

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 15, 1999

The General Development Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on March 15, 1999 at 3 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Jim Davidson, Chairman
Keno Hawker
Dennis Kavanaugh

COUNCIL PRESENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Shelly Allen
Wayne Balmer
Cindy Barris
Mike Hutchinson
Barbara Jones
Greg Marek
Patrick Murphy

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Brodeur
Dan Cleland
Joanie Flatt
Don Hilderbrandt
Bob Lagomarsino
Robbie Sherwood
Celeste Werner
Others

1. Hear a presentation from the proposed consultants for the Downtown Concept Plan.

a. BRW

Dan Cleland, representing BRW, Inc. on behalf of Project Director John McNamara, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to appear before the General Development Committee.

Mr. Cleland provided an overview of the proposed team for the City's downtown concept plan, consisting of professionals from BRW, Inc. and LDR International. Mr. Cleland introduced Celeste Werner (BRW Project Manager), Bob Lagomarsino (BRW Transit Planning), and Don Hilderbrandt (LDR Urban Design) and presented biographical information for each. Mr. Cleland explained the anticipated team organization in relation to City staff, Council, and Mesa citizens.

Mr. Cleland advised that the representatives from BRW and LDR possess international and national design experience, local work experience, and strong multidisciplinary expertise. Ms. Werner delineated skills of the various project team members and noted the availability of support staff.

Ms. Werner spoke concerning the significance of image/identity (development of a regional niche, family-oriented entertainment/recreation, 16-hour activity center). Ms. Werner and Mr. Hilderbrandt displayed maps illustrating examples of placemaking (urban patterns, districts and sectors, linkages) and multimodal circulation systems (streets/sidewalks, pedestrian/bicycle pathways, transit, and parking).

Mr. Lagomarsino presented slides pertaining to the proposed light rail system currently under consideration for Central Phoenix and the East Valley and commented regarding transit connections and opportunities for improved accessibility and enhanced mobility in relation to the downtown concept plan.

Ms. Werner noted the importance of a public-private partnership, commenting that the public sector investment establishes a framework for private investment and the private sector investment produces results. Ms. Werner presented examples of public investment in pedestrian environments and delineated public sector

responsibilities, including development of an implementation program (articulate vision and establish clear policies and regulations) and a commitment to such implementation.

Ms. Werner outlined the 9-week project scope and the project team's anticipated approach to the community involvement program consisting of on-site design charettes, stakeholder interviews, and a community workshop.

Mr. Cleland summarized BRC's/LDR's strong urban design and consensus-building capabilities, staffing resources to fulfill an accelerated schedule, and dedication to enable completion of the project in a timely manner.

Mr. Lagomarsino responded to questions from Committeemember Hawker regarding routing options, scheduling, and funding in relation to the proposed light rail system.

In response to questions from Chairman Davidson, Mr. Hilderbrandt explained that comparables are utilized in an effort to stimulate discussion, not lead in a particular direction. Mr. Hilderbrandt spoke concerning the importance of developing a pedestrian environment and residential component (with a range of housing types and income levels) to establish a 24-hour presence within Mesa's downtown area.

Chairman Davidson thanked Mr. Cleland, Ms. Werner, Mr. Hilderbrandt, and Mr. Lagomarsino for the presentation.

b. Urban Design Studio

Mark Brodeur, Principal of Urban Design Studio, expressed appreciation to the Committee for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Brodeur presented a slide display and outlined his firm's capabilities in relation to urban planning, urban design, landscape architecture, circulation and parking, and light rail/transit. Mr. Brodeur indicated that Urban Design Studio is unique in working exclusively for the public sector and is entirely revitalization oriented. Mr. Brodeur noted that his company is a division of a multidisciplinary engineering firm and is what he believes to be the foremost "Main Street" expert on the West Coast.

Mr. Brodeur advised that Urban Design Studio completed Mesa's *1989 Urban Design Program for Town Center* and the *Connections Report*. Mr. Brodeur provided examples of additional relevant downtown experience.

Mr. Brodeur presented biographical information concerning himself and the other members of his project team: Ron Pflugrath, Bob Klekner, Bob Matson, and Tom Fitzwater.

Mr. Brodeur highlighted components of Urban Design Studio's anticipated project approach, including a four-day master charrette (meetings, interviews, tours, and workshops), kickoff dinner, opportunities and constraints analysis, susceptibility-to-change map, initial findings and recommendations, land-use strategy, circulation and parking, downtown vision poster/concept plan, development of appropriateness findings, revisions and refinements, a finalized downtown concept plan, and Council presentation.

Mr. Brodeur responded to questions from Committeemember Hawker concerning a light rail system. Mr. Brodeur outlined his firm's proposed interface with the City's transit staff and expected participation of individuals in the charrette.

In response to a question from Chairman Davidson, Mr. Brodeur stated that he foresees no difficulties at this time with the downtown concept plan and the anticipated location of sites for projects such as the Arts and Entertainment Center and the Mesa Verde Resort.

Chairman Davidson expressed appreciation to Mr. Brodeur for the presentation.

2. Discuss and consider a consultant for the Downtown Concept Plan.

It was moved by Committeemember Hawker, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, to recommend to Council that Urban Design Studio be selected as the consultant for the downtown concept plan.

Committeemember Hawker said that he was previously impressed with the *Connections Report* prepared by Urban Design Studio and stated the opinion that Urban Design Studio will develop a plan that is practical and useful for Mesa.

Committeemember Kavanaugh expressed appreciation for the proposals presented by both firms but indicated a preference for Urban Design Studio. Committeemember Kavanaugh referred to the *Connections Report* previously developed and commented that he believes the approach by Urban Design Studio is more appropriate for the City.

Chairman Davidson expressed the opinion that BRW will present a more national approach and said that he will not vote in favor of the motion.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Hawker-Kavanaugh

NAY - Davidson

Chairman Davidson declared the motion carried by majority vote.

Redevelopment Director Greg Marek requested direction pertaining to presentation of the Committee's recommendation to Council. Committeemember Kavanaugh suggested that Council be provided with the information compiled by the firms, staff's evaluation, and a synopsis of the discussion this date.

3. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Hawker, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, that the meeting of the General Development Committee adjourn at 4:22 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting of the General Development Committee of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 15th day of March 1999. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1999

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK