

Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force

The Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force met at 8:30 am on July 8, 2014 in the Mayor's Conference Room on the 4th Floor of the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street in Bismarck. Present were: Co-Chairs Brenda Smith and John Warford along with members Larry Oswald, Kevin Ruhland, Dawn Kopp, Kate Herzog, Jason Tomanek, Kelsey Ruhland, Jim Christianson and Andrea Travnicek. Also present were Sheri Grossman, Keith Hunke, Gloria David, Bruce Whittey, Jeff Ubl and Bill Wocken.

Brenda Smith welcomed the committee members. She announced that Jim Hill had found it necessary to resign from the task force but that Andrea Travnicek had agreed to join the group. The Task force welcomed Andrea.

The minutes of the June 10, 2014 meeting were received and moved for approval by Jim Christianson. The motion was seconded by Jason Tomanek and approved by acclamation.

Co-Chair Brenda Smith asked for a report on the banners the task force was hoping to display on the decorative street light standards in the downtown area. Kate Herzog reported that Kelsey Ruhland had provided a design for the banners. An initial quote for 100 double-side printed banners had been received at a cost of \$4,807.00. The banners would be similar in size and material to those currently in use during the winter season. Kelsey Ruhland explained her design and received the thanks of the group for her work. The Task Force endorsed the design and agreed to move the project forward. Bill Wocken asked for a second quote since the amount of the purchase was approaching city policy limits for a single quote purchase. The Downtowners will pursue a second price quote. The banners are expected to be available 2 to 3 weeks after they are ordered.

In the following discussion the Task Force discussed its vision for the downtown area. The cultural trail from downtown to the Capitol was discussed. This project will be difficult since street widths along the route vary widely. The use of trees and decorative lighting will be a challenge the group will need to overcome. Different themes will be discussed as the project progresses. A downtown to the capitol trolley was discussed as was a bike-share concept. All these activities will require careful study and financial analysis.

Gloria David, City Public Information Officer, visited with the Task Force about the use of the city's web site and social media efforts to assist downtown plan implementation. Gloria demonstrated how she had adapted the city's website to provide linkage to the Crandall Arambula study site. The website allows the user to access the original study materials and to offer input. The group talked about how to create interest and maintain

“the buzz” around the downtown projects using the web page and social media. The use of links from other active websites to the downtown page was one idea the group will pursue. A second thought was the use of frequent press releases to maintain public interest. The Downtowners Association will provide Gloria with material for desired press releases. The idea of an annual meeting addressing the implementation of downtown plan projects was discussed.

Jeff Ubl reported that the Task Force suggested to gather pricing for the construction of the promenade sidewalk at the Civic Center this construction season was underway. He said he was getting prices to do the work and would compare them to the price to do the smaller sidewalk bid with the existing project and to replace it in several years. Conduit for future decorative lighting would be installed.

Bill Wocken reported that surface improvements around the 6th Street Ramp were being re-designed to accommodate the cultural trail and to allow for either one-way or two-way traffic on 6th Street and Thayer Avenue. The alley was also being discussed for a change order. This change would convert the alley from the asphalt paving that was specified with the project to concrete paving.

The cost of a study for the three lane proposal for Main Avenue and for the cultural trail will be included in 2015 budget discussions.

The pedestrian underpass under the railroad on 5th Street was discussed. This was part of the pending TIGER grant. There was no news on this grant. Andrea Travnicek volunteered to contact the BNSF Railroad to begin discussions with them about this improvement. Bill Wocken will provide materials to her relative to the project.

Bruce Whittey reported to the group that the development his group was working on was on schedule in its development stages. All the study results received to date were positive toward the project and people were interested in the activity. He said he hoped more could be announced within 60 days.

The agenda having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 am.

Reported by Bill Wocken