

**BISMARCK RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
August 10, 2023**

The Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority met on August 10, 2023, 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 and was present in the Tom Baker Meeting Room.

Authority members present were Jim Christianson, Kirsten Dvorak, Joe Fink, Dustin Gawrylow, Nancy Guy and Greg Zenker.

Authority member Curt Walth was absent.

Design Advisors Eric Hoffer and David Witham were present.

Staff members present were Sandra Bogaczyk (Office Assistant II), Jannelle Combs (City Attorney), Ben Ehreth (Director of Community Development), Isak Johnson (Planner) and Gabe Schell (City Engineer).

Guests present were Cam Knutson (Downtown Depot, LLC), Jake Axtman (AGL Landscape Architects) and Tim Miller (Missouri River Contracting).

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Christianson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed guests present.

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 29, 2023 special meeting and the July 13, 2023 regular meeting were distributed prior to the meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Fink and seconded by Ms. Guy to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2023 special meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with members Dvorak, Fink, Gawrylow, Guy, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Fink and seconded by Ms. Dvorak to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2023 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with members Dvorak, Fink, Gawrylow, Guy, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

**DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW – 401 EAST MAIN AVENUE
DOWNTOWN DEPOT, LLC – SITE IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Johnson gave an overview of the staff report and stated that the applicant, Downtown Depot, LLC., is requesting Downtown Design Review approval of site improvements including parking lot, landscaping, patio, lighting and infrastructure improvements to the property at 401 East Main Avenue. Mr. Johnson noted the previously approved renovation of the historic depot building during the December 7, 2022 meeting, and stated that the proposed project would

complement this design. Mr. Johnson noted that the City Attorney is currently determining the legal status of the right-of-way to the west of the building to see if it was properly vacated. He added that the age of the cashier booth structure within the parking lot area could be eligible for National Historic Registry.

Mr. Johnson stated that the plan includes removing the cashier booth structure currently in the middle of the parking lot along the north side. Chair Christianson added that because no federal tax credits are being sought for the private property that no permission from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is necessary. He directed attention to the applicant's renderings projected to Authority members and included in the meeting packet.

At Chair Christianson's request Mr. Axtman described the work to be done in narrowing the parking lot to accommodate a wider right-of-way and increasing the distance parked cars would be from the building, reducing parking from 92 parking spaces to 79 spaces. He described the project's intent to create a pedestrian-friendly area to be used in future as a multi-function plaza and explained the need to take out trees to rebuild the right-of-way. He added that City Forestry recommended removing the current trees and suggested new tree species.

Lighting, parking bollards, fencing, pedestrian access points, signage, paving and drainage were discussed. Examples of building materials were distributed to Members and Design Advisors.

Mr. Knutson described how the parking lot would function for tenants and monthly and hourly parking customers given the intent to create a special function plaza environment, mostly on weekends.

Lighting for the parking lot was discussed.

The possible effects on the project, if the easement is discovered to not be vacated, was discussed.

Signage requirements were discussed.

The Custer Sculpture placement was discussed. Chair Christianson encouraged the public to read about the history of the sculpture.

Design Advisors both expressed concern with the parking lot feeling like a parking lot instead of an event space. Mr. Axtman stated that the lot material would be concrete rather than asphalt to create a more inviting space. Mr. Witham stated that he was glad to hear about the concrete but said it would be nice if a stain could be used instead of white stripes for the parking spaces.

Mr. Zenker asked Mr. Schell to please describe the investigation into the questionably vacated area to the west of the building. Besides discussing the current status, Mr. Schell stated that he is expecting that the investigation into the ownership of the easement should not delay the parameters of this project.

Mr. Fink asked about the possibility of any barriers on the railroad side of the building. Mr. Knutson stated that there will be a fence.

Mr. Johnson stated that, based on the findings contained in the staff report, staff recommends Downtown Design Review approval of the proposed design for 401 East Main Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the condition that any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to implementation.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Zenker and seconded by Ms. Guy to approve the proposed design for 401 East Main Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the condition that any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to implementation. The motion passed with members Dvorak, Fink, Gawrylow, Guy, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

Chair Christianson stated that this is a great project and thanked the applicant for applying.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW – 121 EAST FRONT AVENUE PRAIRIE ROSE FAMILY DENTISTS – SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Johnson gave an overview of the staff report and stated that the applicant, Prairie Rose Family Dentists, is requesting Downtown Design Review approval of site improvements to the property at 121 East Front Avenue. He described the poor condition of the retaining wall and the landscaping that would have to be replanted after demolition and mentioned that no work on the parking lot itself or building will be completed at this time.

At Ms. Guy's invitation Mr. Miller described the extent of the landscape and construction to be completed at the site.

Mr. Johnson stated that, based on the findings contained in the staff report, staff recommends Downtown Design Review approval of the proposed design for 121 East Front Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the condition that any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to implementation.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Fink and seconded by Mr. Zenker to approve the proposed design for 121 East Front Avenue as presented in all submitted documents and materials, with the condition that any substantive revisions to the approved design must be reconsidered by the Downtown Design Review Committee prior to implementation. The motion passed with members Dvorak, Fink, Gawrylow, Guy, Zenker and Chair Christianson voting in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS UPDATE ON RENAISSANCE ZONE RENEWAL PROCESS

Mr. Ehreth summarized the status on seeking support for Renaissance Zone renewal from the Burleigh County Commission at their July 19, 2023 meeting. He reported on his observations and the suggestions which the Commission made. Mr. Ehreth stated that he believes that any modifications now allowed by North Dakota Century Code which might be a concern to county commissioners would have to be changed in the Renaissance Zone Authority's Development Plan. He reminded Authority members that any renewal of a Renaissance Zone includes

returning the program to active status with the same rules and characteristics of when the program expired.

Dates for future meetings were discussed but Mr. Ehreth noted that staff will have to follow up in the following week to receive guidance of when Burleigh County Commissioners would like to have a public meeting about a Renaissance Zone renewal request.

Mr. Ehreth stated that on July 20, 2023, Mr. Nairn, Planning Manager, attended the Bismarck Parks and Recreation meeting to deliver information about the efficacy of renewing the Renaissance Zone. Mr. Ehreth stated that on August 14, 2023, Bismarck Public Schools requested only one meeting to both discuss information and give final consideration of support of the request for program renewal. He stated that on August 17, 2023, Bismarck Parks and Recreation would conduct a final consideration of the proposal. He stated that August 21, 2023, is the next regularly scheduled Burleigh County Commission meeting while the following one would be September 16, 2023.

Mr. Fink asked what Authority members can do to assist in supporting plans for renewal of the program. Mr. Ehreth stated that staff will communicate with Chair Christianson and provide any additional answers the commission might request.

There was discussion about the new state rules and what the commissioners might be concerned about.

REPORT FROM DOWNTOWNERS

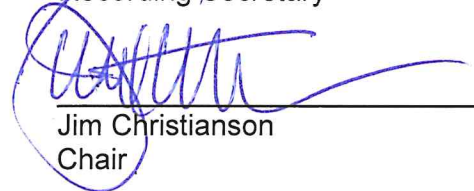
Chair Christianson stated that the Street Fair begins on September 15, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority adjourned at 5:01 p.m. to meet again on September 14, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Bogaczyk
Recording Secretary

Jim Christianson
Chair