

**RENAISSANCE ZONE AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
June 21, 2016**

The Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority met on June 21, 2016 in the David J. Blackstead Meeting Room in the City-County Office Building at 221 North 5th Street. Chairman Walth presided.

Authority members present were Josh Askvig, Jim Christianson, George Keiser, Todd Van Orman, and Chairman Walth.

Authority member Chuck Huber was absent.

Technical Advisors Bruce Whittey and Steph Smith were present.

Staff members present were Kim Lee (Planning Manager), Daniel Nairn (Planner), Carl Hokenstad (Community Development Director), Charlie Whitman (City Attorney), Sandra Bogaczyk (Office Assistant), Jason Tomanek (Assistant City Administrator), Brenda Johnson (Assessing), Will Hutchings (Planner).

Guests present were Madison Cermak of the Downtowners, Naomi Echternach of JLG Architects, Chad Thompson and Jeremy Mahany of The Starving Rooster.

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

The May 17, 2016 meeting minutes 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 May 17, 2016 meeting as distributed. The motion passed unanimously with members Askvig, Huber, Keiser, Van Orman, and Chairman Walth voting in favor.

RENAISSANCE ZONE PROJECT –

512 EAST MAIN AVENUE LEASE

Mr. Nairn stated that The Starving Rooster, LLC is requesting designation of the lease of 3,350 square feet of space in the building at 512 East Main Avenue as a Renaissance Zone project. The property is owned by Gulch Holdings II, LLC and is legally described as Lots 11-12, Block 46, Original Plat. Mr. Nairn stated that this is a lease of space within a prior Renaissance Zone project, so no capital investment is required for eligibility in the

Renaissance Zone program. However, the applicant proposes to make \$600,000 in leasehold improvements to the space prior to occupation. Based on the findings in the staff report, staff recommends approval of the designation of the lease of 3,350 square feet at 512 East Main Avenue by The Starving Rooster LLC as a Renaissance Zone project, with an exemption from state tax on income derived from the business location for five years beginning with the date of occupancy. Mr. Nairn stated that the project completion is projected for March of 2017.

Mr. Nairn further explained that The Starving Rooster application earned a high score using the Renaissance Zone criteria scoring sheet for project applications.

Mr. Keiser asked if the building received credit for a historic rehabilitation when it was rehabilitated. Ms. Lee replied that the front of the building was restored when the building was rehabilitated, but that it was not classified as a historic rehabilitation.

Mr. Walth commented that he loved to see investments like theirs and thanked the Starving Rooster for making the investment.

Mr. Whitley asked if the Bismarck restaurant would have the same look as the one in Minot. Mr. Thompson replied that like Minot the Bismarck area is steeped in agricultural history and their restaurant respects and speaks to that history. He also stated that he's proud to be in Bismarck and that the site in Bismarck would be unique, but with much of the same flavor at the Minot site.

Mr. Walth asked where the Starving Rooster's moniker originated. Mr. Thompson explained that their Minot space was once occupied by the Aultman & Taylor Machinery Company where a threshing machine was nicknamed the Starved Rooster as a source of pride since it was thought that the machine was so good it left no grain behind for a rooster to eat.

Mr. Christianson stated that it will be a great addition to downtown Bismarck and Mr. Whitley agreed that it is a great spot due to the volume of traffic.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Christianson and seconded by Mr. Keiser to approve the designation of the lease of 3,350 square feet at 512 East Main Avenue by The Starving Rooster as a Renaissance Zone project, with an exemption from state tax on income derived from the business location for five years beginning with the date of occupancy. The motion passed unanimously with members Askvig, Christianson, Keiser, Van Orman, and Chairman Walth voting in favor.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW –

100 WEST MAIN AVENUE

Ms. Smith, who is an acting advisor for the final design for 100 West Main Avenue – MetroPlains Management, LLC, abstained from commenting.

