Minutes
City of Keizer
River Road Redevelopment Board Meeting
Keizer City Hall Library
October 26, 1994

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Smith at 7:09 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Vice Chairman Tim Smith, June Abbott, Art Gottfried, and Shannon Blake-Thiess. Joe Van Meter arrived at 7:17 p.m.

Also present were Councilor Jim Keller, Community Development Director John Morgan, Consultant John Spencer, and Recording Secretary Nona Oxe'.

Vice Chairman Smith announced that Mary Hardison has resigned as a member and chair of R3B due to her husband's relocation to Boise, Idaho.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were deferred due to lack of a quorum.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Development Activity

Mr. Morgan stated that there is still a lot of construction going on, and new building permits are being issued. He reported that DEQ has officially acknowledged that there is a major gasoline spill from the old EXXON station (now Keizer Nursery) in the area of Deitz Street. The spill runs under several houses, and is in the first aquifer. Mr. Morgan pointed out that cleanup will be expensive, and it is likely there will be an open pit at the site for a couple years. Mr. Morgan noted that two homes now on the market North of Maine, with the potential for good development, are not selling because of the contamination. Mr. Morgan gave background information on the contamination, and ownership of the property.

FMAGIC

Property Improvement Program - Council Action

Mr. Morgan reported that the City Council approved the driveway replacement portion of the program. However, the Council held off on the sign compliance portion until more specific information is available on what is necessary for sign code compliance. The item will be brought back to the Council on November 21, after staff analysis of every property and determination of the sign code issues.

River Road Redevelopment Project Activities

Salem Electric

Mr. Morgan reported that Salem Electric's work is close to being completed. Because Viacom did not complete their work simultaneously with Salem Electric, they are having to dig up a few spots and are retapping the conduit at their own expense.

PGE

Mr. Morgan noted that PGE will spend about 60 days doing the design and then they will provide a cost estimate. They feel fairly comfortable that the approximate $1,500,000 Keizer has allocated to the project over the next couple years will be enough to cover the project. Mr. Morgan stated that the big question is, how far can the work go east and west on Chemawa. The picture will be clearer once cost estimates are completed.

Traffic Signals

Mr. Morgan reported that the date for signal turn-on keeps getting pushed back. He was not sure, but they may have been turned on today.

Storm Drainage

As reported at the last meeting, Mr. Morgan recalled that a contract was awarded to complete the storm drainage over the top of the hill at Plymouth, tying back into Cherry. He noted that the work would be underway immediately.

Senior Center

Mr. Morgan reported that the City is helping out with storm drainage and undergrounding of wiring. He noted that the seniors are doing all the street improvements, a bus pull-out, etc.

Sign Inventory
Reported above.

Joe Van Meter arrived at 7:17 p.m. and took his seat at the table.

Mr. Morgan pointed out that over 900 lots have been platted in Keizer this year. He suggested that the "magic" 30,000 capacity in the urban growth boundary is not far off. There was discussion of the construction going on in Keizer, and Mr. Morgan responded to questions about current developments.

Vice Chairman Smith requested that the minutes be considered at this time, since a quorum was now present.

3. APPROVAL OF R3B MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Blake-Thiess that the minutes of September 28, 1994 be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Van Meter and carried, all present voting aye.

5. DISCUSSION

a. Cherry Avenue Design Plan

Mr. Spencer reviewed the results of the October 20 Community Forum. He noted that only six people from the corridor attended. Mr. Spencer explained that there was a communication breakdown in getting out notification of the meeting. A mailing list was not yet developed, however, flyers were printed to be distributed along the corridor. Unfortunately, there was a mix-up on who would be responsible for their distribution, and they were not delivered. Also, it was planned that notice of the meeting would be published twice in the Keizertimes. As it turned out, only a very small notice was put in the paper the week before the meeting, with the larger publication on the day of the meeting.

Mr. Spencer advised that a questionnaire handed out at the meeting has now been delivered to every business along the corridor, requesting that they provide an address with their response. A mailing list will then be established to ensure future notification.

Mr. Smith emphasized the importance of notification. Ms. Abbott pointed out that notification for other development in Salem was accomplished by signs posted along the area being developed, and suggested that it might be done here. Mr. Spencer confirmed that he is establishing a data base of property owners in the corridor for future notification.

Mr. Spencer advised that since those present at the meeting were principally from the Senior Center, the main discussion was a concern about bus access, and the ability to cross the street. They discussed the possibility for paving some locations on the continuous left turn lane to allow for better crossing.

Mr. Spencer noted that completed questionnaires from others than those present at the meeting are being received. Most indicate that traffic speed is the biggest problem. Congestion at certain interchanges is also a concern. East/west traffic does not appear to be a priority. Mr. Spencer pointed out that social issues such as crime, safety, etc. are underlying concerns for the area. In talking to individuals from the real estate industry, he noted that the safety issue comes through clearly.

Mr. Spencer noted that businesses have given an enthusiastic response when they have been talked to about cleaning up the streets, undergrounding, and the visual quality. In asking about real estate opportunities envisioned for the corridor, multi-family housing, and some sort of business park made up of offices and small businesses were the two most likely development opportunities anticipated. Mr. Spencer noted that land costs, and the difficulty of assembling properties to construct multi-family housing are perceived to be deterrents to that type of development, even though there is strong market support for it in the Keizer area.

Mr. Spencer felt that if the desire is to pursue those types of developments and to stimulate more housing in the area, it will be necessary to make changes to the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning for the area.

Mr. Morgan confirmed that the Planning Commission would work on zoning, however, he felt that R3B should recommend whatever they feel is appropriate for the Cherry Avenue design.

Mr. Smith wondered if the consultants would be looking at under-utilized or dilapidated housing as pockets for opportunities. Mr. Spencer answered that some properties have already been identified.

Mr. Spencer noted that the Elks and the Lions, etc. control a lot of the property in the corridor. They have all indicated that for now they wish to stay in the area, even though their memberships are not increasing. He felt these could be looked at as a land bank of significant properties on the north end of the corridor.

Mr. Van Meter asked if Mr. Spencer knew how tax revenue for multi-family apartments compared to tax revenue for commercial development. Mr. Spencer felt there would not be much difference—each would probably have a comparable assessed value.

Mr. Spencer requested input from the Board regarding the type of development opportunities, the character, and the focus of use desired for the corridor.

Mr. Van Meter had a concern about changing from commercial to multi-family. He was unsure if more multi-family development along Cherry Avenue would create the visual appearance desired for the corridor. He noted that some of the current apartments, particularly on Plymouth Avenue, are unsightly, with cars parked on streets and kids running in the streets, etc. He felt more apartments might be defeating our focus to improve the look of the area. Mr. Gottfried pointed out that the wider street and sidewalks would help improve the appearance.

Mr. Spencer pointed out what he felt were good examples of how multi-family can fit in. He noted that the development just south of the Senior Center consists of duplexes which are positioned sideways from Cherry Avenue, and oriented to the street that runs perpendicular to Cherry Avenue. He felt having apartment buildings facing Cherry would create too much exposure, however, if they were to be oriented to east/west streets they could be designed to fit in.

Mr. Smith pointed out that the apartments on Plymouth Avenue have deteriorated due to age and ownership. He felt that by making improvement to the area the neighborhood would be cleaned up. He pointed out other multi-family housing that has improved by clean-up and street improvement.

Ms. Abbott alluded to improvements made to the business park along McGilchrist in Salem, and wondered how that type of development might work. Mr. Morgan suspected that McGilchrist was zoned industrial/commercial, a less than desirable classification. He noted, however, that by putting small offices, a delicatessen, etc. in the front of the industrial uses, the visual effect was softened and the appearance became more desirable.

Ms. Blake-Thiess pointed out the solid ownership of homes on Candlewood, and felt there was a need to be careful with what light industrial is allowed in the area. It was agreed that buffering would be needed to create the transition.

Mr. Gottfried felt that it was very important to improve Plymouth Drive as part of the project, and to extend Sunset through.

Mr. Smith asked how the ideas from the Board would be used to develop a plan for the corridor. There was discussion of the current uses and properties in the area. Mr. Spencer explained how the ideas generated by the Board would be used in developing a draft plan.

b. River Road Zone

Mr. Morgan recalled that at the last meeting he advised the Board of a project now underway to write an entire new development code. He noted that one of the themes identified was the creation of a new zone to apply along River Road. He pointed out that current zoning allows many things not in the best interest of the community, and does not provide for other development more visually pleasing and pedestrian and transit friendly.

Mr. Morgan noted that the in considering what is desired for the River Road corridor, the Planning Commission sensed the importance to maintain high standards, but to be more flexible in uses. They identified a need to tighten up regulations in terms of landscaping, aesthetics, and sight plan review.

Mr. Morgan reported that the Commission was also interested in targeting two or three major intersections for more intensely regulated development. The first coming to mind was Chemawa and River Road, and then possibly others such as Manbrin.

Mr. Morgan recalled that at the last meeting the Board discussed the need to have members from the Planning Commission, R3B, and the City Council work together to develop concepts for the River Road Zone. Mr. Smith and Ms. Hardison had agreed to participate, however, with Ms. Hardison's resignation, someone would need to take her place on the subcommittee.

Mr. Morgan asked if there were other ideas for land uses for River Road. He pointed out that the issue of temporary businesses has come up. He noted that current regulations allow temporary businesses to operate for 90 days, but do not regulate the type of business. A concept to consider might be where to draw the line for temporary businesses.

There was discussion regarding a temporary taco trailer business currently operating on River Road. It was pointed out that the business had been granted an extension beyond the 90-day period because the owner is near the end of the process to establish a permanent business. Councilor Keller felt that other businesses had not been given special considerations.

Mr. Morgan stated that another issue to consider is the proliferation of fast food restaurants. He noted that it has been suggested that it might be desirable to prohibit future drive-thru windows.

Ms. Blake-Thiess felt that definite goals for the appearance of River Road had never been established. Mr. Morgan noted that the character of the private development had not been addressed, and pointed out that establishing a specific zone would help achieve a more pleasing visual appearance.

Mr. Smith pointed out the need to get specific about what is desired for future businesses. Mr. Van Meter felt that was the roll of the Planning Commission. He felt R3B's roll was to suggest what would be done with funds to improve the Keizer Community along River Road. Mr. Smith agreed that was R3B's number one goal, however, he looked forward to having input as a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. Smith asked that Mr. Morgan check on Stan Compton's absence. There was discussion of the need to fill the vacancy created by Ms. Hardison's resignation. Mr. Morgan pointed out that the Mayor was responsible for making the appointment.

6. Upcoming Meetings

a. Regular R3B meeting - November 23

Mr. Morgan pointed out that the next regular meeting is scheduled for Thanksgiving eve. It was the consensus of the Board to reschedule the next meeting for November 30th.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Vice Chairman Smith at 8:12 p.m.