

CITY OF ELKO
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
3:00 P.M., P.S.T., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015
ELKO CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
1751 COLLEGE AVENUE, ELKO, NEVADA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chris Johnson, Chairman of the City of Elko Redevelopment Agency (RDA).

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Chris Johnson
Mandy Simons
Robert Schmidlein
John Patrick Rice

Excused: Reece Keener

City Staff: Curtis Calder, City Manager
Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager
Dave Stanton, City Attorney
Jeremy Draper, Development Manager
James Wiley, Parks and Recreation Director
Dawn Stout, Administrative Services Director
Dennis Strickland, Public Works Director
Shanell Owen, City Clerk
Matt Griego, Fire Chief
Aubree Anderson, Human Resources Manager
Rebecca Hansen, Planning Technician

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INITIAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments made at this time.

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Review and consideration of a revised Downtown Corridor Design, including direction to staff, the Redevelopment Advisory Council, and Logan Simpson Design with regard to the concept and refinements within the previously determined budget limitations, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

The RDA took action at its meeting on October 12, 2015 directing staff, the RAC and Logan Simpson Design to continue refinements to the conceptual design proposed at the meeting, determine if the design is consistent with the approved RDA plan and RDA Vision Plan and identify the correct adoption and/or approval for the proposed design based on that determination.

The RAC has held three meetings since the October 12 RDA meeting and has the following two recommendations:

1. A motion was made by Jon Karr, seconded by Catherine Wines, to remove the park on the east end of the corridor.
2. A motion was made by Lina Blohm, seconded by Catherine Wines, to forward a recommendation to RDA to approve the concept of diagonal parking to be further discussed and defined as the corridor project comes together with the design plan.

Staff has provided a list of recommendations in its memo dated December 2, 2015.

Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager, gave an overview of what was included in the packets. He reviewed the contract status update provided by Logan Simpson Design. They believe they've already met or exceeded the assigned tasks, and have provided services worth close to \$20,000 that they didn't bill to us. However, their intent is to continue with the project and provide the deliverable 30% design plans for the whole corridor. They've pretty much been on hold, but he did authorize them to evaluate diagonal parking for the retail edge. He then reviewed the typical block layouts included in the packet. If we were to remove the tree islands that jut out towards the street on the retail edge we could net another 12 spaces per block, but we'd also have to eliminate the spaces that back into the pedestrian crosswalks. Additionally, wherever you transition from the existing alignment to the diagonal alignment you lose some spaces. We haven't authorized them to explore those costs yet. We discussed where it makes sense to have diagonal parking, and we couldn't have the diagonal parking near Roy's without being disruptive to their ingress and egress. He felt they could only do diagonal parking along the 400 and 500 blocks on the Commercial Street side and the 500 block along the Railroad Street side; with that little benefit you have to question whether it's worth it or not. The AASHTO guide regarding on-street parking is included in the packet. There are areas of conflicts such as pedestrian-vehicle, vehicle-vehicle and bicyclist safety. If we decide to do that, once a design is complete we would need to have a traffic engineer analyze it. We believe it will increase the cost beyond what has been presented to the RDA. He didn't recommend considering diagonal parking beyond the evaluation that's already taken place. He continued going over the recommendations from his memo making one correction to item 3: Show the train park... encroachment of *parallel parking* into the 600 block... He pointed out, our Master Plan identifies the Train Park as a special purpose park, and the Arts and Culture section says the Railroad Park should remain a dominant feature and a reminder of Elko's railroad culture. It also identifies the park as a historic landmark for Elko. An idea we have is the addition of a flat car which could serve as a stage for events. If we include this in the Centennial Project we could possibly rename the park the Centennial Park. We are recommending to eliminate the sidewalk on the north side of Railroad Street between 10th & 11th. Most of the area functions for short-term parking and delivery parking. We shouldn't

approve a plan that shows any on-street parking because the streets are the width needed for Fire Department today. If we were to add on-street parking we have to add space for the emergency access width. There's been a suggestion of pavers or decorative paving but our Public Works Director has an issue with the maintenance of those types of items. We should shift the plaza area away from 5th Street because there will be public gatherings there.

