

**CITY OF MESA  
MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING**

**DATE:** July 18, 2002 **TIME:** 7:30 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dave Wier, Chair  
Art Jordan, Vice-Chair  
Theresa Carmichael  
Mark Reeb  
Terry Smith

**STAFF PRESENT**

Katrina Bradshaw  
Tony Felice  
Greg Marek  
Amy Morales  
Patrick Murphy

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Chris Miller  
Members of the Mt. Calvary  
Baptist Church

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Vince DiBella  
Deb Duvall  
Wayne Pomeroy  
Charles Riekema

**1. Call to Order**

The July 18, 2002 meeting of the Downtown Development Committee was called to order at 7:28 a.m. in the City Council Chambers located at 57 E. First Street by Chair Wier.

**2. Items from Citizens Present**

There were no items from citizens present.

**3. Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2002 Study Session**

It was moved by Art Jordan, seconded by Theresa Carmichael to approve the minutes.

Vote: 5 in favor; 0 opposed

**Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2002 Regular Meeting**

It was moved by Theresa Carmichael, seconded by Art Jordan to approve the minutes.

Vote: 5 in favor; 0 opposed

**4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

It was moved by Art Jordan, seconded by Theresa Carmichael, to nominate Dave Wier as chair of the Downtown Development Committee.

Vote: 5 in favor; 0 opposed

It was moved by Terry Smith, seconded by Theresa Carmichael to nominate Art Jordan as Vice-Chair of the Downtown Development Committee.

Vote: 5 in favor; 0 opposed

**5. Discuss and consider Local Historic Landmark Overlay, Case No. HL02-001TC, for Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, located at 430 N. Lewis St.**

**Applicant:** Lil Johnson, on behalf of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

**Staff Contact:** Tony Felice, Redevelopment Planner, (480) 644-3965

**e-mail address:** tony\_felice@ci.mesa.az.us

Mr. Felice explained that this case is to consider a Local Historic Landmark Overlay for Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, which is located at 430 N. Lewis Street in the Escobedo neighborhood. He explained that the purpose of a Local Historic Landmark is to preserve Mesa's cultural, historical, and architectural heritage.

In order to initiate the process, a petition was received signed by 54 qualified electors. Businesses and property owners within 300 feet of the property were notified of the Landmark Overlay and there was no opposition vocalized for this project.

Mr. Felice explained that the Mt. Calvary Baptist Church satisfies criterion 3(A) of the City of Mesa's Zoning Ordinance, Section 11-12, in that it "exemplifies or reflects special elements of Mesa's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural past." Mr. Felice explained that the church's significance revolves around its African American heritage and its members being the first African Americans to settle in Mesa. He explained that when the congregation was first formed it met under a tree in the front yard of Clara McPherson-Lewis's home. Despite the fact that the congregation moved to several different locations before the church was built in 1940, it is significant because of its association with the African American community over a span of 92 years.

Mr. Felice proceeded to discuss the significance of the members of the church in history and the contributions they made in society. Because of their significance, the church is eligible for Local Historic Landmark Overlay designation based on Criterion 3(e) which states that the landmark must be "identifiable with a person or event significant in local, state, or national history." Mr. Felice said based on the significant evidence in this report, staff recommends that the Downtown Development Committee recommend to City Council that they establish a Local Historic Landmark Overlay for the Mt.

Calvary Baptist Church. The City Council will hear the introduction to this ordinance on August 5, 2002, and will make the final decision on August 26, 2002.

**It was moved by Theresa Carmichael, seconded by Art Jordan, to recommend approval of the Local Historic Landmark Overlay, Case No. HL02-001TC, for Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, located at 430 N. Lewis Street.**

**Vote: 5 in favor; 0 opposed**

**6. Discuss the draft Rehabilitation Code.**

**Staff Contact: Greg Marek, Redevelopment Director, (480) 644-3961**  
**e-mail address: greg\_marek@ci.mesa.az.us**

Mr. Marek explained that the draft Rehabilitation Code was included in the packets in order to allow the board members to review the document and offer their comments and feedback. The Code is still going through the internal review process and will move on to external stakeholders meetings within the next 30 days.

Mr. Reeb suggested that the Rehabilitation Code pay particular attention to buildings with historical significance. This may include those properties that are on the National Register or are located within historic districts. He added that sometimes the code requirements can alter the aesthetic look of the buildings which is contrary to the intent of the National Register, which is focused on preserving and restoring historic properties. He suggested that a liaison with historical building background be available to help come up with good suggestions and reasonable solutions to these types of issues when reviewing construction documents on historic properties.

