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

MINUTES
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
Board of Commissioners – September 15, 2016

Commissioners Present	Derald Polston, Chair John McNeill, D.D.S., Vice-Chair Linda Barbeau Doug Dykeman
Commissioners Absent	None
Staff Present	Julie Baird Michael Bulloch Russel Frost Derrick Garcia Cindy Lopez Shaña Reeves Steven Saavedra Cory Styron Karen Walker
Others Present	Officer Robert Decker Cpl. Mark Gaines

1. **Call to Order**

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

2. **Approval of the August 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Commissioner McNeill and seconded by Commissioner Barbeau to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. **Informational Update on Senior Center Parking Lot**

Cory Styron mentioned that the City's legal attorney, Jennifer Breakell, had provided a legal opinion on the RPO (Residential Preservation Overlay) for the Orchard street area. That opinion stated the RPO did not apply to the demolished residence because the

RPO applies to "adaptive re-use and preservation of older residential structures, and compatible new development". The residence that was demolished was not being re-modeled or adapted to another use.

Mr. Styron presented a map of the Senior Center and Orchard Street. He pointed out numerous properties with front street parking entrances. Mr. Styron reiterated that the new parking lot for the Senior Center will have a deep buffer from the street; it will minimize the impact of asphalt, and will have trees in the parking lot to make it the most attractive parking lot in the city and to try to maintain the character of the existing neighborhood.

Commissioner Dykeman stated that he did not see the need for additional parking. Mr. Styron said parking at the Senior Center has been an issue for many years. He said there is not enough handicapped parking or parking spaces near the buildings. People must park on the side streets.

Commissioner Dykeman said he is opposed to an access to the parking lot from Orchard. He feels access should be obtained from the alley and mentioned that there never was access to that property from Orchard when the residence existed. Mr. Styron commented that the populations of patrons to the Senior Center are challenged in regards to motor skills. These patrons asked for head-in parking with lots of space.

Chair Polston asked if any mature trees will be taken out for the parking lot. Mr. Styron commented that the trees that will be taken down are showing decline.

Commissioner Barbeau mentioned that her main concern is to preserve older buildings. She was concerned that a property owner can tear down any building without consideration of the historic value of the building. Ms. Barbeau also felt that access should be from the alley for the Senior Center parking lot.

Commissioner McNeill commented that there are a number of curb cuts on Orchard. He said they are not in character with the residential feeling for the area. Dr. McNeill stated that he would prefer there not be any more curb cuts. He said the area is supposed to be RPO and he feels the curb cuts do not promote residential uses. Dr. McNeill noted that he would discourage any more removal of sidewalks, and would like to see trees and a bench to make it a community area. Dr. McNeill stated that he feels the alley is accessible as an entrance to the parking lot.

Chair Polston said the biggest missed opportunity was the demolition of the house. Ms. Lopez stated that private property owners have the right to demolish their own buildings. The RPO is intended to ensure the character of the neighborhood if a building is remodeled or rebuilt. If there is not any state or federal funds involved, or the property is not designated as historic or in a historic district, a property owner can demolish their property.

Commissioner McNeill asked if Planning & Zoning could make the MRA aware of anyone who pulls a demolition permit so that the MRA could contact that party for review or termination of the project. Ms. Lopez reminded Dr. McNeill that a monthly

report is emailed to each member of the MRA that states the activities and permits issued with the Community Development department.

Commissioner McNeill asked that a motion be made to advise the City Council of the MRAs concerns. Mr. Dykeman made a motion to consider a redesign of the proposed Senior Center parking lot that would incorporate the design elements stipulated by the MRA plan of 2009. The three attributes that are most important are vehicle access to the parking lot from the alley, a landscape/green scape buffer on the Orchard Avenue side of the property, and the setback should be similar to the setback of the adjacent residential property at 218 N. Orchard.

Commissioner Dykeman stated that he commonly hears from people at the Grower's Market that the City makes plans, such as in 1969, the 1990s and the 2000s, and doesn't carry through on those plans. Mr. Dykeman felt this plan should be implemented.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner McNeill. The vote was 3-1. Commissioner Polston was opposed.

4. **Inebriate/Homeless in Downtown Area – Cpl. Gaines and Officer Decker**
Chair Polston asked who had made the decision to close Orchard Park at 5:00 p.m. Julie Baird said it was the decision of the City Manager due to the number of inebriates in the park.

Cpl. Gaines and Officer Decker showed a PowerPoint on the statistics and history of the inebriate and homeless situation in Farmington. Officer Decker said the population congregates in the downtown area due to the location of resources that provide for them. He mentioned that there is surveillance in Orchard Park to discourage problems, and there is currently a high visibility patrol operation downtown in effect between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. from August 12, 2016 to September 30, 2016.

Commissioners discussed the resources available, panhandling, and violence or aggression involving inebriates or homeless. This discussion also involved the officers and Ms. Baird. Mr. Polston wanted to know more about what other cities do to handle the inebriates and homeless.

5. **Update on MRA finances – Cindy Lopez**
Cindy Lopez showed the Commissioners the updated MRA financial report from Teresa Emerich, the City's Budget Officer. The MRA has a little over one million dollars in their budget after approved expenditures.

