

Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force

The Downtown Bismarck Sub Area Plan Implementation Task Force met at 8:30 am on July 14, 2015 in the Mayor's Conference Room in the City/County Building at 221 North 5th Street in Bismarck. Present were: John Warford, Jim Christianson, Dawn Kopp, Kate Herzog, Larry Oswald and Kevin Ruhland. Also present were Keith Hunke, Amos Kolbo, Keenan Hauff, Mark Berg, Sheri Grossman, Mayor Seminary and Bill Wocken.

The minutes of the June 9, 2015 meeting were received and approved on the motion of Kate Herzog with Dawn Kopp seconding. All present approved of the action.

Mayor Seminary spoke briefly about the growth of the downtown. He said he was gratified to see the new ideas and young people in the downtown. He remarked that a busy and vibrant downtown is the key to a vibrant city. He recalled the emphasis the MEDAG project had placed on the downtown and how that emphasis was being converted to activity and growth in the area today.

Keenan Hauff and Amos Kolbo were invited to join the task force for this meeting to talk about downtown art in alley spaces. They advocated a new program named "Allery" to allow local artists to create art on the building sides in the alley between 5th and 6th Streets behind the Parkade. They said this concept was present in Fargo in Robert's Alley and they thought it would be a fine addition to downtown Bismarck as well. If successful, the project may be enlarged to include other alley areas.

The task force felt this project had merit but that it would need more background work before it could be presented to the City Commission. The group suggested Keenan and Amos talk to the Parking Authority and other owners of buildings along the proposed "Allery" project. The costs of the project, costs to provide lighting and sustainability over time were issues identified for review prior to a visit to the City Commission.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the redesign of Main Avenue with particular interest to the transition of the street from a four lane to a three lane section at Washington Street. Mark Berg presented several alternatives for a permanent transition structure. There was considerable discussion about the transition and whether or not it could be accomplished on a trial basis. It was felt that the branding of the downtown and the transition of the roadway needed to be considered together. The task force decided by consensus to place this item on the next meeting's agenda to allow the City Commission to review this issue.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for August 11, 2015.

The agenda having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:46 am.

Reported by Bill Wocken