

MEETING MINUTES

Ad-Hoc Downtown Project Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 21, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Amedee O. "Dick" Richards, Jr., Council Chambers
1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena

Attendees

Committee Members: Anita Artukovich, Frank Catania, Ellen Daigle,
John Fisher, Stuart Morkun, Jack Pettee, and Odom
Stamps

Committee Members Absent: None

Council Liaisons: Philip C. Putnam (arrived 6:50 p.m.) and Marina
Khubesrian, M.D.

Staff: Hilary Straus, Assistant City Manager
Kimberly Hall Barlow, Assistant City Attorney
John Mayer, Senior Planner
Lucy Kbjian, Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Call to Order

The special meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Chair Catania. Executive Assistant Kbjian called the roll. Chair Catania led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Public Comment

Bianca Richards, a member of the public, made comments. She said she was pleased the developer and architect listened to her comments from the last meeting regarding a pedestrian and bike friendly project.

2. Review and approve minutes of the May 29, 2013 meeting

Committee Member Stamps corrected the date of the meeting on the minutes. Committee Member Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes with the amended date, seconded by Chair Catania. By roll call vote, seven ayes, the minutes were approved.

3. Next Step in Design Charrette – Presentation by Genton Property Group and Design Team

David Goodale, Gonzalez Goodale Architects ("Architect"), made a PowerPoint presentation. Jonathan Genton of Genton Property Group, LLC ("Developer"), made a presentation reviewing changes to the project approved by the Committee at its last meeting.

Questions and comments from the Committee were received.

Committee Member Fisher commented on the roadway width.

Committee Member Stamps asked about the bridge/pedestrian crossing at Mission Street.

Committee Member Daigle said that though the renderings were beautiful, they looked like a completely different town and did not fit with the other side of Mission Street. She said it was too modern for South Pasadena, which she has always viewed as a quaint town. She also requested an image which included the other side of Mission Street at the next meeting.

Committee Member Stamps said the rendering were highly schematic and the project still needs review from the Planning Commission and Design Review Board.

Committee Member Morkun asked about the status of the contest parcel and the participation of property owners in the project are. He requested the Developer make efforts to work with these owners because their participation is needed to achieve the design/flow of the pedestrian walkways. He also asked about the Bank of America property. The Developer and the Architect responded. The Developer said owner participation would contribute to the project. He also said he could not speak about specifics of his negotiations with these owners. He also said the Bank of America parking lot is double loaded and will be redone.

Committee Member Morkun said the renderings felt too modern for Mission Street and that there is no organizing rhythm to the project renderings.

Vice Chair Artukovich said she liked the window treatment and the lighting. She asked about the Owner Participation Agreements and also about upkeep of courtyards/plaza. She said it is important to have a clean and safe environment and asked about maintenance and storage of seating/furniture. The Developer said that the space is a retail amenity that will be taken care of by a future property owner's association (POA). This will be a part of the Disposition and Development Agreement ("DDA") and agreement of the future POA.

Vice Chair Artukovich also asked about the ingress/egress on Mission Street. She said she is strongly concerned about the bulb-outs on Mission and Fair Oaks, and having two entries to the garage. She said she is worried about congestion and there needs to be a traffic study.

Committee Member Daigle said she has been part of the effort to save the town for over 40 years as she feels that, based on the renderings, the downtown project doesn't look like it will save this historical town.

Committee Member Fisher said up-lighting would enhance the overall look of the building. He said he liked the massing, verticality and use of historic material, but the façade is missing some type of decorative treatments. He said these elements (ironwork, decorative patterns, etc.) will make the buildings feel a bit more quaint. He also said traffic circulation needs to be addressed in this project. The ingress/egress on Mission Street should be reviewed as well as the bulb-outs on mission.

Assistant Planner Mayer responded. The intersection will be considered as part of the Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) study.

Councilmember Putnam commented on open space in the project and use of public art and fountains. He also said kiosks should be a restricted use.

Committee Member Daigle asked about a parking and traffic study for all of Mission Street. She said the School District project on Mission will also impact traffic and parking in the area. Assistant Planner Mayer responded that the environment analysis would take into account area projects in the area.

