

THE SPRINGS REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)
Minutes for Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 3, 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 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Stephen Cox, Ryan Lely, Richard Lee, and Donna Hayes. David Whiteley and Ellen Conlan were absent (both excused). Kara Olness Reyes arrived at 8:07 p.m. Also present were Redevelopment Manager Cas Ellena, Redevelopment Associate Al Lerma, Redevelopment Staff Jennifer Howze, and approximately seven (7) 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 August 6, 2009 minutes and Ryan Lely seconded the motion; the minutes were approved 4-0-3 (Conlan, Reyes, and Whiteley absent for vote).

4. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Michael Acker

5. Correspondence

None

6. Monthly Reports

Redevelopment Manager Cas Ellena went over the current financials then continued with the monthly project reports.

Ms. Ellena introduced Kevin Howze, Sonoma County Project Engineer for the Highway 12 Improvement Project, to give an update. Mr. Howze reported the striping for the newly paved portion of Hwy 12 would likely occur within the next week. He also explained that while there have been some issues due to traffic signals being set on a timer during construction, the signals will be put on a loop system as soon as the electrical work for the new lamp posts is complete. The electrical work is scheduled to be completed on September 16, but Mr. Howze predicts the project may go over schedule by a few days.

Mr. Howze also provided a brief update on Stage 2 of the project. He explained Public Works is currently obtaining right of way acquisition for Stage 2, and are working to begin construction on the embankment in Las Palmas for electric grounding.

Cas Ellena finished the review of monthly project reports.

Public Comment

Michael Acker

Note: The following agenda items were not discussed in order as members of the RAC wanted to wait until Kara Olness Reyes arrived to discuss SVCHC. The discussion began with Old Business item C and ended with Old Business item B.

7. Old Business

A. Sonoma Valley Community Health Center (SVCHC) Proposed New Health Care Facility

Redevelopment Manager Cas Ellena reviewed the request to purchase a fifth parcel of land that was not originally for sale and, therefore, was left out of the initial proposal presented to the RAC to purchase the four parcels. Ms. Ellena explained the parcel has not been appraised but based on similar properties, SVCHC estimates the value of the property would not exceed \$400,000. She also explained that even if the Health Center should fail to raise enough funds to continue with the project, it would still be advantageous to own the five parcels since they are in the heart of The Springs Project Area and could be provided for another project to eliminate blight and achieve the goals of redevelopment.

Patricia Talbot, CEO of SVCHC, explained to the RAC that the SVCHC believes the fifth parcel could be used for a parking lot rather than building a "soft story" parking lot under the building. She explained that, based on their estimates, the savings from developing a parking lot rather than "soft story" parking could end up paying for most if not all of the extra cost to purchase the fifth parcel. Ms. Talbot also noted that since they have not yet begun required studies, it would be easiest to study all parcels together rather than having to pay for separate studies to be done on the one parcel at a later date.

Public Comment

William Murray

Members of the RAC discussed the proposal and Chairperson Stephen Cox called for a motion.

Motion: Kara Olness Reyes moved to approve up to \$2.9 million for the acquisition of the five parcels. Seconded by Ryan Lely. Motion approved 5-0-2 (Conlan and Whiteley absent for vote).

B. Additional Improvements Workgroup – Proposed Workshop with MIG regarding Project Prioritization

Redevelopment Associate Al Lerma explained this item is carried over from the August RAC meeting as two of the members of The Springs Additional Improvements Task Group were absent from the August meeting and not available to provide comments. Mr. Lerma explained the purpose of the workgroup would be to have MIG assist with prioritization of new projects with remaining funds now that the current major projects in progress are somewhat settled. He also explained that while a second proposal was received from another company to run the workgroup, since MIG prepared the Strategic Plan for The Springs and they are very familiar with The Springs Project Area, staff and the Additional Improvement Task Group recommends that MIG be selected to facilitate a workshop should the RAC desire to move forward with one.

Members of the RAC discussed and decided it would be beneficial to hold a workgroup to prioritize the use of remaining funds. October 27, 2009 was set

as the probable date of the workgroup, the time and location are still TBD. The RAC also decided to cancel the regular October meeting which would have been held on October 1 since they will be meeting on October 27 and currently there are not any pressing matters on the agenda for next month.

Public Comment

None

C. Potential Banner Program for The Springs Redevelopment Project Area Commercial Corridor

Al Lerma presented information provided to CDC staff by Laurie Decker since the last meeting. He discussed the additional costs associated with having different banners for various events rather than having one set of banners which would remain up year-round. Mr. Lerma also presented the option of cutting project costs in half by posting the banners on every other streetlight rather than on every streetlight.

RAC members discussed the proposal but many were still hesitant to approve the program without additional research or information. Ideas brought forward include having businesses sponsor the banners so they can be changed 2-3 times a year without Redevelopment incurring extra costs, and having other mediums of art hanging as well rather than just banners. Members also asked Staff to look for hard data to determine whether the banners increase foot traffic and shopping.

Public Comment

William Murray

D. Gateway Arch Art Work

Al Lerma explained that the artist responsible for the Gateway Art Project, Oliverio Quezada, has said he would be interested in renewing the agreement for this project which expired on December 30, 2007. However, Mr. Quezada would want to re-negotiate the terms as he no longer lives in the area and the cost of materials has gone up since the original agreement was negotiated.

Cas Ellena explained that various County Departments have agreed to maintain the Gateway Arch project as it is but cannot commit to maintenance of any additional art structures or projects until and unless there is a new Countywide public art and maintenance policy put into place. It is a difficult time to get other departments to agree to maintenance as most County departments are experiencing budget constraints.

RAC Members discussed the issue and asked about the visibility of art tiles should they be installed since the landscaping has grown up. The RAC also reached a general consensus that if they cannot find a resolution to this situation that makes sense, they may determine to de-obligate the funds and use them towards a different project.

Public Comment

William Murray

8. New Business

A. *Art displays in Vacant Storefronts Along Commercial Corridor*

Al Lerma explained that the Economic Development Partnership Advisory Committee (EDAC) had previously researched the concept of displaying art in vacant storefronts for the City of Sonoma and came up with the recommendation to use "picture your business here" posters rather than actual art displays. Mr. Lerma explained the EDAC's reasoning behind this decision was that having art in vacant storefronts can be time consuming to administer, does not significantly advance the goal of business attraction, and could lead prospective tenants to believe the space is not available. Members of the RAC briefly discussed the issue and decided that the business posters would be suitable given the purpose of the project.

9. Agenda for Next Meeting

Call to Order; Roll Call; Minutes of September 3; Public Comment; Correspondence; Monthly Reports; Update on the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center Project; Old Business: Potential Banner Program; Gateway Art Arch; New Business: Sonoma County CDC Housing Rehabilitation Program (tentative); Agenda for Next Meeting; Adjournment. Ryan Leily also commented that he would like to know the status of the Clemente Inn rubble.

10. Next Meeting

November 5, 2009, 7:00 p.m., Boys & Girls Club of Valley of the Moon, 100 Verano Ave., Sonoma10. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.