Chris Johnson, Mayor, asked if Mr. Wilkinson's recommendations are based on the October 12th plan.

Mr. Wilkinson answered yes.

Mayor Johnson went through each recommendation.

Mr. Wilkinson said his intent of multi-use areas is that they can function as parking most of the time, but can also convert to event space.

John Patrick Rice clarified Mr. Wilkinson's suggestion was the multi-use areas shown on the October 12th plan will be parking areas and shifted closer to 6th Street.

Mr. Wilkinson said yes. One of the concepts we've discussed is to have an area of a block paved with pavers to delineate the area and it could be blocked off for events. In reality when we typically have downtown events we need about an entire block anyway. He felt expanding on the Train Park will help change the dynamic in that area of the corridor.

Mandy Simons questioned if Mr. Wilkinson's recommendation was to scrap the clock tower or gazebo and focus on the Train Park for the Centennial Project.

Mr. Wilkinson said Mr. Draper drew out the possibility of having a train car, which could act as a stage. He labeled it as a clock tower but you could have another element to a Centennial Project put there fairly easily.

Jeremy Draper, Development Manager, said the location of the proposed clock tower according to Jan Peterson was the original water tower. The idea would be to possibly have the clock tower look like a water tower. We have discussed a gazebo and different stages, which is when expanding this park came up.

Mr. Wilkinson said this proposal is consistent with the City Mater Plan. As well as the Parks and Recreation and Arts and Culture component's of the Master Plan. It is also consistent with the RDA plan.

Mayor Johnson asked what options are still viable once 30% drawings are presented. Do we need to have those specific details of the Train Park decided today? Do we need the specifics of flat car versus clock tower?

Mr. Wilkinson answered no.

Mayor Johnson asked do we need to show closures of 6th or 7th Street, parking lots and/ or park areas because those things matter in the 30% drawings. As well as diagonal parking and whether or not we want to include that.

Mr. Wilkinson answered yes, and the proposed expansion of the Train Park with the closure of 7th Street doesn't disrupt parking. The encroachment into the 600 block and taking out that first row of parallel spaces which ties the blocks together, will take away approximately 5 or 6 spaces, but we could stop short of that.

Lina Blohm, RAC and downtown business owner, felt one of the objectives of the Master Plan was to encourage and strengthen the core of the City. If we continue to do what we have always done, then we will always have what we have had and we won't make a difference. We need to think about diagonal parking in the dense business area between 4th and 6th Street. She has been trying to encourage a book store to relocate downtown and they don't want to because the parking isn't close enough. She heard it could be difficult to move the light poles because of funding, but the poles between 3rd and 6th Street are City poles. Regarding the Train Park, plazas are meant to be centralized to within cities. They are multifunctional and this is what we are envisioning for the downtown.

Catherine Wines, 421 Railroad Street, explained when you design something the things you can touch, are designed by engineers. Architects design the stuff you can't touch, the space. Right now we're looking at lines on a paper, but not thinking about the space. We don't live in a plan. You need to think about the 3D space and how diagonal or parallel parking will affect the sidewalk, for example. She gave an example of the Carlin sidewalk versus the strip in Las Vegas; they are both 4 inch sidewalks, they are both grey, they both have control joints every 4-6 feet, they are both the same but the feel of those two places couldn't be more different. She encouraged them to think about the space because we can't just think about what this looks like on paper. She was also against placing the focus on the Train Park. She questioned what the cost would be.

Mr. Wilkinson answered until we have decisions, we aren't moving forward with the design and having the consultant estimate costs. The consultant wouldn't estimate the cost of the rail car or the clock tower anyway, they would only estimate the cost of expanding the green scape into the 7th Street area.

Ms. Wines said the corner of 12th and Idaho Street had a project scrapped because of cost. One of those was parking for 8 to 10 off-street spaces was upwards of \$300,000. That is why she questioned the cost, she doesn't see the benefit in spending \$1 million on the Train Park. She isn't against developing the Train Park, but felt right now there are a lot of other issues.

