

MINUTES OF A CONTINUED MEETING  
OF THE COEUR D'ALENE CITY COUNCIL  
HELD ON MARCH 28, 2013 AT 12:00 NOON  
IN THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

The Mayor and Council met in a continued session at the Library Community Room on March 28, 2013 at 12:00 Noon, there being present upon roll call a quorum of the Council.

Sandi Bloem, Mayor

Woody McEvers ) Members of Council Present  
Ron Edinger )  
Mike Kennedy )  
Dan Gookin )  
Steve Adams )  
Deanna Goodlander ) Members of Council Absent

Denny Davis, Chairman)  
Rod Calwell ) Lake City Development Corporation Representatives  
Justin Druffel )  
Dave Patzer )  
Brad Jordan )  
Scott Hoskins )  
Tony Berns )

Jim Elder ) LCDC Members Absent  
Al Hassel )

Jon Ingalls ) Members of City Staff Present  
Renata McLeod )  
Troy Tymesen )  
Mike Gridley )  
Judy House )

Mayor Bloem opened the meeting and invited Lake City Development Corporation (LCDC) Executive Director Tony Berns to begin the discussion of the agenda items. Chairman Davis stated that this was an opportunity to provide the City and the citizens an update of the Boards priorities.

**LCDC Strategic Priorities** - Mr. Berns presented a description of their two districts, the Lake District and the River District. He provided an overview of the vision and mission of LCDC and mentioned that a similar detailed presentation was made on February 5, 2013 and that video is available on the city web page.

a. Education: LCDC: They have funded improvements to Sorensen and Winton Schools. They continue to have a focus on the Higher Education Corridor, the four-corner area and potential student housing. The four-corner area is the area surrounding Memorial Field, the County campus, the Human Rights building, previous Johnson Warehouse, and old Kerr site. LCDC strategically purchased properties along Lincoln Way to have the ability to add those properties to the old railroad property for a combined redevelopment of that area. Councilman McEvers asked if LCDC considered the infrastructure within the Education Corridor as completing their commitment or if they had additional plans for that area. Chairman Davis stated that they do not have any plans to build buildings, as they understand that the three education institutions are planning to seek funding for the buildings. However, they want to stay at the table and hear opportunities as they arise. Chairman Davis stated that they do not have specific plans for the properties along Lincoln Way; they have considered open space, student and/or faculty housing, and some other type of private housing development. They will discuss this further at their April strategic planning meeting. Mayor Bloem asked for clarification regarding the four-corners planning. Chairman Davis stated that they are looking at a broad footprint in master planning the four-corner area and are looking at the northerly interaction.

Commissioner Jordan asked if there was any movement with BLM regarding the disposition of their property. Mr. Gridley stated that the City has submitted a Lease Application through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. As part of the application process, the City is required to submit a master plan for the area. The City has met with NIC and they have expressed interest in the property. The Parks and Recreation Commission have offered to take the lead in meeting with stakeholders to begin that master planning process. Simultaneously, NIC and the City have agreed to jointly pursue a Congressional Gift of the land for community use. Councilman McEvers stated that there are restrictions through the lease, including that it cannot be used commercially. Mr. Gridley stated that civic facilities and uses are allowable; however, if it were a Congressional Gift there would not be use restrictions. Commissioner Jordan stated that some citizens have asked about the removal of the track and why the City did not leave them in for future light rail; however, the old tracks are not suited for newer uses. Commissioner Hoskins asked if the Lease Agreement would have a set time line requirement for the installation of new uses/facilities. Mr. Gridley stated that he is unaware of time constraints for the master planning process and the term of the lease would not be less than five years and no more than 25 years. BLM has been supportive of this property coming to the community for community use. Councilman Edinger asked for clarification as to what needs to be sent to BLM, and if it would include the four-corners. Mr. Gridley clarified that the only plan that needs to go to BLM would be what is planned for the BLM property that will be leased to the City. Councilman Mr. Edinger asked about the carousel and the field of dreams going into the four-corner area. Mr. Gridley stated that it is time for the community to look at all the options for the property; however, it will be difficult to put any commercial activities on the BLM land. Councilmember Kennedy stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission had stated that they would have time to facilitate the discussion of the stakeholders.



