

Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force

The Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force met at 8:30 am on June 9, 2015 in the Mayor's Conference Room in the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street in Bismarck. Present were: Brenda Smith, Kayla Ver Helst, Jim Christianson, Dawn Kopp, Kate Herzog, Jason Tomanek and Kevin Ruhland. Also present were Keith Hunke, Daniel Nairn, one unidentified guest and Bill Wocken.

Brenda Smith opened the meeting. The minutes of the May 12, 2015 meeting were received and approved on the motion of Kate Herzog with Kevin Ruhland seconding. All present approved of the action.

Kayla Ver Helst made suggestions for applying for a future TIGER grant. She said the 2015 grant round had just closed. No planning grant funds were available this year. There was a \$500 million appropriation but the applications received requested \$14.5 billion. Kayla said the city's application will be much more competitive if the railroad underpass is a committed project, if at least 40 percent of the needed match is in the bank and if the project is shovel-ready. Also of great importance will be the leveraging of other resources by the TIGER grant as demonstrated by letters of commitment. In discussion it was suggested we need to progress some of the downtown development projects and the Five South project before filing an application. The transit terminal was one of the key items in the past application. It is still actively being considered.

There were no further developments to report on the tree replacement project. This project will need to be linked to the Forestry Department and some education on downtown owners' tree care responsibilities will need to happen.

Bill Wocken reported that earlier action by the committee would result in a request to the city Budget Committee for funds to engage an engineer to plan for the removal of Chancellor Square and downtown pavement replacement.

A letter was recently sent to the Burlington Northern Railroad asking them to review the proposed pedestrian underpass at 5th Street and to begin discussions about the underpass. It was too early to expect any results.

Jason Tomanek reported that the downtown design standards had been adopted for the Downtown Core and Downtown Fringe zones. Copies of the standards had been provided to area design professionals and the Renaissance Zone Authority was using the criteria. Jason also reported that the Planning Commission will soon be considering changing the zoning on much of the land south of the railroad tracks between 3rd and 5th Streets to Downtown Core and Downtown Fringe designations. He said the department was looking into enlarging the present parking district to include more of this same area.

Bill Wocken reported that at a previous meeting the question had been asked if the proceeds from a 2012 increase in parking fines had been designated for downtown purposes. He reported they had not.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for July 14, 2015.

The agenda having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 am.

Reported by Bill Wocken