

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18, 2009

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Frank Boots, David Boring, Bart Barringer, Tom Slater, Georgia Anderson, Eric Benson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Tammy Maisetti, Norma Reed

GUESTS: Councilman David Lopez, Doug Hosner, Lee Hedgepath, Steve Rank

CITY STAFF: Laurie Smith

STAFF: Nancy Young

Chairman Frank Boots called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE: Staff stated all correspondence has been delivered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Bart Barringer moved to approve the October 21, 2009 minutes of the Downtown Improvement District Board Meeting. Tom Slater seconded. Unanimous approval.

Introductions were made.

COUNCILMAN DAVID LOPEZ - Councilman Dave Lopez explained that his vision is for the next generation to be able to live, work and play downtown. Councilman Lopez explained that Bart Barringer's project at 14th and J Streets is a good start for our downtown – a place where you live, work and play downtown. Young adults in there 20's want to live downtown where there is retail and housing.

Councilman Lopez feels we should build towards the freeway between 6th and 9th Streets. This location would give easy freeway access.

Having projects with retail on the street and housing above is important for our downtown. This would be a new first impression for downtown.

An idea for redeveloping 6th Street through 9th Street could be to develop a Tram System that would go through to the Ralston Tower and around downtown.

Doug Hosner explained that he just came back from a business trip to Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Their downtown was blighted and the Arts community got together and convinced the landlords to let Artists use the vacant storefronts as studios and art galleries for artist, sculptor's, painters. It took awhile, but now people shop and it is a vibrant downtown. Doug feels this is something that we could do with our vacant storefronts.

Georgia Anderson suggested we bring a Trader Joe's downtown. Councilman Lopez stated Trader Joe's is a tough company. Their criteria is that there must be three (3) anchor stores, and must have revenue sharing, road traffic and clusters.

David Boring suggested pushing out Ninth Street. Make a promenade on Ninth Street starting off of Briggsmore. This area, David Boring feels, needs to be put back on the front burner. Councilman Lopez feels Archway Commons is a real nice project which will be at Carver and Ninth Streets.

Traffic downtown was discussed. Some businesses want the traffic going through downtown moving slowly and then there are some businesses that want it moving fast.

Councilman Lopez mentioned that Prime Shine is adding a new location at Morris and McHenry Avenues.

It was mentioned that McHenry Avenue is really blighted right now.

Tom Slater explained that the Redevelopment Commission in the General Plan recommended a Shopping Center from 6th to 9th Streets.

Councilman Lopez explained that we need to be ready for the High Speed Rail System. He explained that we will be able to travel to Sacramento or Fresno within one (1) hour.

Tom Slater stated that long range plans are key to downtown. Tom feels we just got derailed because of the economy.

Georgia Anderson and Tom Slater feel a Trader Joe's or Whole Food Store would work for our downtown.

MATTERS FOR THE GOOD OF DOWNTOWN

Gallo Center for the Arts – Doug Hosner reported on upcoming performances at the Gallo Center.

Economic Partnership Meeting Update – Staff reported the meeting for November 17th had been cancelled and rescheduled for December 15th.

Redevelopment Update – Laurie Smith reported that there is no money. Final notice from the State of California: 2 million 15 thousand and 41 dollars is what the State will take from Modesto. There has been no mention on the lawsuit.

The 10th and H Project is going before the City Council on December 1st for zoning issues.

Commonwealth Modesto Update – David Boring reported that the idea the Commonwealth Group is working with is "Modesto is Alive." Georgia Anderson feels that they should put a verb in there. Councilman Lopez explained that the Commonwealth Group is not knocking anything off the table.

Branding will take a lot of effort. It was discussed that Modesto should play off the arts and local music scene.

Tom Slater stated we are a small city that supports its self from within through arts and local music.

Councilman Lopez feels this town has to work on shopping local. Staff explained that The Alliance has a shop local campaign called Count On Me, with posters and buttons.

Frank Boots thanked Councilmember Lopez for giving a discount for local businesses bidding on jobs.

Beautification Reports

Color Modesto – Staff reported that the pots won't be planted until December. The Garden Club would like to see clusters of pots on the corners and only have pots in the center of town. Staff clarified that we must be equal to our members. Staff feels that some of the Garden Club members don't like to work between 6th and 9th Streets.

Parking and Transportation Report

Free Parking on Friday, November 27th – Staff reported that she had requested free on-street parking for Friday, November 27th. The City will put out a Public Service Announcement.

Newsletter Report

Downtown News – Staff reported that the newsletter will be going out tomorrow.

Promotion Reports

Downtown Entertainment District Report – Staff reported that everything is going well downtown with the clubs. There are still some businesses who have not submitted their Entertainment Applications.

Holiday Parade – Staff reported the Parade is Saturday, December 5th. The streets will be closed at 4:00 p.m.

Amgen Tour of California – Staff reported that Amgen is coming to Modesto on May 19th.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Steve Rank explained that he has been involved with the Downtown Entertainment District for a while. He owns an investigation and security business. He was working for a downtown club but isn't now since the economy isn't good.

Lee Hedgepath explained he shares the view of being interested in living, working, playing downtown.

Doug Hosner explained that Seattle completely transformed their city.

Steve Rank stated there is a definite difference between daytime downtown and the nighttime crowd that comes downtown.

Doug Hosner explained that Gallo Center for the Arts brings 1200 people downtown on a Sunday and there aren't very many restaurants open. Tom Slater explained that there is not enough money made on a Sunday for these restaurants to be open.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION

1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Young