

Urban Renewal Advisory Committee Meeting
Regular Meeting
June 17, 2021

Present: Chair Jack Trumbull, Vice Chair Pat McAllister, Tina Lassen, Amanda Goeke, Joshua Chandler, Clint Harris

Staff: Director of Finance/ACM Will Norris, City Engineer Recorder Jennifer Gray, Jonathan Skloven-Gill

Absent: Abby Capovilla

I CALL TO ORDER – Trumbull opened the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

II BUSINESS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Jody Behr was signed up to speak. She was not in attendance. Trumbull stated they would allow her to speak later if she joins the meeting later.

III AGENDA ADDITIONS

IV APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of May 20, 2021, as written
First: Harris
Second: McAllister
Discussion: None
Vote: Motion passed unanimously

V URBAN RENEWAL ADMINISTRATOR

1. Heights Urban Renewal Phase 1 Updates

The purpose of this meeting is to receive committee input and a recommendation to include a project amendment completing a parking analysis and study as part of Phase 2 of the Heights Streetscape project.

Over the next 12 months, the Urban Renewal Agency will develop a preferred streetscape plan for the Heights that guides infrastructure investments focused on improving transportation efficiency, safety, and community livability. The project is broken down into three phases. The primary deliverable of Phase One is the establishment of project goals informed by a review of the background work, community feedback, and stakeholder input. This stage is nearing its completion with final deliverables going to the Urban Renewal Agency Board in July.

The following is the list of project goals reviewed by the Advisory Committee and Board.

Project Goal 1: Preserve and promote a livable community through streetscape

improvements that balance safety and access for people walking and biking with parking needs to support access to local businesses and future mixed-use development.

Project Goal 2: Create an identify for the Heights that reflects the diverse culture and history of the area and as destination for residents.

Project Goal 3: Create streets and gathering spaces that provide safe, comfortable places for people walking and biking along and across the corridor and that connects area recreation and commercial destinations and neighborhoods.

Project Goal 4: Calm traffic and improve intersections to improve safety for people driving, walking, and biking and supporting local businesses.

Project Goal 5: Support existing and future development by maintaining and improving utility infrastructure as part of the streetscape project.

Project Goal 6: Engage residents and businesses, the school district, and those that use the corridor to provide ongoing input in the streetscape project.

Project Goal 7: Provide locations for people to gather, to stop and rest.

While the goals above were broadly supported, it is also clear from outreach activities that parking will be a significant issue that must be addressed in any concept alternative. Changes to the district will almost invariably require altering parking configurations, locations, and potentially even capacity. In anticipation of this potential challenge, the project team has prepared a limited-scope parking study to be included as part of the Phase Two contract for Agency consideration. The Phase 2 contract amendment is included in the packet and will go to the Board as early as July to allow for parking counts that should be completed in the high traffic summer season.

Staff requests that the URAC review the scope of the parking study and provide recommendations for Board consideration. If there are elements the Committee finds essential to the success of the project, which are currently not included in the study scope, staff requests input on possible amendments to be included.

Project Team Recommendation: Based on stakeholder feedback, the project team recommends that a parking analysis be included as part of the Heights Streetscape Project Phase 2.

Norris explained MIG through their subconsultant DKS has the proposed parking study. The cost for the study will be \$44,000. He wanted the group to have a discussion and give a recommendation when this concept is brought to the Agency on July 12 as part of the Phase 2 contract adoption. Staff is recommending an amendment to add the parking study, but it does fit within the contingency of the project.

Members of the Advisory Board discussed and agreed with adding the parking study.

Trumbull asked that the discussion be tables for a moment to allow Behr to speak. After her comments, the group can come back with a group recommendation.

Behr stated since she saw a cost proposal for a parking study in the Heights, she assumed they were going to discuss and approve it tonight. She wanted to let the Advisory Committee know she is going to meet with Adam Schmidt and Robin Chambers, from Public Works to walk the Heights area next week to see if changes in the short-term can be made, to some of the parking spots that are creating dangerous intersections. If there are changes that can be done in the short-term, at the bare minimum what they are doing next week should be coordinated with the consultant group. She believes the costs for these changes should come from Urban Renewal and not the City maintenance budget.

Trumbull asked for clarification from Norris. He believes these are two different things. The parking analysis is specific to the future design, but he agrees they should look for opportunities for some immediate fixes that could slow traffic and create safe intersections.

Norris thanked Behr for contributing her ideas. There have been changes done in the Heights to help with safety concerns. Staff is always willing to listen to ideas. The parking inventory is about counting the district as a whole. He believes there will be several hundred parking spots that will be inventoried, at different points of the day. He does not believe a parking spot being taken away in a few places will affect the parking count and inventory. Norris will connect with Schmidt and Chambers, after they meet with Behr.

Trumbull welcomed Behr to attend the next meeting to share the outcomes from the meeting.

Goeke stated it would be great if short-term fixes can happen. If there is something they can take from that meeting, she would hope Behr would share it with the group. It could be incorporated into future design plans.

There was further discussion regarding the support of the parking study.

Motion: I move to approve an amendment including a parking analysis in Phase 2 as presented.
First: Chandler
Second: Harris
Discussion: None
Vote: Motion passed unanimously

VI ITEMS FROM MEMBERS

Norris stated he wanted to talk a little bit about the direction of Urban Renewal. During the Budget Committee meeting in May, there was discussion regarding the future of the Urban Renewal in the City. This conversation will be picked-up later in the summer, but he wanted the group to start thinking about it. With Columbia Cascade coming to the end of its life, is there is an opportunity on the west side of the City or to add to the Waterfront District? He would like the group to think about the process and involvement they would like to see. No ask from the group at this time, but discussions will be coming in the future.

Norris stated in the adopted budget with the remaining funds in the Columbia Cascade Plan, it is planned to do a business plan to see if they want to do a parking structure. The Wayfinding signage,

painting of the classic light poles, and replacing remaining parking meters with CALE machines are also included in the budget.

Lassen stated she is no longer going to be on the Planning Commission as July 1, so this will be her last URAC meeting.

The group thanked Lassen for all her time and work with Planning Commission and URAC.

The next meeting will be held on July 22.

VII ADJOURN – 6:22 p.m. by unanimous consent.



Jack Trumbull, Chair

Jennifer Gray, City Recorder

Approved by the Agency on Dec 9, 2021