

Downtown Columbia Leadership Council
Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2009, 4:00 p.m.
Mezzanine Conference Room – City Hall

Members Present: Linda Rootes, North Central Columbia Neighborhood Assoc.
Nick Peckham, City Council Appointee
Tim Teddy, Planning & Development Director
Mary Wilkerson, Special Business District
Phil Steinhaus, Columbia Housing Authority
Brian Treece, City Council Appointee
Randy Gray, City Council Appointee
Bernie Andrews, REDI Director
Jay Hasheider, Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Association
Glenn Rice, P & Z Commission
Gary Ward, University of Missouri

Staff Present: John Fleck, GIS Coordinator
Tony St. Romaine, Assistant City Manager

Members Absent: Ken Pearson, Boone County Commission
Bill Thompson, Douglass Neighborhood Association
Bob Hutton, Columbia College
Clyde Wilson, East Campus Neighborhood Assoc.

Review and approval of June 23, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Wilkerson makes a motion to approve minutes. Motion seconded. *Motion carried.*

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Introduction of new officers for FY2009-2010

Randy Gray, Chair.
Gary Ward, Vice-Chair.
Brian Treece, Secretary.

Letter sent to partner organizations regarding DLC representatives

Tony St. Romaine will send out an e-mail to members of the Downtown Leadership Council who are not attending meetings regularly to inquire about their interest in remaining on the DLC.

Shiloh inappropriate fence

Feelings that the Shiloh fence is a nuisance are discussed. Mr. Gray notes that if this is a nuisance property it could be reported to IDS. Noise ordinance is discussed. Ms. Wilkerson suggested taking reasonable steps to have an area downtown louder than a residential area. If you live downtown, you should expect some noise on Friday and Saturday nights. Ms.

Rootes thought this would be an opportunity for them to make a subtle comment about the fact that they do not have design guidelines.

DLC report – under review by City Commissions

Mr. Gray explained there were comments at the last meeting about where they are going with their wonderful product. He understood that Mr. St. Romaine had made it available to all City Commissions, Mr. St. Romaine confirmed that. Mr. Gray announced the City Council had no concerns about the report and such they have not asked for an official presentation. He had heard that most of them were pleased with the report and wanted them to see this group move forward with the urban design charrettes. He felt that should be the DLC's plan of action for the next year. One of their comments had been about encouraging downtown development and noted that the Council had approved both TIF's by unanimous vote.

Downtown Transformations – visual examples

Mr. Gray pointed out they have spent a lot of time over the last year talking about downtown and had gone through many activities and reviews and had come up with their interim report. He asked to show a couple of examples to see if they were all on the same page as they move into the concept of an urban design charrette. Secondly, he said they could see if this was some of the technology that might be available when they get into actually hiring someone – as examples of how you can show before and after scenarios.

As they start holding sessions with the public and try to visualize concepts, Mr. Gray said if they could put these things into words with pictures added, he thought they would have a better idea of what might occur. He said it was almost easier when you have traditional buildings because they would only have to look at three basic elements; the store front, the upper façade and the cornice. He said the challenge is in places where buildings have been removed or new buildings have been added, are they compatible and do they function. He showed an example where they had used all new construction for a stretch with different forms and materials. Some of the buildings were recessed and there was a mixture of retail, office and residential. He showed another example where a traditional, residential area had been converted into commercial uses, but they kept all of the forms in place. At the opposite end of the street there was new construction. He thought we would continue to see these kinds of projects in Columbia and that they needed to see what could be done to encourage and better define what it is we want.

When we get into transitional areas in North Village, Mr. Gray asked how they would come up with recommendations that say this is cool, funky and allowable without having too many restrictions. As they move into the charrette process, he said terms will be thrown out like how do we keep Columbia *unique*? He said they need to know what *unique* means and suggested they could perhaps visualize that as they get into working with design professionals. He suggested they compile examples and start putting together an electronic notebook of both good and bad examples.

