Minutes
River Road Redevelopment Board
Keizer City Hall - Library
Wednesday, July 31, 1996

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Compton at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Stan Compton, Manny Martinez, June Abbott, Tim Smith, and Shannon Blake-Thiess. Mark Grenz arrived at 7:06 p.m. Joe VanMeter arrived at 7:11 p.m. Rick Curry arrived at 7:21 p.m.

Also present were: Keizer Fire Marshal Joel Stein, Inland Shores Architect Chris Freshley, Cherry Avenue Design Plan Consultant John Spencer, Community Development Director John Morgan, and Recording Secretary Nona Oxe'. Council Liaison Carl Beach arrived at 9:05 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Blake-Thiess that the minutes of June 26, 1996 be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith and carried, all present voting aye except Mr. VanMeter and Mr. Grenz who abstained from voting inasmuch as they were not present at that meeting.

4. APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS

Keizer Traffic Safety Commission Chairman Paul Gorlinsky was in attendance as an observer. Les Zaitz with the Keizertimes was also present.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 River Road Design Plan - Hydrant Locations

As was requested at the June meeting, Keizer Fire Marshal Joel Stein displayed a map depicting the locations of existing fire hydrants on River Road and Cherry Avenue. He noted that he completed a visual inspection of the 37 existing hydrants to verify their location.

(Mr. Grenz arrived and took his seat at the table.)

On the map, Fire Marshal Stein had also identified locations for new hydrants based on the Fire District's 500-foot rule for locating hydrants. He noted that under the proposed plan, 19 hydrants would need to be added; some on River Road and some on Cherry Avenue.

Mr. Stein responded to questions about the impact of hydrant spacing on engine response. He noted the possible need for additional engines where hydrants are spaced more than 500 - 600 feet apart. He felt that with the current growth taking place on River Road and Cherry Avenue, it would be a good time to add the needed hydrants.

Mr. Morgan pointed out that in rewriting the River Road Design Plan, the hydrant plan could be incorporated in. Funding sources would subsequently be determined. He noted that including the hydrant plan in the overall design plan would not immediately commit the City to building all 19 hydrants. He named opportunities where hydrant installation might be included in projects, such as new construction, or sidewalk or waterline rebuild. He surmised that additional hydrants would impact insurance rates for businesses within the corridor. Mr. Morgan recommended that R3B, by motion, incorporate the hydrant plan into the updated River Road Design Plan.

Mr. Stein responded to questions about hydrant coverage for commercial areas. He noted that the proposed additional hydrants for River Road would provide adequate coverage for existing structures. For any large new commercial development, additional hydrants would be required as part of the development plan.

(Mr. VanMeter arrived and took his seat at the table.)

Mr. Compton noted plans to soon overlay River Road, and asked if the Fire District would fund the replacement or addition of hydrants. Mr. Stein responded that the Fire District budgets for hydrant maintenance, but does not budget for replacement or new hydrants. When questioned by Mr. Compton about hydrant spacing in the proposed plan, Mr. Stein indicated that with the city engineer's help there could be some fine-tuning, possibly eliminating one or two hydrants.

Mr. Smith indicated support for the plan. He felt that once adopted, a cost analysis could be done, and then R3B could consider whether to participate in some form.

A brief discussion followed regarding costs. Mr. Stein conceded that in spacing proposed new hydrants, the potential for commercial development had not been taken into account. Distance, and staggering on each side of the road were the basis for spacing. Ms. Blake-Thiess felt that any opportunity to take advantage of potential development sites as a means of financing hydrant installation should be explored. Mr. Smith reiterated that a cost analysis would be appropriate after adopting a plan. Mr. Grenz estimated the cost to install a single hydrant at $2,500 to $4,000. Mr. Morgan acknowledged that a cost analysis would be paid for from the Urban Renewal budget.

(Mr. Curry arrived and took his seat at the table.)

It was moved by Ms. Blake-Thiess that R3B adopt Fire Marshal Stein's recommended plan for fire hydrants on River Road and Cherry Avenue. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

It was agreed that the plan would be subject to fine-tuning which might result in less than the proposed 19 hydrants.

The motion carried, all present voting aye.

Fire Marshal Stein indicated his willingness to respond to any other River Road redevelopment issues.

5.2 Gateway Sign - Lockhaven & River Road

Mr. Morgan recalled that funds are budgeted to do a gateway sign of some kind to provide identity at the northern end of Keizer, as was done at the south end of the city. He noted that the developers of the Staats Lake project, now known as Inland Shores, have come in with a proposal for a northern gateway. Mr. Morgan introduced Chris Freshley, the Inland Shores landscape architect, who would share a concept for not only the Staats Lake corner, but for a major entryway involving all four corners at Lockhaven Drive and River Road.

Mr. Morgan recommended that R3B review the ideas with Mr. Freshley and decide whether to pursue the concept. If there was concurrence to pursue the proposal, Mr. Freshley would prepare detailed plans and cost estimates to present to R3B at a subsequent meeting as a formal request for Property Improvement Grant funding. Mr. Morgan reviewed the grant requirements for a city-wide landmark eligible for 100% funding.

Mr. Morgan noted that the Inland Shores developers control only the northwest corner. The southwest corner is City right-of-way, and is controlled by the City. He pointed out that the plan also incorporates 7-11 property on the northeast corner, and Keizer Creekside property on the southeast corner. It would be necessary to work with those property owners if improvements were done on all four corners.

Mr. Smith asked who would maintain the improvements once the project is completed. Mr. Morgan answered that the developers would maintain the northwest corner. The City's Public Works Department has indicated that they could maintain the southwest corner.

Mr. Freshley displayed two large design drawings depicting the landscape plan and monument signage. He pointed out the four corners at Lockhaven Drive and River Road proposed for inclusion in the entryway concept. He described the materials that would be used in the monument sign and throughout the project. He pointed out the proposed location for the Keizer signage and the Inland Shores signage. He noted that a difference in the elevation would provide a separation and distinction between the two signs. The entire rock wall signage would cover approximately 100 feet.

Mr. Freshley reviewed the landscaping plan for the northwest corner which would incorporate the creek and wetlands within the site. He pointed out the meandering sidewalk pulled back from the street, and the pedestrian visual interests, including benches, incorporated into the design. Flowers would be included to provide color. He explained how the entire area would be elevated from the street level.

Looking at the possibility of what might happen at the other corners, Mr. Freshley pointed out areas where vegetation might be incorporated to diminish the extent of the buildings and asphalt, and set up symmetry between the corners.

Ms. Blake-Thiess brought up the subject of this winter's flood. It was noted that the entire Creekside parking lot would likely be flooded if the corner area were to flood.

A discussion followed regarding the cost of the project, and the possible degree of urban renewal participation. Mr. Morgan noted that there is $50,000 in the budget for a gateway sign, and $175,000 was budgeted for the property improvement program.

Mr. Freshley responded to questions about costs to do the northwest corner which would include the rock-wall monument sign. He provided rough estimates for the various components of the project, for an estimated total in the neighborhood of $95,000.

A discussion followed regarding the visibility of the Keizer signage, and the appropriateness of the signage as an entryway to the City. Mr. Compton was concerned that after investing $95,000 at this location there would still be a need for some kind of a gateway coming from the north on River Road. Mr. Morgan noted that a third sign could be put at the southwest corner to catch southbound traffic, however, the cost would go up.

Mr. VanMeter was not certain about calling an identity sign at this location a gateway. He felt the proposed project would be visually appealing and a benefit to Keizer, but that it might better be looked at as a focal point. He made reference to the currently less-than-appealing southeast corner, and suggested that any opportunity for improvements at the corner should be considered.

