

**RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2012**

The Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority met on December 18, 2012 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room in the City-County Office Building at 221 North 5th Street.

Authority members present were Dave Blackstead, Jim Christianson, Chuck Huber, George Keiser, Kevin Magstadt, Brenda Smith and Curt Walth

Technical advisors Jeff Ubl and Bruce Whittey were present.

Staff members present were Brenda Johnson (Assessing) and Jason Tomanek (Planning).

Guests present included Dawn Kopp (Downtowners), Kate Herzog (Downtowners), Loran Galpin, Joe Woodmansee (Woodmansees) and Jon Lee (Bread Poets).

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Blackstead called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 20, 2012 meeting were distributed with the agenda packet.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Christianson to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2012 meeting as received. The motion passed unanimously with members Blackstead, Christianson, Huber, Keiser, Magstadt, Smith and Walth voting in favor.

CORE INCENTIVE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

A. 114 North 4th Street – Woodmansee’s, Inc. – Façade And Signage Grant

Mr. Tomanek gave an overview of the project by Woodmansee’s, Inc. The applicant has replaced signage on the storefront. The work was completed during the period of time the City of Bismarck was not accepting CORE Incentive Program project applications and is being submitted for reimbursement in accordance with the policy established by the Board of City Commissioners. The work performed included removing the awning, reskinning the awning frame and reinstallation, removing the lettering on the sign, repainting and reinstalling a new background behind the letters. The previous background had rotted.

Mr. Tomanek listed the following findings for the proposed CORE Incentive Program project:

1. The building is located within the Downtown Tax Increment Financing District.

2. The purpose of the Façade and Signage Incentive Grant Program is to promote and stimulate exterior maintenance of commercial buildings in order to enhance the overall appearance, quality and vitality of downtown.
3. The applicant had the work performed in April 2011. At that time, the City of Bismarck had suspended the CORE Program and was not accepting applications for the CORE Incentive Programs. The Board of City Commissioners established a policy allowing eligible property and business owners to apply for assistance from the CORE Incentive Program for work performed after the date of Program suspension but before reestablishment of the Program, once the Program was re-established.
4. Under the Façade and Signage Grant guidelines the maximum dollar amount is \$3,000 for signage and awning projects. Each project requires a 50% matching contribution by the applicant. The grant amount requested for this project is \$3,000.

Mr. Tomanek said that based on the above findings, staff recommends approval of the CORE Façade and Signage grant request to reimburse Woodmansee's, Inc. \$3,000 toward the design, purchase and installation of a sign at 114 North 4th Street.

Mr. Walth inquired if the rotted material has been removed and replaced. Mr. Woodmansee indicated it has been fully removed and replaced with new material.

MOTION: Based on the findings included in the staff report, a motion was made by Mr. Walth and seconded by Mr. Christianson to recommend approval approval of the CORE Façade and Signage grant request to reimburse Woodmansee's, Inc. \$3,000 toward the design, purchase and installation of a sign at 114 North 4th Street. The motion passed unanimously with members Blackstead, Christianson, Huber, Keiser, Magstadt, Smith and Walth voting in favor.

CORE INCENTIVE PROGRAM APPLICATION

A. 123 North 4th Street – Sidewalk Subsurface Infill – Continued Hearing

Mr. Tomanek stated that Loran Galpin, representing Redland, LLC, had received three bids for the Cowan building infill project at 4th Street and Broadway Avenue. Mr. Tomanek continued by listing the bid amounts from Weisz & Sons; \$177,300; JMac Resources at \$176,847.40; and Veit USA at \$327,247.23. Mr. Tomanek noted that the bid from JMac Resources was incomplete as they did not provide estimates for the water and sewer work outlined in the bid specifications established by the property owner. Mr. Tomanek added that a concern staff had with the low bid provided by Weisz & Sons was that an itemized breakdown of the bid was not provided. Mr. Galpin stated that he had requested an itemized list and will provide one when he receives it from Weisz & Sons.

(Secretary's Note: The itemized breakdown was provided on December 19, 2012 and revised on January 8, 2013. The final bid amount was \$196,262 based on changes recommended by City staff).

Mr. Walth inquired whether the work proposed by Weisz & Sons will cover the entire scope of work for the project. Mr. Galpin responded by saying that the note on the bid sheet was written by Weisz & Sons staff and all the work tasks outlined in the proposal would be accomplished.

Mr. Keiser asked if there were any contingencies with the Weisz & Sons bid. Mr. Galpin responded that there were no contingencies with their bid.

Mr. Tomanek noted that City Engineer Mel Bullinger and City Attorney Charlie Whitman had reviewed the bids by all three companies. Mr. Tomanek continued by saying that Mel Bullinger said prior to the project proceeding, he would need to see an itemized breakdown of the costs in the event there are cost overruns or change orders to the scope of work.