Public Comment on this item was received:

Joanne Speers, property owner, said that the committee should continue to move forward with the project, but that they should always have two plans: one that includes participation of property owners, and one that doesn't.

Ms. Speers made comments on the elevator shaft, performance platform, and the out of the way water feature blocking the back of their properties and said this is not considered an enhancement by the owners.

Ivan Karp, a member of the community, asked about changes from the prior developer's plan. The Developer responded, stating the any changes will stay within the approvals of the original project.

Mr. Karp also asked about the restoration of the building on Fair Oaks and Mission, which he believed was part of the Downtown Project. Committee Member Stamps responded by clarifying that this was not part of the Project and he was referring to the Comerica building across the street. He added that the Hope and Mound parcel is no longer a part of the project.

Mr. Karp also asked about the materials the Developer would be using. The Developer said he wanted the project to feel organic with elements such as brick, terracotta tile, etc.

Chair Catania made a motion, seconded by Committee Member Stamps, for the Committee to agree that the level of design is sufficient and for the Architect to take input from today and provide additional, more in-depth, detailed schematics. Discussion followed. Committee member Stamps made an amendment to the motion to include comments received by the Committee Members and that there is a greater level of detail, seconded by Committee Member Fisher. By roll call vote, six ayes and one abstention (Daigle), the motion passed.

4. Update on Contested Parcel Status

Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow gave an oral report on the status of the contested parcel. She explained the efforts made to transfer the property, first to the Housing Authority, then to the City for a governmental use. These attempts were denied by the Department of Finance and the Successor Agency was directed to prepare a Long Range Property Management

Plan (“LRPMP”) detailing how the property was to be disposed of. Staff prepared the LRPMP with the intent to sell the property to the Developer at fair market value. The proceeds of the sale will be handled by the Auditor/Controller to be distributed to the taxing entities. A purchase and sale agreement for the direct sale will be prepared for Successor Agency approval as soon as the property is appraised.

5. Introduction of Ken Hira, Kosmont & Associates, Inc.

Ken Hira, Senior Vice President of Kosmont Companies, introduced himself and the company. The firm offers a full range of economics and real estate advisory services, he said. His presentation included ENA and DDA considerations, as well as status and next steps for the project.

Committee Member Stamps asked if there is a conflict as the Department of Finance is a client of Kosmont’s. Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow clarified that Kosmont is assisting in negotiations and the financial piece of the project.

Committee Member Daigle said she was glad for the expertise and guidance of the consultant.

6. Project Overview and Next Steps

Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow presented a handout prepared by staff entitled “Milestones Towards Construction.” She noted the multiple levels of review, public input and recommendations the project will go through, and its ultimate approval by the City Council.

Committee Member Morkun asked about timing of DDA negotiations, Owner Participations Agreements (OPA) and Environmental Analysis. Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow clarified the steps prior to DDA completion.

Committee Member Stamps asked for clarification on OPAs in relation to the signing of the DDA. Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow responded.

Committee Member Morkun asked if there was a deadline. Assistant City Attorney Kimberly Hall Barlow said the application is dependent on the process of this body in addition to acquisition of other property.

Committee Member Daigle asked when the parking management plan will be done. She also asked the City to provide property owners a map/description of the contested parcel.

Public Comment on this item was received:

Diana Mahmud, a member of the public, said there is a need for a glossary of the vocabulary and acronyms being used in relation to the project. Assistant City Manager Straus said staff will provide definitions and answers to frequently asked questions on the City’s website.

7. Next Meeting

Chair Catania said two dates have been proposed by staff, September 12th and 26th, for

upcoming meetings. Committee Member Daigle she was not available on the 26th.
Without objection, the next meeting was scheduled for September 12th.

8. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

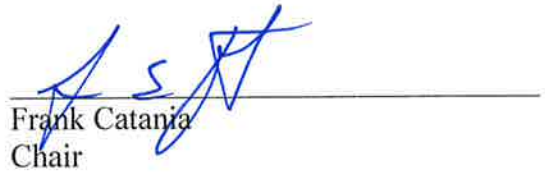
There being no further business, Chair Catania adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved By:



Lucy L. Kbjian
Executive Assistant to the City Manager



Frank Catania
Chair