Farmington
MRA
Metropolitan Redevelopment Area
Preserving the past, revitalizing the future.

# MINUTES
## Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
## Board of Commissioners – August 18, 2016

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| Commissioners Present | Derald Polston, Vice-Chair<br>Linda Barbeau<br>Doug Dykeman<br>John McNeill, D.D.S. |
| Commissioners Absent | None |
| Staff Present | Julie Baird<br>Cindy Lopez<br>Shaña Reeves<br>Karen Walker |
| Others Present | Jim Davis<br>Mary Gardocki<br>Andrew Montoya<br>Cory Styron |

1. **Call to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Vice-Chair Polston, and there being a quorum present, the following proceedings were duly had and taken.

2. **Approval of the June 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes**
A motion was made by Commissioner McNeill for a minor word change from 'fiber optic wire' to just 'fiber optic'. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barbeau to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. **Election of Officers**
Commissioner McNeill nominated Derald Polston as Chair. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Barbeau. Commissioner Dykeman nominated Dr. John McNeill as Vice-Chair. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Barbeau.
**Vote Passed 4-0**

4. **Senior Center Parking Lot-Mary Gardocki**
Cindy Lopez introduced Cory Styron, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Director (PRCA), and Mary Gardocki, Park Planner. PRCA owns a parcel of property on Orchard behind the Senior Center. Two old buildings were taken down with the intention to expand the parking area. The property is in the Mixed Use (MU) Residential

Preservation Overlay (RPO) district. Ms. Lopez stated that she was unaware of the project until after the buildings had been torn down.

Mary Gardocki explained that the buildings were taken down last year. The project is the result of a State grant for $100,000. The Senior Center has had issues with parking in the past. The proposed parking lot will help alleviate some of the congestion and will be used by City employees and for City vehicles that support the Senior Center. Another grant will be used to replace aging City vehicles for the Senior Center. The grants were administered by the Department of Aging and Long Term Services.

Cory Styron said PRCA applied for the grant in 2013 and was approved in 2015. The funds were released in 2016. The original concept included purchasing property on Wall Street for the parking lot, but the owner was asking too much. The buildings that were raised were in disrepair.

Commissioner Barbeau commented that there is a Residential Preservation Overlay in this area. She thought that would keep homes from being torn down for things such as parking lots.

Ms. Lopez explained that the Residential Preservation Overlay does not prevent an owner from tearing down a home. It is for any new structures or additions, and is intended so that they stay in character with the neighborhood.

Mary Gardocki reported that Souder Miller Engineering and Surveying developed the conceptual designs with three options. The designs were presented at two Community Input meetings which were attended by senior citizens, and for a public input for the neighborhood. The current concept is a combination of the three options based on the feedback. People wanted easy access, easy to remember where they parked, minimal maintenance, and shade from trees. We proposed islands with rock mulch and a shade tree. The islands are bio-swale for water filtration. The area will add 30 parking spaces with 2 of them as ADA parking. In addition, explained Ms. Gardocki, an ADA analysis is being done on the parking around the existingfacility to incorporate more handicapped parking close to the Senior Center. The entrance to the proposed parking lot is off of Orchard. Ms. Gardocki commented that the slope of the alley made it too steep for an entrance.

Commissioner Barbeau asked if there were any objections from the neighbors. Ms. Gardocki said the neighbor to the north was concerned about drainage. An engineer is working on the calculations to alleviate any issues and divert drainage to the bio-swales. The bio-swales, stated Ms. Gardocki, will handle about 90% of the storm water.

Commissioner Dykeman asked if an assessment during normal times for the need for more parking had been done for the Senior Center. Cory Styron said currently people are parking on all side streets. Patrons who use the facility commented on the need for more parking. The parking lot will allow for closer parking to the facility for City vehicles and allow for more parking at the facility for patrons.

Commissioner Dykeman asked if there has been an increase in the use of the Senior Center. Mr. Styron said there has been approximately a 6% increase over the past three years.

Commissioner Dykeman asked in terms of historic preservation if there was a Cultural Resource Assessment done before the design process began. Mr. Styron said there had not been a Cultural Resource Assessment. Mr. Dykeman stated there is state code that historic property cannot be damaged with the use of state funds unless there has been an evaluation or review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Ms. Lopez noted that this area is not designated as an historic district. Mr. Dykeman said the way SHPO knows if it is a historic area or building is through the Cultural Resource Assessment.