b. Workforce Housing: Mr. Berns reported that LCDC has collaborated with Whitewater Creek Development in the River District to provide rental housing. Additionally they are looking for a mixed use/housing opportunity in the Midtown area. Councilman Kennedy thought that the last discussion on midtown was to follow up with the neighborhoods. Mr. Berns stated that there have been some attempts to meet with the neighborhood but they have not received a response indicating they would like to proceed. Commissioner Jordan stated he was at the previously held community meeting and the neighborhood stated that they would not mind housing for seniors but not family rentals. He believes that Midtown is a good location for senior housing.

Councilman Gookin stated that he received an email from a citizen who stated that there was a lot of LCDC funding spent in Midtown and then it appeared LCDC went away. Councilman Gookin stated that he would have preferred for the area to grow organically. The citizen suggested that LCDC consider relaxing the sidewalk fees and restrictions to allow more activities on the empty lots. Mr. Berns stated that there have been efforts to start a Midtown business association; however, only two consistent attendees have regularly attended meetings. Councilman Gookin suggested that the downtown model may not work in Midtown, and that he would support relaxing any fees/restrictions to motivate commercial activity. Commissioner Davis stated that LCDC is open to suggestions, and at one point, they talked to groups about outdoor markets, but there has not been follow through. He clarified that they do not have authority over sidewalks, but they are open to discussions of use of the parking lot. Mr. Berns stated that they tried a First Saturday open market and the first one did not occur. Councilman McEvers stated that the residents also have a stake in Midtown and that the commercial businesses seem to be going well; however, the residents have a lot to say about noise and what use they want in their backyard. He asked if they see this area workforce housing as different from Riverstone. Chairman Davis stated that the original plan was all right; however, the condominium model would not financially work, and the rental model was not desirable to the neighbors. Commissioner Jordan stated that he remembers that in the 1980's the citizens wanted to know when they would get revitalization in Midtown, so this has been going on for some time. LCDC is willing to collaborate and bring in a critical mass. Councilman Gookin suggested that the Museum or the Human Rights Institute move to Midtown. He believes that providing housing using governmental dollars is competing with the private sector, when they could help the nonprofit instead. A Museum is neutral and would potentially help build up the neighborhood. One of his objections as to how LCDC has handled downtown is that he believes there were opportunities to directly assist a business owner. For example, when someone wants to change a retail store to a restaurant, they would need about \$80,000 in improvements to make it happen. LCDC could have paid for the improvements, which would stay with the building and increase property taxes. He suggested that LCDC apply that theory to Midtown. Councilman Kennedy stated that he believes that would be problematic for those outside the boundary and that he believes LCDC has increased the number of stores in the downtown due to their investments. He believes that private investment often follows a public investment. Chairman Davis stated he understood the suggestion to be to add resources to an existing building, and with some of the constraints of building codes and being bound by safety codes, and it would be dependent upon where they put the money. They have had



previously funded facade grants in the downtown and have entered into owner participation agreements for items that the public has access too. They have been criticized for crossing into the private property line, so they try to stay within the public property line. He stated that they are still open to requests and discussions regarding funding opportunities. Mr. Gridley stated that he believes that the money does need to go for a public benefit. Commissioner Jordan stated that they have had many discussions regarding public benefit and they have to be legally cautious. He also stated that he did not believe they could resolve the issue of competing with private business in Midtown. At the community meeting, the biggest opponent did not have a problem with senior housing and they are open to helping the businesses there.

c. Job Retention / Job Creation: LCDC has had partnerships and efforts to facilitate jobs with the Downtown Association, within the Northwest Boulevard area, Midtown, and the Mill River areas. A current focus area is east of the US Bank Call Center; they are waiting for the owners to determine what they are interested in doing with the property. He provided a copy of the LCDC Newsletter that included discussion points regarding job creation. Councilman McEvers asked if in their efforts to create jobs do they consider its value, and whether it is a minimum wage position essentially and how do they approach it. Chairman Davis stated a lot of it is reactive, as they are limited on how they create, such as with the call center, to be prepared as opportunities arise. They would love higher paying jobs, and they do not have a strict mathematical equation. Commissioner Colwell said it would be impossible to mathematically dictate, as there are so many parts to a project. Commissioner Jordan said that the call center has higher than minimum wage jobs and that they financed the sewer line on Seltice Way so other opportunities can come forward. Mr. Berns stated that they look at the Higher Education Corridor as a long-term opportunity for higher paying jobs. Additionally, they work with Jobs Plus when they can.