Ms. Echternach from JLG distributed the updated changes of elevations including the increased height of the parapet, and noting that the lap siding was removed. Flat panels have replaced the lap siding and the Nichiha will be the cream color. The color scheme was updated also. Samples were provided and distributed. Ms. Echternach stated that the dark color will be on the balconies only.

Mr. Keiser asked if the owner was satisfied with the color selection. Ms. Echternach stated that the owner approved the presentation.

Chair Walth mentioned that since there is also a landscaping plan, that his concerns are addressed.

Mr. Askvig thought the design was much better and there was a consensus of agreement.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Keiser and seconded by Mr. Askvig to approve the building and landscape plan for 100 West Main as presented at this meeting. The motion passed unanimously with members Askvig, Christianson, Keiser, Van Orman, and Chairman Walth voting in favor.

Mr. Keiser asked if there was a large cost difference between the previously requested materials and what has been accepted. Ms. Echternach stated that there was no significant increase in cost.

DOWNTOWN UPDATE PROVIDED BY THE DOWNTOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Ms. Cermak stated that she has no report except that there is a short Members on Main Street meeting at 8:30 p.m. at the Juniper Workantile on June 22, 2016 for anyone who wants to attend to hear about and discuss the restriping of Main Avenue.

OTHER BUSINESS –

VACANCY

Regarding the resignation of Jeff Ubl, there was a general consensus that the Authority does want to replace the open seat left by Jeff Ubl's resignation. The process was discussed and determined that the mayor appoints a new member who then must be approved by City Commission through the Consent Agenda process. Authority members can encourage

applicants to apply. Ms. Lee stated that if anyone had a candidate in mind to direct them to the application found on the website.

Ms. Lee mentioned that there are currently no applications.

COMMISSION PORTFOLIOS

Mr. Askvig stated that the Mayor's choice of Commissioner portfolios has not yet been announced.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW – 303 NORTH 4TH STREET

Regarding a recap of Downtown Design Review for 303 North 4th Street façade improvements, Mr. Nairn stated that staff and technical advisors met with the applicants and approved the application. They determined that the materials and design met Downtown Design guidelines and building code.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW PROCEDURES

Chair Walth asked Authority members if they think tiers should be created regarding Downtown Design Review actions where certain less-significant reviews could be approved by a committee of just the Technical Advisors and staff.

Mr. Askvig stated that he could see the action if there was a special time-concern, but that he was concerned that since the Authority is held responsible for review that perhaps it was not in the best interest of public to have decisions made outside the formal public forum of Renaissance Zone Authority meetings. He suggested that perhaps such a decision could be made using a consent agenda rather than a full presentation.

Mr. Keiser stated that it has not been a burden for Authority members and since transparency is important regarding decisions, that the burden should be on Authority members as opposed to city staff members.

There was a consensus that minor Downtown Design Review items could be addressed with a consent agenda and that this topic will again be discussed at a future Renaissance Zone Authority meeting.

FUTURE OF RENAISSANCE ZONE PROGRAM

Regarding the questions surrounding the future viability of the Renaissance Zone program, Chair Walth asked Authority members if they thought a needs assessment should be performed. The consensus was that yes a survey should be employed to determine need for further Renaissance Zone investment and to look at only the present designated zone.

Regarding the issue of the Department of Commerce granting an extension to the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority, and the Burleigh County Commission questioning the Commerce Department's authority to grant the City of Bismarck an extension, Mr. Whitman stated that he did not know the content of what the Burleigh County Commission sent to the Commerce Department in support of its argument against Commerce's decision to extend the Renaissance Zone designation, or whether such a statement had been sent yet. A statement would have to be submitted in order to open the discussion.

Mr. Tomanek stated that the City Assessing Division was forwarding tax assessments in order to compile current valuations of previously-approved Renaissance Zone projects.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Walth adjourned the meeting of the Bismarck Renaissance Zone Authority at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra Bogaczyk
Recording Secretary



Curt Walth
Chairman