

**BISMARCK RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
October 14, 2021**

The Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority met on October 14, 2021 in the Tom Baker Meeting Room in the City-County Office Building at 221 North 5th Street and remotely via the online platform Zoom. Chair Christianson presided.

Authority members present were Jim Christianson, Joe Fink, Dustin Gawrylow, Todd Van Orman, Curt Walth and Greg Zenker.

Authority member George Keiser was not present.

Technical Advisor Bruce Whittey was present.

Technical Advisor Steph Smith was not present.

Staff members present were Sandra Bogaczyk (Office Assistant II), Jannelle Combs (City Attorney), Will Hutchings (Senior Planner), Allison Jensen (City Assessor), Kim Lee (Planning Manager) and Daniel Nairn (Senior Planner).

Guests present were Kathleen Jones (Burleigh County Commissioner), Brad Krogstad (KLJ), Brian Dean (Applewood Group), David Witham (Denizen Partners), and Kate Herzog (The Downtowners).

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christianson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of the September 9, 2021 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. A correction to the minutes was made to reflect that Curt Walth was not present at the September meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Fink and seconded by Mr. Zenker to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2021 meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

**RENAISSANCE ZONE PROJECT AND DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW – 215 WEST
THAYER AVENUE
APPLEWOOD GROUP, LLC – NEW CONSTRUCTION OF ROWHOUSES**

Mr. Nairn gave an overview of the staff report and stated that the applicant, Applewood Group, LLC, is requesting approval of a New Construction Renaissance Zone project and Downtown Design Review approval for six housing units of a rowhouse-style arrangement at 215 West Thayer Avenue. He reminded Authority members that the project was reviewed during the July 8 and August 12, 2021 Renaissance Zone Authority meetings and continued to allow time for the applicant to make revisions requested by the Authority. The new plans also include a

reduction of the number of units and a modification in building design. Mr. Nairn stated that the applicant would construct two east-facing buildings including 3-units each and a 6-foot walkway between the buildings. There would be no designated off-street parking. Mr. Nairn stated that the intended windows on the street-façade are different from the rendering provide in the project packet, and he displayed an updated rendering that reflects the current proposal. He also said the applicant has brought samples to distribute. He stated that although the trash enclosure located in front of the building remained a concern, regarding an accommodating streetscape, Public Works – Service Operations stated that the long side alley would not accommodate their vehicles.

Mr. Nairn stated that, based on the findings contained in the staff report, staff recommends approval of a New Construction Renaissance Zone project and approval of Downtown Design Review for a six housing unit development in a rowhouse-style at 215 West Thayer Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the following conditions:

1. The visual impact of the dumpster and enclosure is mitigated to the greatest extent possible given site constraints.
2. Any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to installation.

Mr. Fink asked why condos have a dumpster rather than individual trash receptacles. Mr. Nairn stated that Public Works – Service Operations recommended the single dumpster with recycling, if desired, in the same enclosure.

Chair Christianson opened the public hearing.

Ms. Herzog stated that the Downtowners want buildings to engage with the street and stated that the design looked better than a previous version, but wants to make sure it works well for owners.

Mr. Witham stated that design guidelines are important to maintain high standards and thought there was opportunity for improvements to the guidelines. He stated that the windows facing the street is a great improvement to the design. He was disappointed with the at-grade entrance and would prefer an elevated entrance to the building to further distinguish between public and private spaces and would like to see future projects require an elevated entrance.

Mr. Krogstad stated that he was speaking for Mr. Dean of Applewood Group and stated that his client is wanting to create something that Renaissance Zone Authority members want and is willing to work with all involved and would be happy to do the appropriate landscaping.

There being no further comments Chair Christianson closed the public hearing and stated that the changes made since the packet was created are positive.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Van Orman to approve the New Construction Renaissance Zone project for a six housing unit development in a rowhouse-style at 215 West Thayer Avenue. The motion passed with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Fink and seconded by Mr. Walth to approve the proposed design for 215 West Thayer Avenue as presented in all submitted

documents and materials, with the following conditions:

1. The renderings presented at the meeting are followed, as opposed to the renderings submitted in the packet.
2. The visual impact of the dumpster and enclosure is mitigated to the greatest extent possible given site constraints.
3. Any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to installation.

The motion passed with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

FINAL REPORT ON RENAISSANCE ZONE BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PLAN

Mr. Nairn reviewed the formation of the subcommittee formed to draft the Boundary Modification Plan, as directed by Authority members, to create a process to allow more foresight and notice for property owners regarding their relationship to the Renaissance Zone's opportunities and deadlines. Mr. Nairn stated that an annual review of properties and their status, including a map, was proposed.

Mr. Nairn presented six blocks to consider for potential closure and a procedure to notify property owners, along with many blocks in review for expansion including a Renaissance Zone island. A map was presented to show the designations. Mr. Nairn stated that actions on the Boundary Modification Plan would be timed to coincide with the Renaissance Zone Reauthorization Request in May, 2022 to avoid redundancy.

Mr. Zenker asked if time limitations were discussed amongst the committee. Mr. Nairn stated that the map color-coding was intended to inform Renaissance Zone property owners that if they fall into that sunset zone they would have one year to propose any projects.

Mr. Nairn further discussed the criteria and methodology of the Plan.

Mr. Whittey asked if owners could appear in front of the Authority if they are concerned that the closure of their property might be premature. Mr. Nairn stated that it would be up to Authority members to hear that request. Mr. Whittey expressed concern about blocks which might have potential to move from non-taxable to taxable property in the future, but if closed due to inactivity would be a detriment to the City, since that property, could never again have Renaissance Zone status. He expressed concern and cautioned Authority members that the Plan might be too limited in its scope by placing programmed time-constraints on property development, which he emphasized is a long-range business. Mr. Gawrylow stated that the intent of the annual review was not to place constraints on properties but to simply review properties annually and to create a process of review and promote discussion.

There was a considerable amount of discussion about the Boundary Modification Plan and general consensus that a Plan is needed.

Mr. Witham stated that he believed the Plan would provide a clarification of the Authority's objectives and a better relationship with community objectives which he felt would provide help with future Renaissance Zone designation approval. He also stated that a negotiation with a developer to designate Renaissance Zone blocks is not necessarily a bad thing since properties with the Renaissance Zone designation might feel that their undeveloped land is worth more being in the Renaissance Zone. He stated that designating blocks before development is proposed works against a developer's business plan and potentially restricts possible development.

Mr. Fink asked what the future process is regarding approving a Boundary Modification Plan. Mr. Nairn stated that if the Renaissance Zone Authority approved a Plan then City Commission would review and then potentially an approved Plan would then go to the Commerce Department to compare any changes to its guidelines and state law.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Van Orman to direct staff to send letters to property owners within blocks proposed for completion as discussed and schedule a public hearing for the May Renaissance Zone meeting to review the draft Renaissance Zone Boundary Modification Plan amendment to the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Development Plan. The motion passed with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

REPORT FROM STAFF

There was no report from staff at this time.

REPORT FROM THE DOWNTOWNERS

Ms. Herzog updated Authority members about the development potential of parking lots and a history of the property status of Renaissance Zone applicants. She stated that perogies might soon be sold at a new downtown market.

Chair Christianson announced the purchase of the Depot.

Mr. Nairn announced that November's meeting is scheduled for November 4th rather than the usual 2nd Thursday of the month.

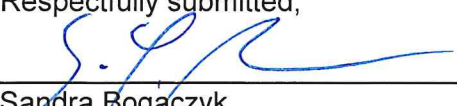
Chair Christianson announced that Authority member Keiser's term ends in December. He encouraged anyone wanting to serve on the Authority to apply and the position will be posted on the City website by mid-November.

Mr. Fink stated that he would like to continue the discussion about adding technical advisors to the Renaissance Zone Authority. Mr. Nairn stated that he will place the item on the agenda of the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority adjourned at 4:54 p.m. to meet again on November 4, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Bogaczyk
Recording Secretary



Jim Christianson
Chair