Mr. Marek said there is a separate chapter in the Rehabilitation Code that deals specifically with historic structures which is less restrictive than the rest of the Rehabilitation Code. It allows some repairs and renovations to be used with original materials and original methods of construction. He added that the Building Department has preserved the Uniform Conservation Code section on historic structures but, as the Historic Preservation Officer, Mr. Marek said he did not feel that it went far enough to address historic building issues. After talking to New Jersey and obtaining permission, he forwarded their detailed section dealing with historic structures to the Building Department asking them to consider those issues that have not been incorporated into Mesa's draft of the Rehabilitation Code.

Mr. Reeb said he also felt that the Rehabilitation Code should address how we can incorporate good uses for the basements in the downtown buildings. He

felt there needed to be some creative solutions to address this ongoing problem. He pointed out that the draft ordinance illustrates what is not allowed but does not provide good examples of what is allowed or what is preferred. He felt it would be better to see what direction the City would like to take and provide solutions to get there rather than only address the prohibitions as it relates to basements. In addition, he felt that the Code needed to provide more clarification and detailed criteria on what is considered to be an existing building.

Mr. Jordan asked about the schedule for the drafting of the Rehabilitation Code.

Mr. Marek said the schedule is pretty loose. Both Mesa Town Center Corporation and Redevelopment staff feel the City should take the time necessary to create a Rehabilitation Code that everyone can be comfortable with before it is presented at external stakeholder meetings. The Building Department was considering holding stakeholder meetings earlier this week, but the Redevelopment Office felt it was not ready to go out for discussions. Mr. Marek said the first stakeholder meeting will probably be within the next 30-60 days. Depending on what happens at those meetings will determine if there is a need for additional meetings. After completion of the stakeholder meetings the necessary revisions would be made to the draft and then it would be considered by the Building Safety Committee, the Downtown Development Committee, the General Development Committee, and finally City Council. The goal is to have the Rehabilitation Code in place by the end of this year.

Mr. Jordan asked if there are any representatives from the Fire Department on the team.

Mr. Marek said there are three representatives from the Fire Department, including the Fire Marshall, who are attending the internal meetings reviewing this draft.

Mr. Jordan asked what is the general demeanor of the Fire Department representatives toward the draft Rehabilitation Code.

Mr. Marek said they feel very positively towards the need for the City to develop and implement a Rehabilitation Code. He added that the Building Department has taken the same theory of using hazard categories from the Uniform Conservation Code but has rewritten it to require more stringent requirements. It has been suggested that the City should stick with the format in the Conservation Code with minor changes so it applies directly to Mesa. The Building Department has agreed to re-look at that issue.

## **7. Director's Report, Greg Marek**

**Hunter Interests** – Hunter Interests, Inc. will be giving a presentation at the City Council study session on July 25, 2002. The final report is not yet

completed. The Redevelopment Office has reviewed the report and has made several comments which will require them to go back and do some additional work. The final draft will be distributed once it is complete.

**Mayor Hawker's Downtown Roundtable** – Mayor Hawker is scheduling a roundtable meeting to advise him on downtown redevelopment issues, similar to the one formed in Phoenix. A meeting will be held on July 25<sup>th</sup>, while Hunter Interests is still in town, to discuss the history of development in downtown and future redevelopment. The meeting will consist of members representing several different groups including the Downtown Development Committee, Mesa Town Center Executive Board, downtown business owners, etc.

**RFPs for Site 21, Mitten and Pomeroy Houses, and 146 W. Main St.** – The City Council will be considering the issuance of the RFP for the former Bank One building, 146 W. Main St., and the Mitten and Pomeroy houses at the study session on July 25, 2002. The General Development Committee has already considered these and has recommended moving forward on issuing those RFPs. Staff anticipates that the RFPs will be issued and responses received back sometime in mid to late September.

**Arts and Cultural District/Arizona Bronze Foundry** – The City Council will be discussing the Arizona Bronze project at the July 25<sup>th</sup> study session. The General Development Committee has recommended that the Arizona Bronze Foundry be located at the old Mesa Vista School site on Center Street just north of Broadway Road.

Gerry Gerber, Arts and Cultural Division Director, has stated that by locating Saguaro Art and Publishing and the Arizona Bronze Foundry in downtown Mesa, the arts community is starting to take notice. Mr. Marek said this will help in forming an Arts and Cultural District in downtown Mesa. This will make Mesa the only location in the State which will have a full spectrum of arts and cultural activities ranging from museums, performing and visual arts, classrooms, production, and retail. As a result of the arts and cultural district, the City feels that it will be able to attract local artists to live and work in downtown Mesa, possibly at the old E.V.I.T. campus once the City offices are relocated.

