MINUTES

KEIZER URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
Monday, June 8, 1992
Robert L. Simon Council Chambers
Keizer City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

President Newton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Present
Mike Hart, Councilor
Dennis Koho, Councilor
Jerry McGee, Councilor
Bob Newton, Councilor
Joe Van Meter, Councilor (arrived 7:05 p.m.)

Absent

Andrew J. Orcutt, Mayor
Al Miller, Councilor

Staff
Donald H. Otterman, City Manager
John Morgan, Community Development Director
Linda Sanders, Recording Secretary

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

There was no public testimony to come before the Agency.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
RIVER ROAD DESIGN PLAN

Mr. Morgan coordinated the presentation by the River Road Redevelopment Board of conceptual plans for the River Road Design Plan.

Speaking was:
Tom Bauer, 1125 Swingwood Drive, Keizer, OR 97303. Mr. Bauer is Chair of the River Road Redevelopment Board. He stated the group was formed by appointment of the Urban Renewal Agency. The Board has been meeting for three months and feels comfortable with the proposals He introduced other Board members present, Tim Smith, Ed Bartlett and Jim Keller.

Mr. Morgan introduced members of the Design team who were present - Eric Simonsen, Wendy Hart and Andy Leisinger. The team has met with the Board at least twice a month for the past three months. Mr. Morgan has met with the team and the Keizer Traffic Engineer Dick Wolk a number of times beyond the Board meetings. The three basic values of the Urban Renewal District include:

- **The aesthetics of cleaning up River Road.** The whole character of Keizer is defined by River Road. At present it could be a strip commercial zone anywhere.
- **Improvement of economic conditions.** At present economic problems are caused by a lack of character and a lack of definition. One result is that not many durable goods are available and there are only a small number of restaurants with menus. Congestion is also a major detrimental factor.

- **A city pride resulting from pulling together to do the project.** This has already been evident among the commitment of Board members as they have worked with the Design team.

Mr. Morgan stated the Agency needs to adopt the budget for the next fiscal year. He presented some of the diagrams relating to the objectives of aesthetics and traffic circulation. The difficulties on the street cause problems. The plan looks at transit improvements including bus pullouts, enhanced traffic service, a transit transfer center and perhaps even an express service coupled with a park and ride. The plan includes sidewalk changes, a landscape median beside the road and the addition of street trees and green space.

Regarding trees, Mr. Morgan noted the goal is to balance trees and business signs, perhaps clustering. The plan proposes a center median which would remove the continuous turn lane and result in 350-400 feet of landscaping in each block. Left turns would be available approximately once a block. The median would allow for a bike route and also create a safe refuge in the middle of the street for pedestrians. The idea is to create a pedestrian friendly way.

Mr. Morgan stated the plan calls for moving all the utilities underground. The gateways or entrances would have a unique feature with possibly an additional feature at the intersection of Cherry Avenue and River Road. That intersection could become a focal point, possibly home to a civic plaza or major redevelopment.

A street is proposed through the Bi-Mart parking lot. This would link Cherry Avenue and River Road thus enhancing the commercial vitality and creating depth for the southern end of the city. The street would have curbs, landscaping and lights, possibly to be called Iris Lane.

Mr. Morgan presented before and after slides of five areas on River Road. He also commented on the plan to add and remove signals in selected places to make the traffic move at a consistent pace. Councilor Koho questioned what streets might be blocked. Mr. Morgan answered those with low volume that would have other access to River Road. Councilor Hart asked whether there would be splits in the median where there are not signals or a through street. Mr. Morgan responded that the median will not be totally symmetrical and some places will have gaps. The signals should be within two city blocks and U-turns will be legal there.

Councilor McGee asked about the vegetation for the medians. Mr. Leisinger stated the team has looked at grass versus ground cover and noted the maintenance challenges of grass. The maintenance people in Salem say the better way to go is a low ground cover such as on the median adjacent to Willamette University. The suggested trees are red maples with a minimum of 8 feet trim. Councilor Hart asked whether there would be different types of trees in different segments. Mr. Leisinger responded that the team was trying to stay with some continuity but might introduce certain varieties with logical sequence. The trees would be integrated with color and pedestrian lighting which could include banners and Christmas lights. Mr. Morgan noted the median design includes a conduit to the center of the street for electricity.

Council President Newton questioned whether the storm drain was complete. Mr. Morgan stated there was money in the budget for the drains at the south end. Councilor Van Meter asked whether the schoolhouse theme had been included similar to the western theme in Sisters. Mr. Morgan answered that the idea had not been included since the cities with themes basically are tourist towns which Keizer is not. The design issues have been discussed but that might include a check off or design review plans. Some design standards may be created for intersections. Councilor Van Meter suggested the school house theme for the gateways.