Mr. Freshley felt that the extensive easement at the Creekside Shopping Center property on the southeast corner would provide a good opportunity for enhanced landscaping. He responded to questions about available easement at the other two corners. Because little area was available at the northeast corner, there was a concern that landscaping that would provide screening of the asphalt and 7-11 store would also cause a vision obstruction for traffic at the corner.

A discussion followed regarding an appropriate location for an entryway at the north end of the City. Mr. Smith pointed out that the Lockhaven/River Road corner represented the north end of the City's business district. Mr. Compton surmised that the extreme northerly boundary of the City would be considered appropriate for an entryway, rather than having it placed a mile into the City. Mr. VanMeter commented that the Parks Committee envisioned another park across the road from The Meadows Park. He suggested that if that were to come to pass, it might be an appropriate location.

Mr. Morgan reminded the group that the Planning Commission had recommended that the City retain the corner of McLeod and Lockhaven for a northeast entry sign. He pointed out that it would be outside renewal district boundaries, and thus another funding source would be needed. An entryway at the extreme northerly entrance to the City would also be outside renewal district boundaries.

With regard to the proposed monument sign, Ms. Abbott felt that the sign, as depicted on the drawings, indicated "welcome to Keizer's Inland Shores." She could see the proposal as a focal point, but not as an entry or gateway, and objected to using funds designated for a gateway sign. Mr. Morgan reaffirmed that if the project was identified as a "focal point," property improvement program funds could be used.

Mr. Curry confirmed with Mr. Freshley that the Keizer gateway sign could be placed on the southwest corner. Mr. Freshley also acknowledged that regardless of urban renewal participation, the developer would put up a 100-foot wall monument sign for the Inland Shores development. The project, however, would be somewhat scaled back to meet their needs.

John Spencer, as an interested observer, felt that scaling down would diminish the visual impact of the project. He saw the Staats corner and the Creekside corner as the two most important components at the intersection and suggested that they be of the highest priority. With regard to a gateway or arrival, he suggested the possibility of identifying River Road as a place, with possibly "Welcome to River Road" signage. He emphasized that the opportunity for a significant project should not be lost.

A discussion followed regarding improvements at the other three corners. Ms. Abbott pointed out other opportunities for urban renewal participation on Cherry Avenue and River Road. She suggested setting guidelines for how much urban renewal would assist for focal points. She felt that no more should be allowed than was granted for the Wittenberg project.

Mr. Curry and Mr. Smith both indicated strong support for Mr. Freshley's proposal. As well as the visual appeal, they felt it would be a nice walkway for the public, and would be in the best interest of the City. Mr. Curry felt that by doing landscaping improvements at the other three corners, the expanse of the Inland Shores corner would appear even greater.

Noting the inclusion of Claggett Creek in the design plan, Ms. Blake-Thiess agreed with the concept of a focal point at the northwest corner.

Mr. Freshley agreed that rather than identifying a geographic boundary, it might be more appropriate to use some form of identity to indicate arrival in the heart of Keizer--possibly not a sign, but a clock or some other structure.

After further discussion, there was a general agreement to consider the proposal as a focal point, eligible for property improvement program funds.

> It was moved by Mr. VanMeter to support the proposed project out of the property improvement program funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grenz.

A discussion followed regarding the extent of urban renewal participation. Mr. Morgan responded to questions about the grant awarded for the Wittenberg project. He noted that Mr. Wittenberg's grant was a dollar-for-dollar match. He acknowledged that by identifying the proposed project as a community-wide landmark, it could be eligible for 100% funding.

Mr. Smith indicated that for him to support anything beyond the developer's corner he would want assurance that the other corners would be maintained year-round. Mr. Morgan noted that a commitment would have to be made by the owners of the Creekside property and the 7-11 property.

In light of the uncertainty as to an amount of urban renewal contribution, Mr. Morgan suggested that the Board indicate its preference to pursue the proposed improvement for the northwest corner, and have Mr. Freshley come back at the next meeting with a budget and a request.

Ms. Blake-Thiess indicated that she could not support the motion without a dollar amount attached.