6. **Report on RFQP for Main Street – Cindy Lopez**
Cindy Lopez said the Downtown Main Street RFQP (Request for Qualified Professionals) scope has been completed and she will be working with Purchasing to get it advertised. The City has a standard document with sections that are required by law. Staff members will be working to finish the report. A committee will be appointed to review the applications for the RFQP.

Commissioner McNeill asked that the recommendations from Blue Zones be included in the decision. Ms. Lopez said the Gateway and Blue Zones booklets will be included. The time frame is possibly around the end of October or into November.

Chair Polston said he wanted to make sure a group of people are notified about the RFQP and asked how notification would be made. Ms. Lopez said it will be advertised and people would then go through Kay Rose in the Purchasing Department. They will have to meet the qualifications and provide a bid. Julie Baird said Kay Rose was the person to contact for information. Ms. Baird and Ms. Lopez explained the process of RFQP to Mr. Polston.

7. **Downtown Association Updates-Michael Bulloch**

Michael Bulloch, Shaña Reeves, and other Mainstreet members met with Daniel Gutierrez and Edwardo Martinez from New Mexico Mainstreet on September 12, 2016. They will be helping with a work plan and economic transformation strategy for Farmington's Mainstreet program to comply with the requirements for the National Mainstreet Center.

On September 9, 2016, said Mr. Bulloch, the Downtown Association and Farmington Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored the Fall Crawl on Main Street. There was some discussion with the promoter, Rich Klein, to encourage them to make Farmington a home of the Grand National Championships for the rock climbing competition. Currently a multi-year commitment is being discussed.

Mr. Bulloch said some downtown business owners are still unhappy about the removal of three traffic signals on Main Street. Confusion should be alleviated now that the lights are no longer blinking.

Mr. Bulloch and Shaña Reeves are working on an RFP for the property at 119 W. Main Street. There has been some interest in the property. Mr. Bulloch is also working on the Wi-Fi portal page design.

Commissioner Barbeau asked if there was any progress on the Indian Museum. Ms. Baird said the holdup is with the construction of handicapped bathrooms. At this time, said Ms. Baird, the City does not have money for this project. She said the MRA had suggested helping with the cost of the bathrooms at one time, but the City Council felt the MRA should put their money into other projects.

Commissioner McNeill asked if there was still a staffing issue for the museum. Ms. Baird said the hope was to staff it with volunteers.

Commissioner McNeill asked if the issue should be re-visited mid-winter. Ms. Baird said winter is a good time to do the construction because the peak tourist season is spring, summer, and fall.

Commissioner Barbeau asked if the MRA could solicit funding with some type of fund raising project. Ms. Baird said the MRA might partner with the museum foundation on a fundraiser. Ms. Baird said she would be happy to come back to the next MRA meeting with a better cost projection for the Indian Museum bathrooms.

Chair Polston asked if the Convention and Visitors Bureau could be housed in the Indian Museum and help with the staffing issue. Ms. Baird said that was a possibility.

Commissioners McNeill and Barbeau said they would not be able to make the October 20, 2016 MRA meeting. Mr. McNeill made a motion to move the next meeting to October 27, 2016. Chair Polston, and Commissioners Dykeman and Barbeau said they would be able to come to an October 27, 2016 MRA meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barbeau with a vote of 4-0.

8. **Business From:**

a. **Floor** – Michael Bulloch asked where the MRA funds come from. Chair Polston said $500,000 was allocated from the City Council in previous years. Commissioner McNeill said the City Council was not able to allocate money this year.

Mr. Bulloch asked why an incremental tax was not being used. Ms. Lopez said the state statutes allow certain types of TIDD (Tax Incremental Development District) and TIF (Tax Incremental Financing) processes that can be utilized. There are restrictions on how and when money can be used, and property taxes might not increase enough to be beneficial. TIDD can use property tax and gross receipt tax increases, while TIF can only use property tax increases as funding sources in the MRA. Commissioner McNeill asked Mr. Bulloch to look into it and report at the October 2016 MRA meeting.

b. **Chair** – Chair Polston said to Michael Bulloch that one of the Economic Development Strategies for New Mexico Mainstreet could be catalytic projects. Another could be to create an arts, culture, dining, and entertainment district. Mr. Bulloch said Farmington does not have to wait to be designated by the state. Farmington can be a self-proclaimed arts, culture, dining, and entertainment district.

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

d. **Staff**- Ms. Lopez said in regards to New Mexico Mainstreet that small increments that can actually be accomplished should be part of the work plan.

Ms. Lopez said Mr. McNeill had asked her to look at pre and post construction changes to Main Street. Some studies are very in depth, but other studies may be possible to do. She said a timeline and program schedule needs to be set up to accomplish this. Commissioner McNeill asked that the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) should be involved in regards to the safety aspect. Ms. Lopez said that discussion would be on the November MRA agenda.

Chair Polston asked Ms. Lopez to help with contacting Blue Zones to get a map to overlay with the city map.

9. **Adjournment:**
A motion was made by Commissioner Dykeman and seconded by Commissioner McNeill to adjourn. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Derald Polston, Chair

Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant