciprocated. He said the Arlington Park tree lighting attracted about 2,000 individuals and that the WinterFest event was growing each year. He said that ABP was preparing for the 15th Annual Chili Cook-off in May.

Janice Penner said that ABP and RDP partnered on certain events as well as shared ideas. She commended ABP on the WinterFest event and said RDP would provide a donation toward the teddy bears next year. She stated that RDP and ABP would be meeting to discuss the renewal of their funding agreements with the City.

12) New Business

Bill Gardner stated that he wanted to make two motions; one to recommend alley improvements and enhancements be considered for downtown, and the second to recommend that a staffed public restroom be installed downtown.

Janice Penner stated that from a procedural perspective, a motion on alley improvements should be referred to the RDP Land Use for review and recommendation to the Executive and then to the Board. Bill Gardner clarified that he meant lighting and artwork when referring to improvements and enhancements. It was noted that the alley behind the Imperial Hardware Lofts project would have some improvements due to construction.

Motion: Following the procedure outlined for referral, review and recommendation, that RDP support improving and enhancing the public alleys downtown.

Motion made by: Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:** Ian Davidson

Motion carried.

Janice Penner said that RDP had adopted a position against public restrooms approximately a year ago. She said that the Board could adopt a motion to reexamine the issue once again.

Motion: Following the procedure outlined for referral, review and recommendation, that RDP reconsider installation of a staffed public restroom downtown.

Motion made by: Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:**

Motion failed.

Stan Morrison warned that individuals had been observed fishing mail out of the mailboxes in front of the downtown post office. Bruce Blomdahl said mail theft was a federal offense but added it was a difficult crime to prosecute with little repercussion.

13) Adjournment and next meeting date

The meeting was adjourned until Wednesday, February 8, 2017