

**CITY OF MESA
MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
STUDY SESSION**

DATE: February 20, 2003 **TIME:** 7:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dave Wier, Chair
Vince DiBella
Robert Fletcher
Wayne Pomeroy
Chuck Riekena
Mark Reeb
Terry Smith

STAFF PRESENT

Shelly Allen
Katrina Bradshaw
Tony Felice
Greg Marek
Patrick Murphy

OTHERS PRESENT

MEMBERS ABSENT

Art Jordan
Theresa Carmichael

1. Call to Order

The February 20, 2003 study session of the Downtown Development Committee was called to order at 7:00 a.m. in the Gold Room of the lower level City Council Chambers located at 57 E. First Street by Chair Wier.

2. Discuss items on the agenda for the Regular Meeting.

Amending Section 11-19-5 of the City of Mesa Sign Ordinance relating to the definition of terms for window sign area.

Mr. Reeb inquired if the changes to the window signs applied to single or multiple story structures.

Mr. Murphy responded that the changes refer only to the ground floor of buildings.

Variance Case No. ZA03-003TC to reduce set-backs, landscaping, and building separation requirements for 108 S. Pasadena, 110 S. Pasadena, 100 S. Pasadena, and 123 E. 1st Avenue.

Mr. Riekena questioned if the property owner intended to subdivide or sell off the parcels at a future date, and if so, would the variance stay with the property.

Mr. Marek stated that the Zoning Ordinance states that the minimum lot sizes are 6,000 sq. ft., and that the property owner would probably not be able to subdivide the property. If the property owner did decide to apply to subdivide the lots, he would have to go through the variance process to obtain approval.

Mr. Riekena inquired what would happen if the property owner decided to build condominiums on the property.

Mr. Marek said that property owner could locate the condos on the same property, since the TCB-1 Zoning is intended to provide for multiple dwellings, and the yard would then become a common open space for the condos.

Mr. Riekema then inquired about the landscaping variance that has been submitted for a reduction of the required landscaping on the west side of the property. Mr. Riekema wanted to know if it would be a good idea to still require landscaping on the west property to provide a buffer in-between the properties.

Ms. Bradshaw responded that currently there is a block wall on the west side of the property, and there is nowhere for the property owner to provide the required fifteen feet (15'0) wide landscaping strip, because the existing detached garage is only four feet (4'0) from the property line.

Mr. Reeb asked whether or not there was something in writing to support an adjacent property owner's comment that they had no problem with some of the setbacks being reduced to zero (0).

Ms. Bradshaw answered that she does have a letter that the neighbor provided.

Council Use Permit Case No. CUP03-001TC to allow a social service facility in a R-4 zoning district and Variance Case No. ZA03-014TC to reduce landscaping and parking requirements for the Salvation Army located at 241 E. 6th St.

Chair Wier inquired if indeed the Salvation Army had withdrawn their application.

Ms. Allen confirmed that the Salvation Army had withdrawn their application due to financial reasons.

Special Use Permit Case No. ZA03-011TC, for a modification to the Comprehensive Sign Plan for the Mesa Arts Center located at 1 E. Main St.

Ms. Allen stated that the comprehensive sign plan has been submitted for modifications.

Amending Sign Ordinance Relating to Window Sign Area.

Ms. Smith inquired what the Institute for Justice's position is on the free speech issues that they presented regarding Winchell's Donuts.

Mr. Murphy stated that the lawsuit submitted by the Institute submitted was vague; there was no indication as to what violation had occurred.

Ms. Smith inquired what kind of precedent does the Institute have on their position.

3. Update on applications and projects and Directors Report

Mr. Marek said that he would provide the update and his report at the regular meeting.

4. Board Member Comments

Mr. Pomeroy discussed the editorial that was in the Tribune. Mr. Pomeroy suggested that the DDC produce a letter and send it to the Mayor, the City Council, and the newspaper. Within this letter, Mr. Pomeroy would like to show the DDC's support of the Redevelopment Department, and include examples of progress that has been made.

Mr. Wier agreed that a letter of support would be a good idea. Mr. Wier has heard that one suggestion presented was to combine the Redevelopment Office and the Economic Development Office. Mr. Wier stated that the Economic Development Department has a full workload, and that they will probably not be able to provide the same support to the DDC that they are currently receiving.

Mr. Pomeroy stated that the Board will probably be buried along with the other projects that the Economic Development Office is working on.

Mr. Riekema stated that he read in the newspaper that the State Legislature is currently working on a condemnation statute that would limit the municipalities ability to condemn properties. Mr. Riekema feels that Mesa has always had what he calls Phoenix envy; the Redevelopment Director in Phoenix said that without the ability to condemn, the City of Phoenix would be run down, drug infested as well as many other things if they were not able to produce the right kind of development. Mr. Riekema feels that if the Mesa Redevelopment Office were to be eliminated, there would be no one around to drive the engine for improvements. Mr. Riekema does not feel that the private industry will come in and take over developing Mesa once the Arts Center is completed. He feels that this all needs to be a coordinated effort.

Mr. Reeb stated that in order for a reduction to occur, there needs to be a solid plan in place, and coordinated effort from other departments. Mr. Reeb feels that the City needs to be an advocate for their downtown.

Ms. Smith stated that she personally has a few problems with the use of eminent domain; she feels that the thought process that is involved with the elimination of the Redevelopment Office is premature. Ms. Smith feels that the Redevelopment Office is needed now more than ever, especially because of the progress that is being made on the construction of the Arts Center.

Mr. Pomeroy agreed that the Redevelopment Office is a necessity for the City to have. Mr. Pomeroy stated that he has seen progress that has occurred here in Mesa, and he feels that every time progress is being made, something happens to slow the progress down. Mr. Pomeroy added that the City has had

the use of eminent domain, and at first citizens are reluctant to the change, but they later come back and express their gratitude and appreciation.

Mr. Wier stated that he truly feels that Mr. Bailey of Baileys Brakes has made a huge mistake, adding that Mr. Bailey could have had a larger building that would be nicer than the one he has now.

Mr. DiBella stated that the Redevelopment area is a legal entity (an identified redevelopment area); once this area has been created there are certain things that are legally required to be done. As a last resort, cities across the nation have the ability to use eminent domain, to facilitate zoning and to facilitate assistance efforts that are needed for the central corridor. Mr. DiBella feels that many people have lost sight of what the Redevelopment Office does.

6. Adjournment

With there being no further business, this meeting of the DDC was adjourned at 7:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Gregory J. Marek, Director of Redevelopment
Minutes prepared by Amy Morales