Mr. Styron noted that from previous experience with state granting agencies, requirements are given in order to receive the grant. All requirements were met.

Commissioner Dykeman said the grantor should have raised the issue. He feels both buildings would have been potentially eligible for the historic registry because they were built between 1890 and 1920. On the northwest corner of the property, said Mr. Dykeman, is the Farmington Ditch which may have already been determined to be an eligible property for the historic registry. When we are in the MRA and the downtown district, and the RPO in the Civic Center district, he said, we need to be more aware of the potential. The opinion of the Deputy of SHPO and the New Mexico State Archeologist to my request regarding this was that the state agency is charged with avoiding inadvertent damage to cultural properties, and the appropriate action would have been to survey and document and evaluate the significance of the buildings prior to action. Even after an evaluation, SHPO will often not allow you to tear down the buildings. This is important for us to consider in these parts of the MRA.

Commissioner Dykeman continued to state that all development in the RPO district, according to the Unified Development Code (UDC), is subject to the approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Was a Certificate of Appropriateness obtained for this property, he asked? Ms. Lopez pointed out that a Certificate of Appropriateness would have been necessary for a building, but not to any other changes. It is based on applicability in the UDC. The code is not clear in this area, she said.

Commissioner Dykeman said that in 4.4.2 of the UDC, under applicability it says RPO district standards shall apply to the development of the following uses on properties identified on the zoning map: new multifamily residential and nonresidential construction. I regard a parking lot as a structure. It is a development and certainly a change of use of that piece of property. Ms. Lopez stated again that the UDC is not clear.

Commissioner Dykeman went on to say that under 3.11.4(A) in the UDC it says: all parking shall be located in the rear yard, or interior of the property, and accessed from an alley where such alley access is available. Ms. Lopez stated the required front yard is 10 feet from the front property line. The parking area is behind that10 feet. Mr. Dykeman said that did not address the access from Orchard when Mixed Use (MU) asks

for alley access. The RPO says all parking shall be accessed from the alley. Ms. Gardocki pointed out the neighboring property has access from Orchard. Mr. Dykeman said that property is probably grandfathered in, but the parking lot is a new construction. Ms. Lopez said the exception would be if the alley was not passable. Mr. Dykeman said the alley is paved. Yet, Ms. Lopez stated the alley is in poor condition and very steep. Mr. Dykeman felt the condition of the alley can be fixed. Mr. Styron pointed out the alley is not conducive for a bus. Mr. Dykeman said he would prefer the access comes from the alley and the setback be the same as the house next door. He said he would also like to see landscaping to buffer the historic nature of the neighborhood. Mr. Dykeman stated that he is not suggesting that a parking lot not be placed in this location, but he felt it should be better designed for the RPO district. He also said he feels the storm drainage will not be handled by the bio-swales.

Mr. Styron said the issue is a gray area of the MU element in the residential area. It was the opinion of the Community Development staff, said Mr. Styron, when this was being developed, that the RPO applied strictly to buildings. Mr. Styron said that before moving forward and redesigning this with additional cost to the City, he would like to see clarification and more discussion due to the limited amount of grant money. Mr. Styron said the concerns of the neighborhood has been mitigated to make parking spaces bigger. Ms. Lopez said she will ask for a legal opinion. She mentioned that she was not consulted on the project prior to hearing from Doug Dykeman and after the houses were demolished. A legal interpretation of what the RPO actually says in the UDC is needed.

Commissioner Polston said he felt it was more appropriate to have access from Orchard.

Commissioner Dykeman made a motion to table a decision pending a legal opinion. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McNeill.

**Vote passed 4-0**

5. **Farmington Electric Utility-John Armenta**

John Armenta was not able to make the meeting.

Ms. Lopez stated that she, Dr. McNeill, and Mr. Polston met with Mr. Armenta and Char Maes to discuss the upgrades to the utilities and where outlets should be placed. Having 3 outlets on the pole, an outlet at each corner, and outlets mid-block was discussed. Ms. Lopez said she gave the Electric Utility a copy of the drawing from the consultant showing where the light poles exist.

Commissioner McNeill said Mr. Armenta is looking at the cost of installing fiber optics. Char Maes will be providing the estimate.

6. **Downtown Wi-Fi Project-Jim Davis**

Jim Davis owns an internet service company in Farmington. He discussed the feasibility of installing Wi-Fi in the downtown area. His plan is to install Wi-Fi from Artifacts to Citizens Bank on Main Street, and across Broadway from Citizens Bank to Wells Fargo. Mr. Davis said Wi-Fi can be an advertising venue in the future. He said Shaña Reeves is

working on a portal so that people who log in can hear about downtown Farmington. For future use, Mr. Davis said it is best to install as much potential power as possible when the ditch is open. Mr. Davis said Main and Orchard will be installed first. He said he would like to meet with the City Utilities to make sure everything is covered.

7. **Complete Streets Update-RFP**

Ms. Lopez stated that she is in the process of writing the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the construction drawings for Main Street downtown. She said that she is applying for grant money from the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). Ms. Lopez said she applied for the TAP monies with a Performance Feasibility Form and went to Santa Fe to discuss the project for the feasibility to do the Complete Streets project. She said she has been discussing the possible use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements need to be included in the RFP to use CDBG money.

Commissioner Polston asked how much is available for the grant funds. Ms. Lopez said the most that can be granted is $2 million. It would cover construction money for one of the roundabouts in Phase I. The estimate for the first phase is $5 million. With the CDBG, a loan or construction money can be used. The RFP is for the final design and construction drawings.

8. **Update on Transit Hub-Andrew Montoya**

Andrew Montoya, Transit Manager, discussed the milestones that have taken place in the transit project for the Red Apple Transit. Mr. Montoya went over the three concepts and locations that are being considered for the transit hub. The next milestone includes the Operational Analysis Study. Mr. Montoya said the study will cost approximately $70,000. This study is required by the National Transportation Association (NTA). The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is looking into a way to help with the money for the study. The study will look at the Red Apple Transit routes required to best serve a new transit hub.

Commissioner Polston said he thought the study should show how a new hub site will help the city. The site that is chosen is as important as to how efficient the routes might be, he said. Mr. Montoya said the focus is on the Animas Street location and the Downtown location near Wells Fargo.

Mr. Montoya said that after the Operational Analysis Study, a design of the hub will cost approximately $200,000 to $250,000. Construction will be approximately $3 million. Currently there is no money in the Red Apple Transit budget to fund the project.

9. **Downtown Association Updates-Shaña Reeves**

Shaña Reeves said Michael Bulloch received his certification as Executive Director of downtown.

The Downtown Association started a Makers Market in July. It will continue through October and is every Tuesday from 4:30-8:30 pm. There have been between 4-14 vendors.

Orchard Plaza will close at 5 pm to assist with the increase of inebriates and homeless that seem to be in this area. There have been community concerns due to the increase and the police are working on the situation.

Ms. Barbeau commented that as a member of the MRA, she would have liked to have been consulted or notified of the closing of Orchard Plaza. She said she was told about it from a member of the public and noted that the MRA members are supposed to know what goes on in the downtown area. She said she did not like being caught off guard and embarrassed. Ms. Reeves apologized and said the closing was an attempt to assist with the situation and not to bypass the MRA. Once the signs go up, the downtown businesses would be informed. Ms. Reeves said she will have a formal report at the next meeting on the increase of inebriates and homeless.

Ms. Reeves reported that the 'Diva' program was purchased to help document the downtown buildings. A volunteer helped to gather information on addresses, business owners, and contact information. The program will document information on each building in regards to amenities, square footage, etc. Ms. Reeves said she will have a demonstration on what the program can do in a few months.

Commissioner Polston commented that the downtown area should be a destination for people. He proposed that all events, including the Maker's Market, should be a Friday night activity in the downtown area. If all events tie in with Friday night, it will bring people to the downtown area. Ms. Reeves said that the new logo and brand have helped with people looking at Farmington as a destination. Ms. Reeves is also working with Madison Steiner with her "Hustle Kindness" movement.

10. **Business From:**
    a. **Floor** – There was no business from the Floor.

    b. **Chair** – There was no business from the Chair.

    c. **Members** – There was no business from Members

    d. **Staff**- There was no business from Staff.

11. **Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Commissioner McNeill and seconded by Commissioner Barbeau to adjourn. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Derald Polston, Chair

Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant