

CITY OF DERBY

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

November 10 2009 - 6:30 P.M.

DERBY CITY HALL – ALDERMANIC CHAMBERS
MINUTES

Call to order:

Chairman Joseph Bomba called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All rose and pledged allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Glenn Stevens, Greg Russo, Ken Hughes, Michael Kelleher and Chairman Joseph Bomba.

Also present: Director of Economic Development Sheila O'Malley, and Corporation Counsel Joseph Coppola.

Additions, Deletions, Corrections and Adoption of Agenda:

Motion to approve agenda by Mr. Kelleher, second by Mr. Hughes, all in favor, motion passes.

Approval of Minutes - September 8, 2009

Motion to approve by Mr. Kelleher, second by Mr. Stevens, all in favor, motion passes.

Public Portion:

Tom Lionetti - 79 Sunset Drive. Mr. Lionetti would like to know if he can speak after the presentation. Mr. Bomba said it is not a presentation. Mr. Lionetti thought the settlement offer was already done. Mr. Bomba said this agency needs to be informed on the settlement offer.

Donald North - 15 Commodore Hull Drive. How is the road (Route 34) going to be addressed before what is going on with the presentation. Why can't we ask questions after the presentation? He has talked with Themis Klarides, Senator Crisco and Linda Gentile and this is going to be an issue. What is the plan for Rte 34 before we get going on the downtown. Mr. Kelleher said Ms. O'Malley can answer that in her presentation.

Mr. Yacobacci - 10 Lombardi Drive. Mr. Yacobacci commented on an article in the Valley Independent Sentinel. In it Aldermen Ken Hughes talks about a round table that was voted on and Sheila was to get some developers and other public officials to discuss what was happening in downtown Derby a couple months back and he does not see it happening. How was that decision made without another meeting and voting to not have that meeting set up. He would hope the board would reconsider that. That was something the public and people who had an interest in downtown Derby was really looking forward to, to sit down and find out what was going to be happening and get a little bit of input from somebody.

Mark Garofalo - 95 Academy Hill Road. There were minutes that were just approved to direct staff to set up a workshop to designate areas as what the board would like to see. Now it has been unilaterally decided that this will not take place. Mr. Corso was also named as being invited for his professional help. People thought that was going to take place as of September. This deserves public input about the future of our downtown. Now there has been a whole bunch of new ideas that no one has been privy to. We don't know if the public is in favor of it, if it makes financial sense or from a traffic standpoint. The people should be going to the developer with what we want as a community. It looks like we are trying to turn this over to a developer when this whole process hasn't gone out to bid. It has to go out to bid to get the best project for the City. Mr. Garofalo encourages the board to adhere to the public process. There is a need for infrastructure improvements that are going to be a big drain on this project. He asks the board to make sure there is going to be a real public dialogue and not let this be a unilateral dictate.

Motion to close public portion by Mr. Stevens, second by Mr. Kelleher, all in favor, motion carries. Public portion closed at 6:41 p.m.

Conceptual Master Development Plan - discussion and possible action

Ms. O'Malley said there is nothing new being presented, it is the same mixed use concept. There is commercial near the Rte 8 exit and entrance ramps, residential along the river, a parking garage with several levels and retail.

Ms. O'Malley belongs to several economic development groups. Jimmy Ryan from Shelton Economic Development is a good friend and colleague and are taking into account other professional opinions about this downtown area. No one has said they don't want mixed use in their downtown. Mr. Geddes plan is also similar. There is not much to do with the triangle piece of property. Residential will not want to be by the highway, commercial will want to be in a highly visible area. The street lends itself to retail stores.

Ms. O'Malley speaks three or four times a week to the engineering and architectural firm designing the widening of Rte 34. They have to work with us to make sure that this is going to take into account future development. We may see a preliminary design for Rte 34 within three to six months. Mr. Geddes design takes into account the full set back.

Ms. O'Malley is asking the board to accept a mixed use plan for downtown.

Motion to accept the conceptual master plan of a mixed use development with the full twenty two (22) acres by Mr. Kelleher, second by Mr. Hughes, discussion.....

Mr. Russo pointed out there were sections that are not highlighted (Main and Caroline Street).

Mr. Stevens asked if the DOT or State given any indication what's going to happen to that when Rte 34 gets modified? Ms. O'Malley stated it is still too premature.

Ms. O'Malley stated the area Mr. Russo pointed out, is in the plan, in the zone, part of the redevelopment plan. There is no more Phase 1 or Phase 2.

The area that Mr. Russo pointed out could be commercial or parking.

Ms. O'Malley contacted five or six people for a workshop willing to make a presentation, but could not get everybody together. There will be a presentation and the public will be welcome or can meet with her. This is not a workshop. This is not starting from scratch.

There is an issue with the flood control easement in the residential portion. Mr. Geddes is going to set the residential back farther and reduce the number because there is an easement upon which you cannot build.... **Motion** is on the floor, all in favor, motion carries.

Phased Approach to the Downtown Redevelopment Area - discussion and possible action

Ms. O'Malley would like to be able to go out for request for proposals on separate portions of a mixed use development.

Mr. Hughes said anything being done tonight will be cutting out the public from any part of the process. Ms. O'Malley agreed, it is allowing us to continue trying to redevelop this mixed use project.

Mr. Kelleher stated any RFP will be in a public meeting.

Mr. Stevens wants the infrastructure addressed. Ms. O'Malley said there have been discussions with several developers. The City has an option to participate through various programs. It will be up to this board how they would like to go out for RFP's. Ms. O'Malley said there are some incentives the City can offer, plus the special taxing district is how we are going to resolve some of the infrastructure issues. Mr. Bomba said the City will be involved in the whole plan.

Mr. Kelleher said he hopes the RFP's includes the financing the company has, other projects they have completed, the timing of completing those projects and their expertise and completion schedule.

Mr. Russo wanted to know if the proposals will be based on the conceptual plan here tonight with mixed use, residential and commercial and asking people to make proposals based that area or is there a plan upon Mr. Geddes plan, or asking people to give us proposals for what they would like to build within the twenty two (22) acres. Ms. O'Malley said it has always been the case that there has been commercial retail interest by Rte 8. The areas will be designated in the RFP.

The road structure is subject to negotiation and the special taxing district. The onus is going to be on the developer. All projects will be subject to approval of all the necessary boards and public portion.

Motion to go into a phased approach with separate phases with Ms. O'Malley, the Redevelopment Agency, Board of Aldermen and the appropriate boards to keep a watchful eye, second by Mr. Stevens, all in favor, motion carries.

New ARRA funding for Economic Development

There is new funding available through the federal government to be passed on to the state and funneled through the municipalities and larger communities and counties. The total is 225 million for Connecticut and 90 million for distressed communities and some of the larger cities. Ms. O'Malley was in discussion with the Connecticut Development Authority and the Department of Economic & Community Development regarding the program. The program requires you to be shovel ready and have a developer(s) and the City to have a finance plan. The state will cover 45% of the interest rate on the bonds for the project. It is a good incentive program and could save someone millions of dollars. They will not look at projects under 3 million dollars.

Mr. Hughes said the City & Town Development Act in New Haven passed with 84% of the vote.

The Town & City Development Act the developer uses the City's bond rating and ARRA the City and the developer have to put together a project and go to the state and compete in which the state will issue the bonds for the project and will pay 45% of the interest rate on the bonds for the project. Both programs are good doing essentially the same thing. The projects should be submitted by early December.

Executive Session: Settlement Offer and Acceptance of the Derby Ceruzzi Matter

Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. and invite Ms. O'Malley and Corporation Counsel Joseph Coppola with no action and subject to adjournment by Mr. Hughes, second by Mr. Stevens, all in favor, motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Denise Cesaroni
Recording Secretary*

***These minutes are subject to approval at the next Redevelopment Agency meeting.