Mayor Johnson explained staff is looking to get enough direction to the consultant to come back with 30% drawing.

Mr. Rice asked how John Lemich felt about diagonal parking.

John Lemich, 450 Commercial Street, said in cities he's been in that seem more comfortable, are almost all diagonal parking. He sees older folks struggling to cross streets. It doesn't have to be through the whole corridor, but putting people in front of businesses is important. He was worried slowing it down too much might hurt business. He was in favor of diagonal parking and it seems to work well in other places.

Mr. Rice said he likes the idea of the flat bed car and what's proposed, but it moves the area he was thinking about it being in. The Western Folklife Center already has the entertainment value. He also understood having the events near 5th Street could be dangerous. His thought was maybe between 5th and 6th Street. Another idea he had to continue the railroad history would be a rail from the Train Park to 5th Street, so the flat car/stage could be moved. He wasn't sold on focusing the plaza at the Train Park. He was okay with eliminating the east pocket park. While diagonal parking won't help us gain any spaces, it will give us a different feel that we're looking for. He didn't care about recommendations 4 and 5, but still wants to have the plaza more centralized. He is on board with the multi-use area.

Mr. Wilkinson said that approach would be consistent with the Master Plan and the RDA Plan. Whether we do the Train Park expansion or the east end of 5th and 6th Street block, both of those are consistent with the plans.

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, to reject recommendation 1 and continue to examine the idea of diagonal parking downtown.**

The motion died, for lack of a second.

Robert Schmidlein said on the 400 to 600 block on Railroad Street we should allow diagonal parking and on Commercial Street from 4th to 5th Street allow diagonal parking as well. He recommended that because it is where the majority of people need to walk right inside the store front. Further down by the theater, he felt a mass parking lot was more appropriate. We can put in pedestrian walk ways to slow cars down because there is a lot of foot traffic.

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, seconded by Robert Schmidlein, to continue to have Logan Simpson look at the feasibility and design of diagonal parking in select areas of the downtown.**

The motion died.

After a second, but before the vote, Mayor Johnson asked why there would be a cost increase for diagonal parking.

Mr. Wilkinson explained it depends on the extent. We are recommending something similar to the motion, having diagonal parking on the 400 and 500 blocks of Commercial Street and just the 400 block of Railroad Street. He didn't feel it was necessary to evaluate diagonal parking in front of Stockmans or in front of Roy's. If we can be more specific, Logan Simpson is able to move things forward and do a design and evaluate the cost of that. We would also recommend a traffic engineer evaluate the design and identify any safety concerns.

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, seconded by Robert Schmidlein, to have Logan Simpson examine deployment of diagonal parking at the retail edge at the 400 and 500 blocks of Commercial Street and the 400 block of Railroad Street.**

The motion passed. (3-1 Mandy Simons was opposed.)

After the motion, but before the vote, Mr. Draper said we would want to make sure Railroad Street lines up.

Mr. Schmidlein said we could do a jog-out by increasing the sidewalk and it could be a patio or piano bar there to line the intersection up.

Mr. Wilkinson said if we are going to employ on-street parking, it would be prudent to have a traffic engineer analysis. As we move into something further if the engineer determined that it was problematic, we could redesign that area.

Mr. Rice questioned wouldn't Logan Simpson have that expertise in their design anyway.

Mr. Wilkinson answered they are a landscaping architect. They sub-contracted the civil work. This should be the last go around with Logan Simpson for a design so we can move forward. He'll ask if they can have their civil firm do that.

Mr. Schmidlein said you will have an additional cost to add diagonal parking regardless because the roadway will be moved about 20 feet.

Mr. Wilkinson said all of the corridor lighting was put in with grant funding. He has reached out to NDOT because it was Federal Highway funding, to find out if we relocate those, will we have to pay that funding back.

Mr. Rice said he has worked with federal grants, but felt that shouldn't be in the way of them making a decision.

Mayor Johnson also felt they may not be keeping the budget intact. If he knew diagonal parking wasn't going to cost much more and set them back time-wise he would be on board, but he isn't convinced that it is going to happen. In the end we have to make the budget fit.

Mr. Rice said we can't find out what it's going to cost until we give direction to Logan Simpson. If we narrow the focus of diagonal parking, we aren't going to be widening and narrowing on a broad part of the project. We have recommendations from the RAC and a fair amount of downtown businesses that they like the direction of that. He also has experience with theater and negative space, so he appreciated Ms. Wine's points. He likes the idea of high concept, low tech; or a big idea, with the simplest way to implement it. Mayor Johnson's concern is legitimate, but felt we should let Logan Simpson help us get to that decision with a design. Then we would have a better handle on the cost.

Ms. Simons said she can't see why that would be desirable. If she knew there were going to be savings in other areas that would be one thing, but all these little things that would be nice are going to come along but will always cost extra money; she felt at some point you have to say no. She's not in a position where she wants to commit to diagonal parking.

Mr. Rice felt they could amortize the cost over the years. He gave an example with his experience in theater, he spent \$1,500 on lumber, but has used it for approximately 8 different productions.

The board voted on the motion.

After the motion, Mayor Johnson said he knew it would be a tie. We have to get this thing done. Are we going to get it done, do diagonal parking and keep it within the budget?

Mr. Schmidlein answered he can say no. We have set a budget but we need to determine where the funding is going to come from. Realistically a lot of the things we are trying to do, he doesn't see them redesigning the entire corridor all at once. It will have to be phased over 20 years. Unless people are going to come through with all these grants. If we are going to go to diagonal parking it will add approximately \$500,000 just for those three blocks.

Mr. Wilkinson said the plan you're looking at was based on the \$5 million budget.

Mr. Rice said he and Mr. Schmidlein have sat on as liaisons for RDA and feel we should go in this direction.

Mayor Johnson said he is worried about the timing and reiterated this needs to get done.

Mr. Schmidlein said you can always go back and utilize your existing infrastructure.

Mr. Wilkinson said we could use the diagonal parking as one of the add alternates.

Curtis Calder, City Manager, said if we're only looking at those two block areas it may very well fit in the \$5 million budget. It's a good idea to have a traffic engineer look at any parking configuration. Even with this design in front of you there's a 20% parking reduction and if we're half as successful as we hope we'll be we'll need the parking.

**** A motion was made by Robert Schmidlein, seconded by John Patrick Rice, to eliminate the east end pocket park.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

After a second, but before the vote Ms. Simons said although they are eliminating this park she felt green space is important and draws in people and families.

The board voted on the motion.

Ms. Simons felt closing 7th Street would cause more problems with the one-way travel.

Mayor Johnson said he likes the idea of closing 7th Street. Most of what he has heard regarding the corridor is “do what you’re going to do, but don’t eliminate parking.” He felt 7th Street could be sacrificed to keep as much parking available as possible.

Mr. Schmidlein said he was in favor of closing 7th Street, but wasn’t quite in agreement with Mr. Draper’s conceptual design.

**** A motion was made by Mandy Simons, seconded by Robert Schmidlein, to expand the green space at the Train Park and close 7th Street.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

After a second, but before the vote, Mr. Rice said he doesn’t want this to be considered the center of town. He wants the focus on the gathering spot to be further west. People are drawn to places and go to particular spots. We are drawn to the area between Commercial and Railroad and 5th and 6th Street. He just wants to make sure whatever we design further west will be multi-use. The Western Folklife Center just got a grant to bring more entertainment throughout the year.

Ms. Simons said she also would like the plaza further west.

Mr. Wilkinson explained it would look like the concept in the October 12th plan. We were just illustrating the possibilities if we expanded the park into the 7th Street area. If we want more green space we could change the plan accordingly. This plan is based on a \$5 million budget.

Jon Karr, 346 Silver Street and member of RAC, asked if they would consider increasing what they are paying Logan Simpson, so they can come up with a couple options for diagonal parking and the park. He felt closing 7th Street was debatable.

