

**STATE OF TEXAS §**

**AND RANDALL §**

**CITY OF AMARILLO §**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May 2010, the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Board met in a regularly scheduled meeting at 12:00 p.m., in Room 306, City Hall, 509 SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Amarillo, Texas, with the following members present:

<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>MEETINGS HELD</b>	<b>MEETINGS ATTENDED</b>
John Ben Blanchard, Amarillo Independent School District	Yes	5	5
Carol Autry, Potter County	Yes	27	25
Paula Bliss, City of Amarillo	Yes	30	28
H.R. Kelly, Potter County	Yes	13	11
Richard Brown, Chairman, City of Amarillo	Yes	29	27
Lilia Escajeda, Amarillo College	Yes	25	24
Paul Harpole, Vice Chair, City of Amarillo	Yes	29	27
Sonya Letson, Potter County	Yes	29	24
Dr. Paul Proffer, Amarillo Hospital District	Yes	14	14

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

- Dean Frigo, Assistant City Manager
- Kelley Shaw, Planning Director
- Marcus Norris, City Attorney
- Karon Watkins, Recording Secretary
- Melissa Dailey, DAI

Chairman Brown opened the meeting at 12:00 p.m., established a quorum and conducted the consideration of the following items.

ITEM 1 Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 8, 2010.

Chairman Brown asked for corrections, deletions or changes to minutes and hearing none approved the April 8, 2010 minutes as previously distributed.

ITEM 2 Receive and discuss the report from the Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards Subcommittee.

Chairman Brown presented the results of the Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standard (DAUDS) subcommittee, which consisted of himself, Vice-Chairman Harpole, Board Members Letson and Bliss representing the TIRZ Board, Beth Duke representing Center City, Melissa Dailey representing Downtown Amarillo Inc. (DAI), and Martin Roden and Kelley Shaw representing the City of Amarillo’s Engineering and Planning Departments respectively. Chairman Brown stated the subcommittee met every Tuesday for seven (7) weeks. DAI took the lead in drafting the guidelines and coordinating the input of interest groups, property owners, and downtown residents to develop a cohesive plan that will protect investments, encourage new development and serve as a framework for providing a viable urban environment for downtown Amarillo. Center City is focused on the requirements and needs of the downtown property owners and occupants and their Board completely supports the proposed guidelines and believes they will help preserve current historical areas and make downtown Amarillo more inviting for redevelopment as well as new development. Chairman Brown noted the DAUDS main focal point was the pedestrian and creating a walkable, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.

Chairman Brown acknowledged Board Member Letson’s efforts in heading the review concerning the DAUDS vs. the existing Zoning Ordinance. Chairman Brown reiterated that the DAUDS is in fact, a

zoning ordinance and as such, the TIRZ Board (Board) has no jurisdiction in approving, denying or taking any action on any issues governed by the proposed DAUDS. The duty of the Board was to decide if the DAUDS aligns with the Board's mission and if so, provide its support. Chairman Brown explained the DAUDS is the first overlay zoning ordinance in the City of Amarillo and encompasses the entire TIRZ boundary plus the residential area left out of the zone. The existing zoning ordinances still apply, however, new development and major redevelopment projects must comply with both the existing zoning ordinances and the DAUDS but if a conflict between the two ordinances should occur, the DAUDS would be the governing ordinance.

Chairman Brown acknowledged Board Member Bliss' efforts in heading the review concerning Existing Costs vs. Incremental Costs. Chairman Brown stated there are presently costs associated with the existing zoning ordinance and the subcommittee considers any incremental costs related to DAUDS compliance to be minimal, reasonable and consistent with the Board mission. The subcommittee views the ordinance as an incentive towards development and revitalization in areas within the TIRZ boundaries. Chairman Brown noted that the existing lighting focus was largely based on vehicular safety. He commented on the importance of pedestrian safety and walkability which is one of the most important facts to the revitalization of downtown. There has been some discussion regarding assistance with the initial incremental cost such as, Xcel absorbing some of the wiring and utility burial expense, the City incurring all or part of the operating costs and TIRZ funds being allocated initially for some of the fixtures in an attempt to encourage others to initiate these improvements on their own.

Chairman Brown acknowledged Board Member Harpole's efforts in heading the review concerning Signage. The subcommittee concluded fewer and more uniform signage in the downtown area would be more conducive to a downtown urban environment. Although the DAUDS may be slightly more restrictive than other parts of town, the resulting affect will be beneficial to everyone allowing advertising to be effective as well as attractive.

As head of the review concerning review and processing applications, Chairman Brown stated City Staff will handle the initial forms, applications, guidance and compliance of a project. A Design Review Board (DRB) will be created, appointed by the City Commission, to review new development and major redevelopment or changes and possible variations from the DAUDS in much the same way as the Planning and Zoning Commission oversees existing zoning matters. In the event an applicant wishes to appeal the DRB decision, the appeal would be heard by the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA). The DRB will be appointed from interest groups, downtown residents, developers, downtown property owners as well as technical experts.

Chairman Brown acknowledged Mr. Shaw's efforts in heading the review concerning City Services. The subcommittee examined water and sewer, lighting replacement, drainage, solid waste and code enforcement issues. The subcommittee found no downside to water and sewer lines of which 95% are in the alleys or solid waste. Chairman Brown stated the cost of replacing existing street lighting with pedestrian lighting would be relatively benign with most of the incremental costs being the new fixtures. The subcommittee did have some concerns in regards to drainage and the affect bulb-outs might have. However, bulb-outs will be suggested not required, therefore creating flexibility on a case-by-case basis. The subcommittee concluded code enforcement was complaint driven and had no impact at this time.

Chairman Brown stated after many review meetings, the subcommittee recommended the Board move in favor of adopting the DAUDS, understanding some minor tweaking will still occur.