Councilor McGee asked about the safety factors in the street median. Mr. Morgan explained the median will allow for the creation of bike lanes, pedestrians will have a refuge in the center of the street, the center lane will no longer be used as a merging lane, and all traffic movements will become predictable. In answering to a question from Councilor Hart, Mr. Morgan elaborated on the plan for undergrounding utilities. The goal is to divide the work in thirds, work on one side of River Road and then on the other. Mr. Morgan also stated the City staff hopes to negotiate cost with the utilities since there will be a long term savings in maintenance. Councilor Koho noted the consumer owned utility plans to share in the project.

Councilor McGee was concerned about proposed plans for the use of the River Road-Cherry Avenue intersection as a civic center, thus displacing the present businesses. Tim Smith, Board member, stated that particular block is tough because it is such a small mass of land. It is possible the creation of a civic center would add value on Cherry and those present businesses might be thrilled to relocate. Board Chair Bauer also noted that one goal of the project is to have the business community in partnership with the Board. Businesses, by block, will have a time to get together to discuss the plan and offer suggestions.

Councilor Hart noted one of the features when the team came on board was their desire to be with the merchants and questioned whether that had happened. Mr. Morgan responded that the plan would be unveiled at the Chamber of Commerce meeting on Wednesday and merchant meetings would follow.

Council President Newton was interested in having a Park and Ride at the north end of Keizer with perhaps a bus service with smaller vehicles than Cherriots. Mr. Morgan noted a meeting with the Salem-Keizer Transit representative had discovered that was a bit out of phase with their planning program. Much of their emphasis had changed with the American Disabilities Act and they hoped to adopt that plan in the summer which will free them for more long range planning. The Transit organization was interested in several other possibilities including pullouts, transit terminals, express busses, and a park and ride at the Parkway. Councilor President Newton liked the idea of a hub to not bring the big vehicles into the town.

Council President Newton asked for comments from the audience. Tony Paolucci of 6818 Wheatland Road, Keizer asked the River Road Development Board to consider intersections where no traffic moves and people are allowed to cross diagonally.

Jim Keller of 1919 Mistwood Drive NE, Keizer felt that one loose end had been left in the plan and that was the strip of Lockhaven up to Trail Avenue. He had noticed a number of skid marks at Trail Avenue and was concerned that the strip be included in the design plan. Council President Newton noted the plan does take in the Lockhaven corridor. Mr. Morgan stated there is no easy answer and Creekside, if built today, wouldn't look anything like it is. The new businesses on Lockhaven will extend the turn lane all the way up to Trail. At present, the Traffic Engineer has not looked at Lockhaven but he will be asked to. Councilor Koho also commented on the traffic hazards inside the shopping center and asked whether there was anything the Urban Renewal Agency could do about that. Mr. Morgan stated nothing could be done unless Urban Renewal money was to be spent there.

Bob French of 1584 Manzanita Street NE, Keizer hoped that it would not be that long until the Board looked at Lockhaven Drive. He was extremely worried about the safety there. A large percentage of vehicles have worn the paint off the curb at that intersection. The walking area is about 1.5 foot narrower at the most dangerous point for walking traffic. Councilor McGee asked whether that area could be referred to the Highway Safety committee. Council President Newton stated they could look to the City Manager to talk with Wall and look at the longer range plan.

Jerry Bessello, 1356 Parkview Court, asked about the size of the bike lanes. Mr. Morgan answered the team will try to get 5 feet wide lanes which is the ODOT standard but they may be 4 feet which is acceptable.

Walden Swick, 7455 Wheatland, Keizer asked about the possibility to develop using the Parkway, or Cherry Avenue to reduce some of the congestion. Mr. Morgan responded that there should be federal money in year 7 of the project to widen Cherry. The team looked at the way Cherry might be used, perhaps to be a one way, but that would isolate the homes on the east side of the street.

1992-93 BUDGET BUDGET

Mr. Morgan presented the Budget with a note that some fine tuning may have to be done.

In the Revenue area, it is possible that about $600,000 in increment may be taken next year. If that is taken, the rate will be about $.91 which is up from $.11. The Budget does anticipate a bond sale. At first the Board was thinking they didn't want to do a bond in year one because of the uncertainty development would be there to cover the bonds payments. The staff discovered that although last year they took $65,000, $485,000 was available to be taken because values had risen so much. The new budget considers growth of 5%. Other Revenue items come from the Bond Sale of 3.5 million and Interest income of $172,872.

The Capital Improvements section was discussed by Mr. Morgan. The area of Street Improvements includes a new street (Bi-Mart/Marth's), a signal connect, pavement overlays, signal installation and removal which would total $660,000.

The Urban Renewal Agency is reviewing the budget tonight to become familiar with it. A hearing will be called on June 29th so that it can be adopted prior to the new year. The Budget is based on a proposed plan which has not been adopted but will hopefully be done this summer.

In the Utility Improvements category, storm drainage and sewers were included.

Streetscape Improvements include undergrounding lines, sidewalk and landscaping and median for one-third of the total project. Signage and identity is included for the total project. The total amount budget for those improvements is $1,160,000.