Mr. Rice asked Mr. Gray if he saw some of the examples they were looking at as some how incorporated into the charrette. Mr. Gray said he was wondering if, when they get to that point, if whomever they are working with would be able to provide a product that would incorporate all of the input from the charrette so that at the end of the project they would have some kind of document, also maybe an electronic document. Mr. Rice notes that one option is to develop some sort of visual preference survey for downtown. Mr. Teddy states it could

be done as an online survey. Ms. Wilkerson liked the idea, especially if it could be made as interactive as possible. Mr. Gray said he was looking at encouraging the group to incorporate those tools into the charrette process, whether it's a visual preference survey or electronic images. Mr. Rice said a demonstration among this group might open some eyes. He passed around a planning commissioners journal with two sets of pictures on the front and on the back. He said the pictures are striking and have to do with density with each having the same density but look totally different. Ms. Rootes said she would be happy to take a survey back to the North Central Neighborhood Board. Mr. Peckham thought it was possible to do these things as a committee, especially if the committee is willing to put in time and effort to make it happen.

Mr. Gray said he was asked by the City Manager to ask the DLC whether or not they could accomplish something in the realm of this Urban Design Charrette by next spring. He said he put in June and worked backwards, which meant they would have to look at drafting what it is we are seeking in September and then line up Council approval, advertise and solicit proposals and review them and then recommend and then start scheduling on-site services, have a first draft and then have a final product in June. He said he and Gary felt that was a pretty tight schedule. What they have been asked to do, regardless of this schedule or any other, is to start writing an RFQ which may be an RFQ and an RFP. What the City has asked is for the DLC to draft that and bring it to the Council for final approval. Then the process would start where they would go out and solicit proposals and actually hire a firm to do the Urban Design Charrettes.

Mr. Ward talked about a process they have been using at the University, an RFQ (request for qualifications) followed by an RFP. He said if they keep the costs down they can ask for things very quickly. They have gone to an electronic RFQ process where they send out e-mails to different firms with a very brief idea of what the project is going to be. They do that because they are not interested in bringing someone in that thinks the project will have a \$5 million budget. Instead of a process taking 3-4 months it now takes under two weeks. Mr. St. Romaine noted that any project over \$15,000 is required to go through the advertised process. We have an electronic process in place already, but we are still required by ordinance to advertise in a newspaper of local circulation.

Mr. Peckham asked if it would be useful to gather the data instead of the consultant having to do it. Mr. Gray was of the opinion that the consultant should gather some of the input and have interaction with the community, stakeholders and interested organizations. He did not necessarily feel that was their role. Mr. Gray thought the challenges were its uses and form, not just its use as a public market. Ms. Rootes commented that they somehow they need to build interest in the community for being involved in this charrette that will culminate right when the first on-site visit occurs. Mr. Gray was hopeful that those who represent neighborhood groups and other organizations have been spreading the word because he felt this was a premier opportunity for Columbia to take on this project.

Mr. Gray thought it was essential for Columbia to do this in the right way and fashion. He did not think they could do it on a small scale and that they should appropriate funds and get a top notch firm. A suggestion was made to get the community interested, not to replace the charrette being done by a professional. Mr. Hasheider asked if Benton-Stephens would be included in this charrette. Mr. Gray said he was working from page 37 of the report that said the two darker green areas were the priority areas. To do the charrette, he said, there was not

enough time to do the whole area so it would be the two green areas (Broadway and Providence and the North Village).

Ms. Rootes commented she was concerned about transportation and about how the downtown is going to be affected by more and more traffic. Mr. Hasheider said they had not addressed transportation up to this point so going into the charrette, he did not know that they could do it justice. Mr. Gray said it was a huge issue and the information he got back from City staff who had talked to Council members and also discussions at a DLC executive meeting were that while there are a lot of things that go into downtown; transportation, social issues, etc.

Downtown Columbia – Urban Design Charrettes:

Discussion centered around the process for writing the RFP and getting it out for bid. It was suggested and approved that a sub-committee consisting of Randy Gray, Gary Ward, Brian Treece and Tony St Romaine get together and draft Part I of a two part RFP, the first part being a simple Request for Qualifications. Gary Ward indicated that he would send a draft of a similar University project to Tony so that a rough draft could be prepared for discussion by the sub-committee.

Public Comment

None.

Next Meeting

Sept 22, 2009

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:15 p.m.