Chairman Brown asked for any comments from the Board. Board Member Letson noted the slight difference between the TIRZ boundary and the DAUDS boundary and the provision that public projects such as the Potter County Courthouse Renovation would be treated as existing zoning applications. Board Member Letson added however, that Potter County's project will include the walkway corridor standards set forth in the DAUDS.

ITEM 3 Receive and discuss a legal review by the City Attorney on the proposed Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standard.

Chairman Brown asked Mr. Norris, City Attorney to present the legal review of the proposed DAUDS. Mr. Norris stated a draft ordinance had been prepared. The first pages summarize the procedural steps as outlined in the DAUDS, in greater detail to adhere to due process. The remainder consists of the actual

standards, both mandatory and suggested. Mr. Norris stated the proposed DAUDS will go before the Planning and Zoning Commission and if approved, go before the City Commission for a minimum of two hearings. Mr. Norris added given the ordinance's significance, a public hearing or workshop could be scheduled by the City Commission as well. Mr. Norris asked if there were any questions concerning the legal review.

Chairman Brown asked about the public hearing procedure. Mr. Norris explained that at both the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission and City Commission public hearings would be held and notice will be posted in the newspaper. Mr. Shaw added that a workshop had been scheduled for the next P&Z meeting on May 24 and the ordinance will be on the agenda as an action item for the meeting scheduled on June 14.

Mr. Norris stated he would correct the ordinance if the Board voted to adopt the DAUDS, to read "proposed Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards" rather than "proposed by Downtown Amarillo Inc. Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards" since this has become a joint community effort.

Board Member Blanchard asked if this would affect the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and suggested a reminder be added to the ordinance stating the ordinance is in compliance with ADA. Mr. Norris agreed a statement could be added to that affect; however it was not necessary as all proposed guideline designs were done by design professionals involved in ADA compliance.

ITEM 4 Consider a recommendation regarding adoption of the Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards.

A motion to adopt the proposed Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards was made by Board Member Blanchard and seconded by Board Member Letson. Chairman Brown called for a vote which carried unanimously.

ITEM 5 Presentation by Downtown Amarillo Inc., on the newly formed loan consortium for downtown projects.

Chairman Brown asked Melissa Dailey to comment on the newly formed loan consortium for downtown projects. Ms. Dailey stated she had been working with national and local banks for approximately six months and had invited them to participate in a loan consortium for downtown Amarillo projects. These deliberations resulted in seven local banks, Amarillo National Bank, Happy State Bank, Herring Bank, First Bank Southwest, First United Bank, First Bank of Texas and Interstate Bank uniting to create and participate in a \$5.6mm loan consortium for downtown projects. Ms. Dailey stated it is critical to spread the risk between several banks in an unproven market like downtown Amarillo to help primary projects get started. This allows all banks which want to participate in the revitalization of downtown Amarillo a chance to incur only part of the risk. Ms. Dailey said this consortium should fund 3 – 4 projects. This will be a revolving loan, setup for five years with the expectation once projects become stabilized, those projects will be refinanced and the original funds returned to the consortium. Panhandle Regional Planning Commission will accept applications and partner in dealings with developers and owners. Mr. Shaw extended his thanks to Ms. Dailey on her efforts to pull the consortium together and made note that this type of consortium is monumental. Ms. Dailey added she feels this loan consortium shows the commitment of local banks and others to the revitalization of downtown Amarillo.

ITEM 6 Discuss preliminary TIRZ revenue estimates for the 2010-2011 budget year.

Mr. Frigo stated he received the preliminary values from the appraisal district and downtown values are down slightly down from last year. The Appraisal District estimated next year's value to be \$178,600, while current year's values were \$179,826. Mr. Frigo stated this will impact TIRZ revenue at \$412,000 for next year, whereas the current year was \$430,000, a drop of \$18,000.

ITEM 7 Report on Status of Projects:

- a. Fisk Courtyard by Marriott Redevelopment Project

Mr. Shaw stated there was nothing new to report.

- b. Double R Lofts

Mr. Shaw stated there was nothing new to report.

c. Downtown Amarillo Inc. Consultant Planning Studies

Ms. Dailey stated the Housing and Land Use Studies were nearly complete. There will be one more workshop and expects the studies to be finalized the week of June 7<sup>th</sup>.

ITEM 8 Committee Reports:

a. Marketing

Nothing to report.

b. Hotel Development

Mr. Shaw stated the pool for the RFP had been cut to four. The RFPs have been sent to those four with a return deadline of June 15, 2010.

Board Member Blanchard asked if parameters were specified in the RFPs for example, the number of rooms in the hotel, whether any of these developers were tied to any commercial names such as the Courtyard by Marriott and the developer's viability concerning registration systems. Mr. Shaw answered yes, and that those types of parameters were included in the RFQs. Mr. Shaw said expectations were high to receive highly defined plans which included financial figures. Mr. Shaw stated in regards to the developer's connections with commercially known names, each of the developers asked to submit RFPs have worked with specific brands and were asked to identify those names in the RFP. Mr. Shaw stated the four developers chosen had worked with brands which are considered more than adequate.

Vice Chairman Harpole asked if any of the four developers had expressed any interest in the Herring Hotel. Mr. Shaw stated one of the applicants did express an interest in the Herring Hotel as they have previous experience in the renovation of older hotels.

c. Subcommittee on Extensions

The committee did not meet.

ITEM 9 Public Comments

The Board can take no action on matters presented or discussed. Beth Duke reminded everyone High Noon on the Square begins June 2<sup>nd</sup> and invited everyone to come and participate. Ms. Duke expressed thanks to Potter County for allowing Center City the use of their grounds.

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There being no further items before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m. All remarks are recorded and are on file in the Planning Department.