Off hand, Mr. VanMeter suggested setting a limit of $20,000. It was perceived that property owners at the remaining corners might not agree to participate making it necessary for urban renewal to fund 100% of their improvements. Mr. Compton asked if Mr. Freshley could also come up with estimates for improvements at those corners. Mr. Freshley agreed to put together some preliminary estimates. Mr. Freshley pointed out the need to present the proposal to the property owners prior to making a decision regarding their property. Mr. Grenz stressed the importance of acting on the Inland Shores proposal since it is real and ready to happen.

Mr. Freshley responded to questions about the extent of the project with and without urban renewal participation. He pointed out the Board's apparent willingness to participate at the other corners without participation by the property owners. Noting the extensive landscaping proposed by the Inland Shores developers, he felt there was considerable rational for urban renewal participation at the northwest corner.

Mr. Compton pointed out that if insufficient funds remained in the budget to do the other three corners, they could be considered in the following year's budget. For the present, he suggested voting on the motion on the floor. Next month a specific dollar amount could be considered.

It was clarified for Ms. Blake-Thiess that the motion was specific to the northwest corner only. She stated that she could see no purpose in voting on the motion since the issue would come back next month.

<u>The motion carried, all present voting aye except Ms. Blake-Thiess who voted no.</u>

Mr. Morgan indicated that he would work out details with Mr. Freshley prior to his next presentation. He received confirmation to include in the project some kind of identity sign, not necessarily "Welcome to Keizer." It was suggested that Mr. Morgan also pursue the proposal with the property owners at the other corners, and confirm with the Public Works Department that they would maintain any landscape improvements at the City-owned corner.

Ms. Blake-Thiess felt that the Board was having to make decisions by reaction. She indicated that she would like to see the Board decide specifically where to put dollars, and also determine a dollar limit for participation in projects. With the limited amount of money available, she felt there was a need to prioritize projects.

A discussion followed regarding the Board's decisions on focal points. It was noted that general locations were identified, but also pointed out that opportunities for beautifying all of the redevelopment area should not be overlooked. Ms. Abbott stressed that the Board should not loose sight of what's already been decided.

Mr. Freshley suggested that rather than handing out "a dollar here, and a dollar there," it might be beneficial to pick one precedent kind of project and then use it as a standard to bring the other projects up to.

The Board recessed at 8:35 p.m. and reconvened at 8:40 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - (Added item)

Bus Pullout/Transit Shelter

Mr. Morgan reported that an opportunity has surfaced with Bi-Mart to work toward doing a bus pullout and a transit shelter north of Iris Lane. Bi-Mart has indicated that they will be willing to explore giving or selling the land to the City. Mr. Morgan noted that this would be consistent with R3B's plan for a focal point in the area.

Mr. Morgan explained how the project would be configured to allow room for two buses at the same time. He noted that it would mean spending money budgeted for buss pullouts, and thus would need to come back to R3B for a recommendation to the City Council. At this time, Mr. Morgan was seeking direction from R3B as to whether to proceed.

The Board concurred that Mr. Morgan should pursue the opportunity.

Sign Code Compliance

Mr. Morgan distributed copies of a sign compliance list. The list represented an analysis of every business that still has an outstanding sign code issue. Of the 96 original businesses with compliance issues, 51 remained. Mr. Morgan called attention to a few of the businesses with non-complying signs. He noted that the final grant application date is September 1, and only $15,000 remains in the fund. Letters will go in the mail tomorow to those on the list.

Chemawa Interchange

Mr. Morgan reported that a "big-end user" has approached the City regarding a development project at the Chemawa Interchange. The proposal is for a minor-league baseball stadium north of Tepper at the Labish Stables location. The applicants are private people, however, there would be public involvement. Mr. Morgan described the proposal now being worked out. It calls for the City to finance the infrastructure adequate to support the stadium. Mr. Morgan described the improvements that would be required to get the private investment to do the stadium. He noted that there would be risks as well as opportunities.

