

January 28 CBID Retreat Overview

The 2010 CBID Retreat took place on January 28th at the River Park events building west. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 am.

The commissioners were asked to send in ideas for a "To Do" list to discuss during the retreat and a few were sent in. However, with using the topics from the last CBID retreat and topics from the past year, a list was compiled and visible throughout the day. The items on the list were as follows:

- Secure a Corporate Entity to locate in Downtown
- Complete the parking lot on 2nd & B Street
- Improvements to the parking lot at 2nd & Garrison
- New City Hall
- What do you want to achieve
- Promotion of West End Park
- New Downtown parking deck
- Clayton Expressway landscape, (trees)
- Towson Avenue street scape
- Completion of Garrison Avenue street scape
- Develop city owned 54 acres on Clayton
- Strengths & weaknesses of CBID
- Identify allies and partners for Downtown development and enhancement
- UAFS apartments Downtown
- New State Investment Tax Credit legislation
- Status of Grand Avenue entry lot
- Downtown Art
- Relocation of the rail yard
- How is the new maintenance code working
- CBID as a catalyst for Downtown projects

Throughout the day you added several additional topics to discuss. These included:

- Garrison Avenue Bridge, (lighting)
- Retirement housing
- Walking trail system
- More residential in general
- CBID Tax Credit Legislation
- Expansion of the Trolley

Out of these topics of concern several were identified as being complete or as would be complete in the next few months. Those topics were:

- Completion of the parking lot at 2nd & B Streets
- Garrison Avenue street scape completion
- New State Investment Tax Credit
- Status of Grand Avenue entry lot
- How is the new maintenance code working

The facilitator for the day was Mr. Rusty Myers and he laid out the challenges for the day beginning with the trolley tour and what he wanted the commissioners to look for while taking the tour. The tour took the commissioners and all who were in attendance through the entire boundary of the CBID. The commissioners were challenged to look for first impression items and think about improvements. They were also asked to discuss the successes of 2009 and include any information on possible projects that

are in the works. Keeping the items on the 'To Do' list in each of the commissioner's minds was also suggested.

Once the commissioners returned from the tour they openly discussed what their impressions were. Some felt the area looked "pretty rough" while others felt like there had been improvements. All were in agreement that private property owners needed to be pushed to keep their properties looking nice. This discussion led to the topic of the property maintenance code and standards.

- How do we use maintenance standards? Chairman Griffin stated how easy the use of the web site is to report concerns on properties.
- Do we have a copy of the standards? Ms. Hughes will provide copies of the maintenance standards to the commissioners.
- Should the CBID be the "bad guys" and report properties within the district? It was determined that it is the Commission's responsibility to encourage all property owners to keep their property in good standing.
- File all of your complaints and concerns on Downtown properties with neighborhood services individually. Don't just send in a list of properties.

Several buildings were identified as possible projects which could be "reused" or renovated into a better use. Those buildings were:

- The building at 100 North A
- The building, R A Young
- The building at Howard Johnson Hotel
- The building at Town Club

How the CBID could "speed up" the Riverfront project was brought to attention.

- Should the CBID push for the infrastructure, water and sewer, to the area.
- CBID work with the USMSM and initiate the requests for this
- Get "shovel ready" areas for potential investors.

During the lunch time of the retreat, John Castro and Kasey Moran with the River Fort Smith project gave the presentation which was currently being presented to the community. During the CBID November meeting the commissioners present all agreed that this would be beneficial to hear and see what was being presented to the citizens who ultimately would have to vote on a sales tax for some of the improvements along Clayton in Downtown.

Additional City staff, Ray Gosack, Stan Snodgrass and Wally Bailey attended during this time to also see the presentation.

After the River Fort Smith Project presentation the commissioners set short term and long term goals.

Short Term Goals:

- CBID to support other groups working on projects either in or near the district.
- CBID Commissioners to use their influence to help improve public policy.
- Special Event improvements for the parking lot at 2nd & Garrison.
- Downtown Art:
 - Bass Reeves
 - 701 Rogers, CBID Property
- Push for infrastructure along Clayton to be shovel ready for investors

- Promotion of the Park at West End
- Push maintenance standards
- Marketing plan for the riverfront

Long Term Goals:

For all long term goals it was decided to design who asks, or who will be used to encourage progress, based on the personal connections each commissioner might have. To be successful a plan should be created which will partner the person or persons making the ask to the appropriate project.

- New City Hall project
 - Build Coalitions
 - Marketing plan
 - Concentrate on the facts
 - Design a total package which combines property purchase, build back and financing.
- Secure a corporate entity to locate in Downtown
 - Be shovel ready
 - Work closely with Chamber
- Relocation of the rail yard
- More residential
 - UAFS
 - Retirement
- CBID Tax Credit Bill

Additional items were given some notice:

- Garrison Avenue Bridge, (Lighting)
- Expansion of the Trolley
- Walking trail system
- Continue work on revised design guidelines
- Marketing plan, overall
- Develop the City owned property along Clayton

The retreat adjourned at 2:50 pm.