Council President Newton asked whether the bus turnouts were included since the buses need to be removed before the signals can be sequenced. Mr. Morgan stated they fall under sidewalk and landscaping in the Streetscape Improvements.

The Operations portion of the Budget has sections for Personal Services, Materials and Services and Debt Service. The Personal Services division includes City staffs' time and benefits. The Material and Services section includes outside services needed, i.e. legal, administrative, design, printing and advertising. The Legislature has said that all households in the community must be notified if there are to be major changes in the Urban Renewal District. A newsletter is proposed as one way to do this and the cost for doing that is included in the printing and advertising line item. The cost of issuing the Bond is also in this section. Debt Service includes the cost of debt service on the Bond.

The Balance sheet resulted in an ending fund balance of $1,707,193. Increments will also be coming in that will allow for projects to continue being done.

Councilor Koho questioned whether a Bond issue was anticipated every other year. Mr. Morgan clarified that a Bond issue was scheduled in year 2 and another one in about year 5 or 6. The first bond issue is bigger because the increment is there to support it and the undergrounding and street costs are more expensive than original plan anticipated.

Councilor Koho questioned whether the Bond issue would take care of more than two years. Mr. Morgan noted the Bond would pay for everything that is listed in the budget, and would leave enough there for the second and third phases. Councilor Koho asked if that anticipated levying the full increment each time. Mr. Morgan responded that it is not presuming levying the full increment for the additional work since the bond proceeds will do that. The increment will need to be levied for operations, debt service and additional items to be taken on during that period.

Councilor Koho noted that almost every year the Streetscape amounts are 1.7 million. Mr. Morgan explained that one year would be $960,000. Some money might be carried over and the engineering costs have been loaded up at the first end so they won't need to be carried over. He was quite comfortable with the figures and it has been reviewed by Charlie Kupper, the consultant.

Tom Bauer, Chair of the River Road Redevelopment Board, commented that there has been a fear to levy money without direction. He reminded the Councilors that the Board would probably be back in years to come and are going to need the levy each year. Councilor Koho stated his support for the plan.

Councilor Hart questioned the number of bonds projected and the amount. Mr. Morgan responded that two bonds were scheduled but the actual amount for the second issue is uncertain. He projected the pay off period would be a short one, perhaps 5 or 6 years, although the schedule had not been completed. He felt comfortable with the present situation since a lot more tax increment is being received than was expected.

Councilor McGee requested that the increment tax and how it relates to the levy that the City is proposing be clearly explained. He was concerned that people would not understand and think the $.91 would be on top of the $1.95 projected for the levy. Mr. Otterman stated the County Tax Assessor's estimate for the levy excluded the increment from the increase in the valuation of the project area from the total assessed value in deriving the milage rate of $1.95.

Councilor McGee didn't want the community to think they are getting something for nothing, but it needs to be presented that the community will benefit from the project. The theory is the valuation will be substantially higher for 15 blocks on either side of River Road at the end of the project. At this time it won't cost us any more but taxes that would have been reduced will not be. There is a cost but it needs to be packaged so that the community will understand why the Council supports the project despite the cost.

Mr. Otterman stated the concept of Tax Increment is a challenging thing to understand and it has been made more difficult with the passage of Ballot Measure 5. The staff will need to develop a way to explain this concept. Council President Newton also felt the information needs to be packed in easy to understand terms. Mr. Morgan stated there is a citizen's guide which is 24 pages long. He could do a fundamental explanation with a few diagrams. Councilor McGee also suggested going to someone who is not especially an expert in the field for a more practical presentation. Councilor Van Meter felt the staff and members of the committee should understand the concept, too.

Councilor Hart questioned whether the basic concept is that the tax assessment is frozen and the additional amount of taxes, as it increases goes to the Urban Renewal District. Mr. Morgan responded the frozen value is about 77 million dollars and any increase in value goes to the district. Mr. Tim Smith, committee member, stated he had heard the explanation about 15 times, but that the last time Mr. Morgan explained the concept, he made it understandable. He also encouraged the use of diagrams.

Councilor Hart questioned the timing of the meeting of June 29th. Mr. Morgan stated it was a suggestion, since the 29th would work with the timing of the hearing. The Council needs to meet as the Renewal Agency, hold a hearing and then recommend to the Council the budget. Council President Newton asked about the possibility of meeting on the 30th since there is an election that day and it is possible the Council will already have a meeting. Mr. Otterman would rather try to keep the two issues separate although the Personal Services part of the Agency Budget does reflect in the General Fund Budget. They are separate funds.

A motion was made by Councilor Van Meter that the proposed Fiscal Year 1992-93 Urban Renewal Budget be adopted for consideration and a Public hearing be set for June 29, 1992. The motion passed unanimously.

Council President Newton asked for further comments.

AGENDA INPUT

Nothing additional was placed on the agenda for the meeting of June 29, 1992.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Linda Sanders,
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

MAYOR