Mayor Johnson explained that was why he asked what options they would still have once the 30% drawings are done. He wants to make sure they will have another chance to look at the drawings and make necessary changes. He felt in order to move forward and progress we probably won’t need to make many changes.

Mr. Karr asked if that was their decision to have Logan Simpson design blocking off 7th Street and expand that green area and does it come back for approval after they’ve drawn it up.

Mr. Rice said the recommendation is pretty clear and Mr. Wilkinson said we can have diagonal looked at as an additive alternate.

Mr. Karr said regardless of their decision he encourages them to ask themselves “What are we hoping to gain in that area by doing that and how is it going to affect that area?”

Mayor Johnson felt those were great questions. We are trying to answer some but we may not be asking quite enough questions. Everyone's main concern is to watch the parking. That is where we always struggle to keep that balance.

Ms. Wines said you can have a multi-use, even grass that can be parked on. We're asking for concrete instead of asphalt and maybe some bollards to block it off. There are a ton of products out there that can accomplish having both a parking lot and a plaza.

The board voted on the motion.

**** A motion was made by Robert Schmidlein, seconded by Mandy Simons, to eliminate the conflicting sidewalk extension on the north side of Railroad Street beginning at the mid-block crosswalk and continuing to 11th Street.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, seconded by Mandy Simons, to eliminate on-street parallel parking shown on the October 12th plan preserving the existing street width for fire access and stationing.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

Mr. Rice said he wanted to stop short of designating the east end of the 600 block as a multi-use public gathering area. He felt he didn't want them to eliminate the possibility of having a gathering of some sort on the 5th Street end of that area.

Mr. Wilkinson felt they needed to make that decision if they wanted to have a multi-use gathering area on the 500 block. It is one of the more important decisions. There have been concerns expressed to the Centennial Committee about contributors not wanting to contribute to a Centennial project on 5th Street. There has been discussion about shifting it to the 6th Street area, but if you do that then 6th Street has to be closed for special events. He felt if that decision could be made, it would get them that much closer to finishing the 30% plan. If we employ diagonal parking in these areas, the corridor will get narrower so the surface area will be smaller.

Mr. Rice said it would be easier to close 6th Street to expand, but would still like to utilize the center of the block.

Mr. Schmidlein said basically you are trying to establish a multi-use area in front of the Western Folklife Center out into the corridor utilizing the roadway for 1/3 of the block area.

Mr. Rice said he envisioned being able to walk out of the Western Folklife Center into some other event that is happening right there.

Mr. Wilkinson said Dennis Strickland's idea was to rotate that up against Railroad Street, then you wouldn't impact a lot of the parking area.

Ms. Wines said she liked Mr. Strickland's idea and felt it addresses the other businesses concerns about not wanting to lose parking. We also need to consider 5th Street because it is the heart and center of our City. It's not necessarily a public gathering area to have a concert, but we need to address 5th Street. We could possibly put some art pieces there or something because we currently are doing a disservice to the heart of our City.

Fran Schultz, Kittridge Canyon, said you just shot downtown. We have utilized downtown for the last 25 years. You have independent owners running independent businesses. Every new design that is presented, shuts down Roy's parking lot. If you put diagonal parking between 5th and 6th Streets, you can no longer get to Roy's. Having the temporary parking allows you to drop someone off. He was frustrated with the plan and just wanted better access to the businesses to spend money. He felt people weren't interested in displaying art on the side of the road or gathering centers.

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, seconded by Mandy Simons, to designate all public gathering areas will be multi-use areas. The direction to Logan Simpson is to work on designs that designates the quadrant of the 500 block between Commercial and Railroad Streets, boarded by Railroad and 6th Street as a multi-use public gathering area.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

After a second, but before the vote, Ms. Simons said that was smart because Roy's has a great parking lot. She has never had a problem with parking there and felt that didn't need to be considered.

Mayor Johnson said this has been one of the best meetings. Once we see it at the 30% drawings that may change. That change will be a real surprise to Roy's. When we get to 30% drawings if we decide to change things, we'll have to allocate more funds and time.

Ms. Simons questioned if he wanted to wait on item 5.

Mayor Johnson explained he was thinking of waiting on the whole thing. Once we engage the consultant again and the 30% drawings are provided, that will only happen once. If we don't like those drawings we will have to come up with more money for new 30% drawings. Is there a way to look at that without moving forward to 30% drawings? He felt making a change that big without input from Roy's would be tough not to have to redo it.

Mr. Rice said it's a multi-use area so 90% of the time it will be parking.

Mayor Johnson questioned if multi-use would cost more in the budget, and if we'd be able to handle that.

Mr. Wilkinson said it would probably reduce the budget cost because we won't have green space and a gazebo shown on the plans. It will be limited in scope to a multi-use and the predominant use is parking. He felt running electrical into that area would be a good idea because we would need that for events. These decisions need to be made so we can go back to Logan Simpson and

have them design it out and get costs on it. Then we can bring it back for review and they will probably be able to do one last revision at that point. He felt they were asking a lot of Logan Simpson to keep redesigning these concepts.

Ms. Wines said she agrees with Mr. Wilkinson's point of view. From a consultant's point of view, they will want to draw it out and bring it back to show you.

Mr. Rice said we need to pay some attention to 5th Street between Railroad and Commercial. Right now it's simply a curb, gutter, and sidewalk. We need a design element to serve as our gateway.

The board voted on the motion.

**** A motion was made by John Patrick Rice, seconded by Robert Schmidlein, to eliminate the public use areas on the east end of 400 and west end 500 blocks.**

The motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

- B. Review, consideration and possible action regarding funding resources for the Downtown Corridor Budget, as previously approved by RDA, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

The RDA took action at its meeting on October 27, 2015 directing the RAC to evaluate and recommend a maximum amount of tax increment to deploy toward corridor improvements, versus other possible projects within the entire redevelopment area.

The RAC met on October 29, 2015 and took the following action:

1. A motion was made by Catherine Wines, seconded by Lina Blohm, to recommend a public workshop with RDA, RAC, Planning Commission, Dawn Stout, Matt Griego and other related staff as soon as possible.

The RAC met on November 19, 2015 deliberating the item a second time in which it was reminded of the RDA action taken on October 27 and took no action.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

II. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review, consideration, and possible approval of property owner notification and survey questions, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

City staff notified all property owners on September 14, 2015 that the RDA was planning improvements to the downtown corridor and of possible funding sources to support those efforts. At the RAC meeting on October 15, 2015 City staff indicated its intent to continue with official notification to the property owners within the designated parking area for the corridor with the inclusion of a short survey of relevant questions that could

be included on the notice card. Certain RAC members indicated that they would form a separate smaller committee to work on the property owner notification. City staff requested to be included in that process. The committee met without the inclusion of City staff and developed a two question survey.

The RAC met on October 29, 2015 and took the following action:

1. A motion was made by Catherine Wines, seconded by Jon Karr, that the committee get together and make changes based on Scott Wilkinson's comments and then forward it to the RDA for consideration to go out as a survey to the public.

A revised survey or property owner notification is not available. Staff has provided a list of recommended questions in its memo dated December 2, 2015.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

- B. Review, consideration, and possible action concerning the effectiveness of utilizing the Redevelopment Advisory Council to further the redevelopment efforts within the Redevelopment Area, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

- C. Review, consideration, and possible action to amend the Redevelopment Advisory Council bylaws by replacing the Elko Chamber of Commerce membership with a new membership to be determined by the Redevelopment Agency and additional amendments as proposed by city staff and city legal counsel, and matters related thereto **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

The RAC met on November 19, 2015 and took the following action:

1. A motion was made by Catherine Wines, seconded by Lina Blohm, to forward a recommendation to RDA to amend the RAC bylaws to replace Elko Chamber of Commerce membership with a member-at-large from within the City of Elko corporate boundaries.

City staff and the city's legal counsel have reviewed the bylaws and are recommending additional changes as shown on the supplemental information.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

FINAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments made at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor Chris J. Johnson, Chairman
Redevelopment Agency