

Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force

The Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force met at 8:30 am on April 14, 2015 in the Mayor's Conference Room in the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street in Bismarck. Present were: John Warford, Andrea Travnicek, Dawn Kopp, Kate Herzog, Jason Tomanek, Kayla Ver Helst, Kevin Ruhland and Jim Christianson. Also present were Bruce Whittey, Sheri Grossman and Bill Wocken.

John Warford opened the meeting. The minutes of the February 10, 2015 and March 11, 2015 meetings were received and approved on the motion of Jim Christianson with Dawn Kopp seconding. All present approved of the action.

John Warford asked for a report on the critical elements the Task Force had identified for itself. Bill Wocken reported that a consultant was under contract to work on the Main Avenue "Road Diet" project. He said a physical inventory was underway and it was hoped that a demonstration project would be ready for field installation in August.

The Depot Plaza project was moving forward as a private venture and the 5th Street design project was being incorporated into the Five South Project. Several meetings had been held to discuss the implementation of the design elements involved in this project. The hotel included in the downtown plan was a part of the Five South project.

The pedestrian underpass was discussed briefly. Earlier Andrea Travnicek had coordinated a phone conversation with the Burlington Northern regarding this improvement. There are design questions that will need to be answered before this improvement can be developed further. Andrea and Bill Wocken will contact the railroad and, if needed, the Federal Railroad Administration to formulate a strategy for this underpass project.

Jason Tomanek reported that the new downtown design standards were being introduced in ordinance at the City Commission meeting of this evening with final action expected by the end of the month.

The next tier of downtown projects identified in the plan was briefly discussed. It was decided to request money in the 2016 budget to do a redesign of Chancellor Square. Several of the other projects will depend on the progress of the Five South project.

The group discussed future activities to support downtown plan activities. The Downtowners agreed to make task force members aware of downtown happenings and events. Future TIGER grant applications were discussed. Kayla Ver Helst agreed to propose a pro-active plan for preparation of future grant applications.

Kate Herzog reported there are 33 empty tree pits in the downtown area with 11 being within Chancellor Square. The group felt that a request to replace the trees in the

Chancellor Square pits should be filled with 2016 budget and that the City Forester should be invited to the next meeting to discuss options for the other 22 pits.

Bruce Whittey told the task force that plans were progressing well for the Five South project. Several review sessions have been held with city staff. A development agreement and a project proposal were in the final development stages. The necessary properties had been acquired by Bismarck Futures and were being held for the project. The developer and the city were presently discussing tax increment and other financial considerations for the project.

John Warford asked the group if other downtown initiatives should be investigated. It was suggested that a closer relationship with Camp Hancock would be very desirable and it was suggested that Jonathan Campbell, Camp Hancock manager be invited to the next task force meeting.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for May12, 2015.

The agenda having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 am.

Reported by Bill Wocken