Mr. Keiser asked Mr. Galpin if he spoke with Veit USA to inquire why there was such a separation between the low bid from Weisz & Sons and the high bid offered by Veit. Mr. Galpin stated that he had spoken with the bidder from Veit USA and their comment was they were comfortable with their proposal. Mr. Galpin noted that the price of concrete was \$28.00 per-square-foot versus \$10.00 per-square-foot in the Weisz & Sons bid.

Mr. Tomanek stated that he spoke with Charlie Whitman regarding the entity that would hire Weisz & Sons to perform the work. Mr. Tomanek continued by saying that Mr. Whitman recommended that Mr. Galpin hire the contractor to perform the work.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Walth and seconded by Ms. Smith to recommend approval of the CORE Incentive Program Sidewalk Subsurface Infill project for the property at 123 North 4th Street, subject to obtaining a line item breakdown of the bid by Weisz & Sons and that the City Engineer and City Attorney review the bids. The motion passed unanimously with members Blackstead, Christianson, Huber, Keiser, Magstadt, Smith and Walth voting in favor.

RENAISSANCE ZONE PROJECT MODIFICATION REQUEST

A. 106 East Thayer Avenue – Project 90-B

Mr. Tomanek stated that Kenneth Clark and David Clark are requesting approval for an exterior modification plan for the building at 106 East Thayer Avenue. The owners of the building are requesting to modify the rehabilitation project previously approved for the building that currently serves as the Bread Poets Baking Company location. The request is to allow a change in the color scheme for the new portion of the building. The owners would prefer to have the new brick portion of the building match the color of the existing glazed rock material on the current storefront. Additionally, the EIFS portion of the building addition would be changed to match the existing brick on the current building. The owners are concerned about finding new brick that will match the existing brick on the current storefront.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Christianson and seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the building modification request. The motion passed unanimously with members

Blackstead, Christianson, Huber, Keiser, Magstadt, Smith and Walth voting in favor.

CORE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Mr. Tomanek stated that there has been interest from property owners in requesting assistance from the CORE Incentive Program Technical Assistance Bank. Mr. Tomanek noted that the current policy allows for 30 hours of design work at a rate of \$70.00 per hour by professional architects and engineers. Mr. Tomanek stated that he spoke with several of the architectural firms that had previously agreed to provide services within the Technical Assistance Bank. Mr. Tomanek stated that professional design rates now range between \$90.00 per hour up to \$115.00 per hour depending on whom in the firm performs the work.

Mr. Whittey suggested that the rate be raised to \$110.00 or \$120.00 per hour.

Mr. Keiser stated that he would be comfortable raising the rate to \$110.00 per hour to ensure a quality product is delivered by the professional designer.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Magstadt to recommend the CORE Technical Assistance Bank rates be increased to \$110.00 per hour for a maximum of 30 hours of professional design services. The motion passed unanimously with members Blackstead, Christianson, Huber, Keiser, Magstadt, Smith and Walth voting in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

A discussion was held regarding the potential to redraw the boundary of the Renaissance Zone to include property along Main Avenue east of 9th Street. Mr. Tomanek stated that he would look into the matter and provide information during the next meeting of the Renaissance Zone Authority.

A discussion was held relating to the screening of rooftop mechanical equipment. A suggestion was made to look at the City of Bismarck's current ordinance relating to rooftop mechanical equipment and the requirements to screen the equipment. Concerns were raised with the appearance of the mechanical equipment on the roof of the building at 217 North 3rd Street (JL Beers). It was noted that the project did receive approval from the Renaissance Zone Authority to allow the current screening material that resembles a picket fence. Mr. Whittey stated that during the renovation project for JL Beers a number of modifications were made to the project that resulted in the current materials intended to screen the equipment. Mr. Whittey said that the current material was initially shown on the concept rendering that also demonstrated a rooftop patio. Mr. Whittey went on to add that the project was modified to no longer include the rooftop patio area once the mechanical equipment was designed for the building and the renovation had begun. Mr. Whittey said that staff and the Renaissance Zone technical advisors had met with architectural staff for JL Beers in an effort to better screen the rooftop area. As a result of these efforts, it was decided by JL Beers to utilize the picket fence-style screening material that was initially approved with the first concept for the project to avoid further delays with construction.

Mr. Whittey concluded by saying that the Renaissance Zone Authority ultimately approved the material that is in place today. Mr. Ubl noted that the JL Beers project had changed significantly from the original concept, and in the future, it would be appropriate to require renderings and drawings demonstrating the exact changes to a project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Blackstead adjourned the meeting of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Tomanek
Recording Secretary

David Blackstead
Chair