Mr. Morgan explained the idea currently on the table that would expedite putting together the financing. It would extend the North River Road Redevelopment District to encompass the land, as opposed to forming a whole new urban renewal district. Mr. Morgan could see no detrimental effect on River Road efforts. He pointed out the tax increment advantages that would eventually be realized in addition to financing the infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Morgan relayed Council's invitation to R3B members to attend a City Council Executive Session on Monday, August 5 at 5:30 p.m. to deal with the details of the proposal.

Mr. Morgan responded to questions about the impact on the Chemawa Activity Center Plan. He noted that the Campus Light Industrial and Commercial areas would not be touched. He conceded that traffic and other neighborhood issues would have to be addressed. He encouraged all Board members to attend the Council meeting.

5.3 Cherry Avenue Design Plan

Mr. Morgan noted that Consultant John Spencer would be reviewing the draft report and engineering drawings. He requested that R3B work with Mr. Spencer in determining the steps to be taken to finish the draft, including additional public input. The intent was to first set a neighborhood meeting on Cade Street within the next two to three weeks to talk about options for Cade. Mr. Morgan suggested that the Board tonight set a specific date and time for that meeting.

John Spencer referred to the draft report and drawings. He noted that everything in the report reflected the Board's direction over the last several months. Rather than going into great detail on issues already discussed, he wished to respond to comments and questions from the Board. He noted that yet to be done was the final landscape overlay. He had held off on having it completed to receive any final comments from the Board. He noted that he would like to incorporate any final direction, and finalize the document for adoption and forwarding on to the Council.

Mr. Spencer pointed out that specific recommendations to create two new districts, the Commercial District and Industrial Business Park zone, would need to go to the Planning Commission and then to Council. Also, in order to implement all four of the east/west street projects, besides Iris Lane, it would be necessary to amend the Urban Renewal Plan to add street improvements for Plymouth, Cade, and, if included, Sunset. Mr. Spencer noted that he will also be adding an executive summary in the final draft report.

Mr. Spencer responded to questions about property proposed for Industrial Business Park zoning. Mr. Morgan acknowledged that the zoning would be considered by the Planning Commission at its August meeting.

Mr. Spencer reminded the Board that there had been considerable discussion regarding a proposed 10-foot wide sidewalk. He noted that the current drawing shows a 5-foot wide sidewalk. The text, however, talks about a 10-foot section over a certain stretch. Mr. Spencer advised that the landscape overlay plan will show the 10-foot wide sidewalk as an option. He recalled previous discussion of areas where a 10-foot wide sidewalk would work well and have little more impact than one five feet wide. He noted that it would be necessary to buy a little more land, but would make little difference from a cost point of view. He pointed out advantages to having the wider sidewalk in certain areas.

(Councilor Beach arrived and took his seat at the table.)

Mr. Spencer responded to questions about impacts on specific sites along the corridor.

After discussion, the Board agreed to schedule a neighborhood meeting with Cade Avenue residents and property owners on August 14 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held outside on the street, and design, parking, alignment, and other related issues will be discussed. Mr. Morgan will provide notice to the interested parties, the City Council, the Planning Commission and R3B.

It was also agreed to have a public meeting around mid-September. Wednesday, September 18 at 7:00 p.m. was tentatively agreed upon. Mr. Morgan suggested holding the public meeting in the meeting room of the Mennonite Church on Candlewood. He will make the arrangements. The Board will meet the following Wednesday to discuss input received at the public meeting. Mr. Spencer noted that he will add the executive summary and put together the landscape plan before public distribution of the Cherry Avenue Design Plan.

Mr. Morgan responded to questions about funds available to begin construction once a plan is decided upon.

Mr. Morgan announced that he formally requested an increase to $800,000 in the Federal contribution--up from $400,000. He anticipated receiving at least $600,000.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AGENDA INPUT

6.1 Regular Meeting - August 28, 1996

Cade Avenue, and the Inland Shores proposal will be on the agenda.

7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Compton at 9:25 p.m.