d. Public Parking: LCDC has worked with the Downtown Association and Kootenai County and the City regarding downtown parking opportunities. Additionally, they plan for improvements to the Midtown existing lots. The long-term strategy includes the Old Federal building block as a place for structured parking. The Federal Court house building is on the historic register and managed by the State Parks and Recreation Department, so it will continue to stay at that location. Councilman Adams asked how many spaces would be anticipated at the proposed Midtown 4<sup>th</sup> Street facility. Mr. Berns stated they have reviewed a stackable model, a single floor would have 100-150 stalls, with the option to add more floors later, or they could look at a mixed-use option. Chairman Davis stated that they looked at a single floor as one concept at an approximate cost of \$1.5 million and that they have planned for the project prior to the close of the district.

e. Midtown Redevelopment: Mr. Berns stated that the Midtown area has been discussed earlier and reiterated it will continue to be a focus area for LCDC. They will look to put a team together to progress forward.



f. Downtown Vitalization: Mr. Berns stated that the downtown area is still a focus area for LCDC. They are looking at the potential of pocket parks.

g. Public Space: LCDC is currently focusing in on McEuen Park and looking at the potential of Sherman Park. Successes include the Library, Kroc Center, Prairie Trail, and Winton Park. They own a structure at 728 Sherman Avenue, which was acquired to allow the City the option for the connection of 8<sup>th</sup> Street. They do own the Library parking (referred to as the Jameson Asset). They also own several parcels on Young Avenue for future public use and recently discussed as potentially boat trailer parking. Councilman Gookin stated that he has received complaints regarding the homes that LCDC owns and the lack of quality, specifically homes at Foster Avenue, Sherman Avenue, and Lincoln Way and asked if something could be done to clean those properties. Chairman Davis stated that it is an issue of how much to stay on top of a tenant versus how much money do you put into them or if it is time to demolish the structures. He clarified that the rent does defer some of the cost of purchasing the homes. They did take one house down for the River Avenue relocation, and can consider that when homes are vacated, realizing that they would lose some income. Councilman Gookin stated that he felt that would go a long way with the neighbors. Mr. Berns stated that they have stakeholders in the community that challenge them about not providing enough living accommodations that are more affordable to a certain demographic. Councilman Gookin felt that could be addressed by the Riverstone apartment investment. Councilman Edinger asked if there were college students living in the homes. Mr. Berns stated that there was.

Mr. Gridley wanted to discuss the opportunity of acquisition of the Mill River area BNSF property, as a great place to put in a trail. BNSF owns that land in fee and they are willing to sell the land. There have been previous discussions with LCDC to purchase the property and reconfigure the park within Mill River. Currently there has been difficulty finding someone to do an appraisal, which is the next step, with the next step being the funding options. Mr. Gridley clarified that there are no restrictions on the property due to BNSF ownership in fee.

**DISCUSSION:** Councilman Gookin asked how much more increment LCDC is estimating to bring in over its life span. Mr. Berns stated that one could estimate the amount based on the current \$5.3 million value from both districts, as they believe it should hold steady at that amount. Chairman Davis clarified that each District has a different end date. Councilman Gookin felt that the priorities would be better stated as goals, and clarified that these would be the plan for the life of the Districts. Mr. Berns stated that these are the strategic categories and that annually they set goals to achieve certain categories. Councilman Gookin asked the Board if there were any concerns regarding the future. Commissioner Patzer stated that November election is a concern, as Councilman Gookin has gone on the record stating he would end the urban renewal district if he got the right number of votes. Councilman Gookin responded that it was good that they were aware of that.