

**BISMARCK RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
December 9, 2021**

The Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority met on December 9, 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), Allison Jensen (City Assessor), Kim Lee (Planning Manager) and Daniel Nairn (Senior Planner).

Guests present were Scott Bina (Mann Signs) 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 October 14, 2021 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Walth to approve the minutes of the October 14, 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 – 418 EAST
ROSSER AVENUE
JJ HAGENESS RENOVATION, LLC – REVISIONS TO FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Nairn gave an overview of the staff report and stated that the applicant, JJ Hageness Renovation, LLC, is requesting Downtown Design Review approval for revisions to façade improvements to 418 East Rosser Avenue. He reminded Authority members that the project was approved during the June 11, 2020 meeting and a Renaissance Zone project was approved by the City Commission and tentatively approved by the State Department of Commerce. Mr. Nairn stated that the applicant proposed to construct fourteen new window openings on the north side, infill a ground-level door on the west side and replace an existing window with a new exit door on the west side. Mr. Nairn stated that the applicant would also like to extend the deadline for Renaissance Zone project completion to August, 2022 and that the applicant has made much progress already.

Mr. Nairn stated that, based on the findings contained in the staff report, staff recommends approval of the proposed revisions to the design for 418 East Rosser Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the condition that any additional substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to installation. Staff also recommends consideration of an extension of the Renaissance Zone project timeline.

Mr. Gawrylow asked if the request is going to change the investment amount. Mr. Nairn stated that the project cost estimate has increased from what was reported during initial project approval.

Mr. Fink asked why the request is for eight months. Mr. Nairn stated that the applicant has changed contractors which slowed progress.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Walth to approve the Downtown Design Review revisions to façade improvements to 418 East Rosser Avenue and extend the Renaissance Zone project deadline to August, 2022. The motion passed with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

**DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW – 521 EAST MAIN AVENUE
CIVIC SQUARE DEVELOPMENT, LLP – PROJECTING SIGN**

Mr. Nairn gave an overview of the staff report and stated that the applicant, Civic Square Development, LLC, is requesting Downtown Design Review approval for the proposed design for 521 East Main Avenue.

Mr. Nairn stated that the request would place the sign higher on the building than ordinance allows, but the Downtown Design Review Committee has authority to waive this for certain reasons. A similar project was approved by the Downtown Design Review Committee at 120 N 3rd Street and meets guidelines for historic integrity and precedence.

Mr. Nairn stated that, based on the findings contained in the staff report, staff recommends approval of the proposed design for 521 East Main Avenue, waiving sign ordinance requirements, as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the following conditions:

1. An encroachment agreement from the City Engineering Department is obtained prior to installation.
2. Any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to installation.

Mr. Fink asked why the proposal did not include using the actual historical pins already present on the building which housed the earlier sign. Mr. Nairn stated that the applicant preferred a lower location, and staff believe that if its approximate location was maintained that it would meet historical context.

Mr. Bina stated several reasons for the new placement, including visibility.

Mr. Fink noted that the Renaissance Zone Authority should follow historic precedence and use the location marked by façade pins still protruding from the façade.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Walth to approve the proposed sign for 521 East Main Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the following conditions:

1. An encroachment agreement from the City Engineering Department is obtained prior to installation.
2. Any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to installation.

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

OTHER BUSINESS REPORT FROM STAFF

Mr. Nairn stated that letters describing and mapping the Renaissance Zone blocks slated for closure were sent to property owners as Authority members requested. He stated that he has heard from three property owners and that the hearing to discuss the item is scheduled at the regularly scheduled Renaissance Zone Authority meeting on May 12, 2022.

Mr. Nairn stated that the 2022 meeting calendar was distributed to Authority members and to direct any questions to him. He stated that Renaissance Zone Authority meetings are all scheduled for the regular time and dates.

Mr. Nairn stated that there are two seats to be appointed by City Commission on December 14, 2021, including Authority Members Keiser and Gawrylow's seats, and stated that there were a number of applications received.

Mr. Nairn mentioned that City Administration is moving all appointed board seats to end in December and begin terms in January. Some Authority members might have a term ending one month earlier since most Authority members' terms currently end in January.

Mr. Nairn stated that the Patterson Building Renaissance Zone project has been closed and approved by the State. He stated that the project met Renaissance Zone terms and that costs were \$10.7 million while the original estimate was \$7 million.

REPORT FROM THE DOWNTOWNERS

Ms. Herzog updated Authority members about parking lot needs and how low interest rates have seemingly affecting downtown development. She stated that the national Main Street Conference in Richmond, VA meets in May, 2022 and will focus on infill and development and mentioned that she and staff have been selected to present Bismarck's downtown investment success story and what an honor it is to be selected and to be a part of the progress.

DISCUSSION ABOUT ADDING TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Mr. Nairn stated that at previous discussions Authority members have advised staff to add a

technical advisor. He stated that there is no requirement of City Commission for the position, that only Authority members make appointments. Chair Christianson announced that Stephanie Smith declined her position as Technical Advisor for the term beginning 2022 and took a moment to wish Ms. Smith the best and thanked her for her service and contributions to the Downtown Design Review Committee and Renaissance Zone Authority.

Chair Christianson asked Authority members to consider how many advisors they would like to add to the board, suggest to qualified persons to apply for the position by contacting the Planning Department and have comments prepared for discussion at next meeting.

Mr. Whittey recommended adding at least one more additional advisor, totaling three advisors. He reminded members that Ms. Smith had technical expertise not otherwise present at meetings and suggested adding a member with similar capabilities.

Mr. Fink asked if staff had been approached by anyone showing interest. Mr. Nairn affirmed that he has. Chair Christianson asked what the correct procedure would be regarding requests. Mr. Zenker suggested that staff place an ad for advisors and after resumes are collected Authority members could then decide how many advisors, they would like to have. Mr. Fink stated that if an advisor wanted to help the board he stated that he would not have to limit the number to three. Chair Christianson stated that he agreed while Mr. Zenker suggested that too many would not necessarily be the most effective solution. There was a consensus that staff should proceed with advertising the position.

RECOGNIZING AUTHORITY MEMBER GEORGE KAISER

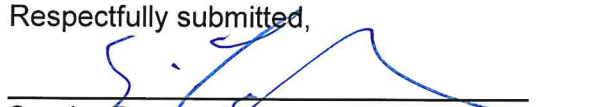
Chair Christianson stated that it would be appropriate for the Renaissance Zone Authority to recognize George Keiser and presented a draft resolution of appreciation to recognize his time and dedication to the Renaissance Zone Authority and Downtown Design Review. He then read the resolution aloud to members.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Mr. Fink to approve the resolution of recognition to George Keiser. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with members Fink, Gawrylow, Van Orman, Walth, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority adjourned at 4:31p.m. to meet again on January 13, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Bogaczyk
Recording Secretary



Jim Christianson
Chair



Resolution of Appreciation

Whereas, George Keiser served on the original Renaissance Zone Advisory Committee as a Bismarck business owner to help establish Bismarck's Renaissance Zone program and adopt the first Renaissance Zone Development Plan in November 22, 2000; and

Whereas, Mr. Keiser has served as a member of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority for over twenty years, first appointed on June 21, 2001; and

Whereas, Mr. Keiser has, over the course of his service on the Renaissance Zone Authority, had a role in approving 149 projects, representing over \$100 million in proposed capital investment, which has helped revitalize businesses, increase the tax base for political subdivisions, and create a vibrant downtown for Bismarck residents and visitors; and

Whereas, Mr. Keiser participated in the creation of the Downtown Design Review Process and has consistently advocated for high-quality design and construction in the Renaissance Zone that will leave a lasting impression on the built environment of Bismarck; and,

Whereas, Mr. Keiser has consistently been a valued member of the Renaissance Zone Authority, always attentive to fairness in program application, tirelessly advocating for the benefits of the program, and considering the best interests of the general public in all decisions made; and,

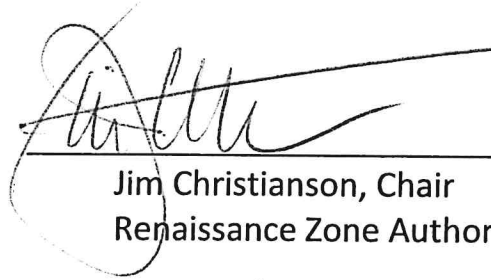
Whereas, Mr. Keiser will now leave the Renaissance Zone Authority for a well-deserved rest;

Now, therefore be it resolved by the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority that George Keiser be commended for his dedication and his support for

revitalization of downtown Bismarck and that the appreciation of the Renaissance Zone Authority be extended to him.

Dec. 9, 2021

Date



Jim Christianson, Chair
Renaissance Zone Authority