**8. Report from Mesa Town Center, Tom Verploegen – Executive Director**

Mr. Marek said that Tom Verploegen was unable to attend today's meeting but had asked him to notify the DDC members that the Mesa Town Center Corporation has been working on their Safe and Sound program. They conducted a 3 ½ hour focus group discussion, which was very productive, and they will continue to work on this program and keep the Board members updated.

## 9. **Board Member Comments**

Ms. Carmichael asked for clarification about two projects listed on the status log including the Wilbur Neighborhood Action Plan and the McCabe Residential project.

Mr. Marek explained that a historic preservation plan is developed for each historic district that is established. As part of this historic preservation plan the Wilbur neighborhood asked if they could take it one step further and develop a neighborhood action plan. This was brought about partly in conjunction with the Fire Station relocation to Mesa Drive and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. This neighborhood plan would develop a work program, identify projects, consider design issues, and address issues regarding Hibbert Street. BRW was hired to come up with the plan and once the draft is ready and the neighborhood is satisfied, it will be presented to the Downtown Development Committee and the City Council.

Mr. Marek said the McCabe project is a residential project located on the eastern portion of Redevelopment Site 23. The western half of Site 23 (Temple Court) is City-owned property fronting Hibbert Street. Several years ago the City Council rejected the submittal to the Request for Proposals that was issued for Site 23. Since that time, Arlene McCabe was able to work out an agreement to purchase properties on the eastern half of the block, which is owned by the Cardon family. Part of that agreement is based on the condition that the City help her with demolition of some of the blighted properties and halfway houses. Staff is working with the Community Development Block Grant program to see if Federal funds can be used to remove those blighted properties. After the land has been cleared, Ms. McCabe is proposing to develop market rate housing and use rental rehabilitation money to rehabilitate some of the houses on that block that are still in pretty good shape.

Mr. Jordan said he was disappointed in the landscaping that was planted at the Kid's Play facility on University Drive. This project was brought before the Downtown Development Committee several months ago for approval, and without having a copy of the plans or remembering exactly what variances were granted, Mr. Jordan said he was surprised that there was no irrigation system installed on this property and was disappointed in the size of the vegetation. Mr. Jordan asked how the Building Department was able to approve the landscaping plans without the irrigation system. He suggested that the inspectors visit the properties prior to issuing the Certificate of Occupancy to ensure that the improvements have been made in compliance with City standards.

Mr. Marek said the Building Plans Examiners should have required the irrigation system when they were reviewing the plans. The Redevelopment staff has suggested that they become involved with the inspection process and have the opportunity to sign off on the project, but this is not part of the process that currently takes place. The Zoning Inspectors are currently in charge of visiting

the site and ensuring compliance with the plans. Mr. Marek felt that, in this case, someone may have dropped the ball in following through with the required procedure to ensure the improvements were constructed as they were approved by the Downtown Development Committee. Mr. Marek said staff will check into this.

Mr. Jordan said he hopes the City does not treat remodel and redevelopment projects with a different inspection process than they do with new construction.

Mr. Marek said he does not think the inspectors are treating any of the projects different but he added that this is one of the reasons why the Redevelopment staff would like to become involved in the inspection of their projects.

Mr. Jordan asked if the Four Wheel Parts store appealed the Zoning Administrators decision to remove the freestanding sign.

Mr. Marek said the City Council considered their appeal and allowed the freestanding sign to remain for a period of two years after which time it will have to be replaced with a conforming sign.

Mr. Jordan suggested that the Board members continue to lobby to City Council to require signs to come into conformance.

Mr. Marek said the City Council may look at changing the appeal process in the future to require appeals in the Downtown Redevelopment Area to go to the Board of Adjustments rather than to City Council.

Ms. Smith asked if the Connecting Mesa team is still looking at the railroad corridor as a means of installing fiber optics for high tech businesses looking to locate in downtown Mesa.

Mr. Murphy said the team is headed by Dan Brewer whose first focus was to obtain Council approval for fiber optics in the Williams Gateway area. This approval has been granted by City Council and now the focus will be the downtown area. The team is currently working on several different options for a fiber optic loop system in downtown Mesa some of which include using existing conduit or sewer lines.

Ms. Smith asked if the team is no longer considering the railroad corridor for fiber optics.

Mr. Murphy said that is also one of the several options being considered.

Chair Wier asked the status of the proposed Day Labor facility.

Mr. Marek said this project has not moved forward. He pointed out that many of the day laborers have now migrated further east to Broadway Road and Gilbert Road.

**10. Adjournment**

With there being no further business, this meeting of the DDC was adjourned at 8:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Mr. Gregory J. Marek, Director of Redevelopment  
Minutes prepared by Katrina Bradshaw