



**Urban Renewal Agency  
Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2010**

**Members Present:**

Bob Gordon, Chairman  
Mike Frink, Vice Chairman  
Sheridan Norberg  
John Canaday

**Members Absent:**

Jacque Driggs

**Also Present:**

John Dahlgren, City Planner  
Laura Hansen, Director of Community Development  
Yvonne Kelley, Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Gordon called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Frink made a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Norberg seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the motion carried.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2010**

Mr. Frink motioned to approve the minutes of February 23, 2010.

Mr. Norberg seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the motion carried.

**CITIZEN REQUESTS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

None

## BUSINESS

### 1) Review of 2005 Plan

Mr. Dahlgren asked, "What are the things you like and don't like about the plan?"

Mr. Frink stated I thought we could take sentences out and I tried that but there is too much missing in between if we take certain lines out of the middle.

Mr. Dahlgren stated it's written from an academic standpoint. It's written with a lot of planner jargon. I don't think it fits what we need it talks more about buildings than areas. It talks about how to do things but it doesn't really discuss what to do. A lot of this was geared strictly towards Main Street. I need direction from the board on what we would like to see first. My recommendation would be to start looking at blighted areas within the City and drawing some boundaries and then we will go from there.

Mr. Frink asked, "Is it our intention to use areas or buildings or do the areas and then do the buildings as projects?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated you need to define the areas and then define how best to eliminate blight and how best to get the citizens involved. I've been looking through the old meetings. There were a couple of public meetings on this. One was at the bowling alley and one was here in City Council chambers. There were power point presentations done up for those. It looks like there was some public input but it wasn't specific to the people that were affected by this plan. This plan wasn't discussed it was a general City wide thing come if you want to. In my opinion that's wrong. We need to figure out the areas, contact everybody, bring them in and say we've determined your area is blighted. It doesn't mean we are going to take your house or your business. We want to know what we can do to help you to fix it up. I believe that is the role of this committee.

Mrs. Hansen stated one thing I would recommend, the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) for instance has a very good process as far as getting public input. Whenever you are dealing with areas and maps hold it as an open house. Have maps of your areas and make it open to the public to come in and view those maps and submit their comments on those maps. That's a good general process to get feedback. The other thing I would suggest in this plan if you are coming up with more areas in the plan that need to be changed and saved maybe approach it differently. Just circle the areas you would like to see incorporated into a new plan. It does sound like there is too much work that needs to be done in that existing plan than just red lining it.

Mr. Frink stated there is information in there we can use. My first feeling was we can take this section out and that section out but then it doesn't make any sense because you are missing so much. Do we have what was shown as blighted buildings when we did the historic downtown district? That would help us identify the buildings after we put the areas in.

Mr. Dahlgren stated that was done before I got here. I haven't seen them.

Mr. Frink stated I know we did that because a lady came in and we paid her. That was a Main Street project and she came in. We saw the application and we paid her \$10,000.00 to fill out the form.

Mrs. Hansen asked, "Do you know who it was?"

Mr. Frink replied I don't. I believe her name was Mary.

Mr. Dahlgren stated Ms. Ruth Lauritzen will know.

Mr. Frink stated she came and gave us the downtown historic district. I know she had to skip specific building because they weren't historic. We could use some of that. The URA is about historic preservation also. That might be a way to start if we get that so we know what we are skipping over, what needs to be done and some direction for the building owners. One positive thing that I would like to bring out at those meetings is the tax deductions you get when you are in a historic preservation district and a historic building. I know that is a huge sell to the people that own those buildings.

Mrs. Hansen stated you do have to have the areas established before you start picking the projects. I would still focus on the areas and classify those. The buildings within those areas would be the projects. You do need areas and not every building within those areas has to be a blighted building. You do need to start with areas within the town and that has to go through that adoption process and public input. That is where the open house would be a good thing and make it an educational opportunity to let the public know that just because your property is in one of those areas it doesn't necessarily mean your property is blighted. You happen to fall within this area. It would be a good educational opportunity for the public as well as getting their input because they may have other areas that we may not have on there that could be included too. This is our opportunity to start over and involve the public and make sure we have the public's buy in. Once we have the public's buy in then we'll have the governing body's buy in as well.

Mr. Gordon stated because our mission is somewhat focused as opposed to an overall plan it becomes a subset of the plan, we have a particular goal for the URA. Would the starting point be to get that document the woman prepared, take a look at that and try to work on the boundaries? Would that be the starting place?

Mr. Dahlgren stated that's a good document to look at and I'm sure Ms. Lauritzen has a copy but I think it was a more historic preservation commission thing than a Main Street. I know Main Street was involved but I think Ms. Lauritzen did the grant.

Mr. Frink stated we wanted the designation and we received the grant to do it and then we worked right with her. We talked to the State Main Street and they gave us some grant money to have the lady fill out the form for us and it worked because we got the designation.

Mrs. Hansen asked, "Do you remember when that was?"

Mr. Frink stated I think it was in 2007.

Mr. Dahlgren stated it didn't get adopted by the National Park Service until last year.

Mr. Frink stated I see you gave us all a copy of the action plan. We do have some roles in there too. I think we should be writing those things down that are in that action plan and what it affects and get with those people that are listed with you. We are in there partnering with Futures or Main Street or the Community Development department on different things that are in there. If you could make a list of those I think it would help us.

Mr. Dahlgren stated it would and I didn't think of that. I will go through the plan and make a list of the URA actions and email them out to everybody.

Mr. Frink stated then we need to get a hold of the partners. Some of that stuff in that plan is going to be part of our plan when we write ours. It will be a good place to start and make sure we have our partners on board and we keep them informed of what we're doing with it so that we don't have so much overlap.

Mr. Dahlgren stated I also gave you a copy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> South Street Beautification Project. This was actually part of an appendix to a grant application. Please look through that I guess the URA was very involved with this.

Mr. Frink stated they wrote it. They were expecting a lot of money from Exxon and Union Pacific. They were going to do it because it was approved. They were going to phase it in. I don't know what happened to it.

Mr. Gordon stated Exxon and the Union Pacific changed their priorities to education from community improvement.

Mr. Frink stated the original plan which included the first phase was going to be to put up. The fence next to the railroad was going to hide it and have Union Pacific logos on every fence post all along the south side. Phase two was to put in the landscaping. I'm glad the underpass was done first because it really looks nice.

Mr. Gordon asked, "In respect to that plan, do you want us to look through it?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated look through the plan. I don't know where it is in development right now but it is moving forward. I will see what I can find out and see how much it's changed and maybe use that as part of our overall plan.

Mrs. Hansen stated that is part of the City's Strategic Plan that they just adopted, the South Street beautification.

Mr. Canaday stated that street does need some help. We have patched it but it is going to need to be redone and it's going to be expensive.

Mr. Gordon asked, "Is there any State money because that is Highway 530?"

Mrs. Hansen asked, "Have they applied for any State grants?"

Mr. Canaday replied not that I know of. I know it is on the urban systems.

Mrs. Hansen stated it is but it might have been on the priority list for urban systems.

Mr. Canaday stated even if it makes the list it is still ten or twelve years out.

Mr. Dahlgren asked, "Is that because of the design of the road or because it's been so long since it's been redone?"

Mr. Canaday stated it's because of the design of the road. It's the sub-grade. That whole subdivision is basically built on a landfill. It's sitting on cinders and burn piles of whatever the railroad dumped in there.

Mr. Gordon asked, "Isn't that whole area a flood plain?"

Mr. Canaday replied it's technically under the banks of the river so yes it is a flood plain.

Mr. Gordon stated that is problematic as far as upgrading the buildings along there, I don't think you can get any money to build anything there or improve what's there.

Mrs. Hansen stated a lot of it is just flood plain not flood way. It is buildable within the flood plain; you would just have to conform to the flood standards with elevation. Federal funding however can be impacted by anything in the flood plain. It depends on the project. For road improvement they may not care as much, however regarding structures, I've seen an entire project shut down because one little foot of the property is in the flood plain because of grant funding.

Mr. Gordon stated since it's a major thoroughfare of the community and gets a lot of traffic and it's such an eye sore along there even the Union Pacific buildings look like they are crumbling even if you went with this plan to screen the yards, the south side of that street has a real mix of body shops. You have residential mixed in with other things like storage units. How could we visually improve that area?

Mrs. Hansen stated that would be an excellent thing to put in the URA's plan because that whole street is zoned commercial. Those residential units that are along that street are grandfathered in so as far as something that would be excellent to have in the URA plan is to encourage enforcement of the grandfathered discontinuance. You could propose a shorter discontinuance period. Right now under our zoning ordinance if a house is not occupied up to eighteen months it can be reoccupied again as long as it's within eighteen months. Maybe part of something that the URA could propose to the Planning and Zoning Commission is within this district; have a shorter period of time maybe a six month period of time just to encourage that discontinuance of those grandfathered uses along there to encourage commercial use. That is just a suggestion. That is a good thing to have in your plan. Work on grandfathered structures and propose this to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Frink asked, "Is that road wide enough?"

Mr. Canaday replied it is but it could use widening.

Mr. Gordon asked, "Are there opportunities to acquire property and convert it in the URA?"

Mrs. Hansen asked, "As far as the City acquiring property?"

Mr. Gordon replied yes.

Mrs. Hansen stated if we have money to do it.

Mr. Dahlgren stated there would be a lot of grant money included in that and very little City match if we are going to do it in the next couple years. It would really have to be grant funded rather than City funded.

Mrs. Hansen stated but that could be something you could put in your plan.

Mr. Gordon asked, "The metal building that's been under construction on the road to the Island for a long time now, is it occupied?" Is it still under construction?

Mr. Norberg stated it's occupied but it might not be finished. It's Lee War's.

Mrs. Hansen stated I will have the Building Inspector look into that.

Mr. Frink stated that was a bad situation because they gave him thirty days to get it done or it would be torn down. He got it done enough to where they were satisfied.

Mr. Frink asked, "How do we split the projects up?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated if you're doing an area you're doing an area. Your area is your project.

Mrs. Hansen stated legally you can't have a project until you have a legal plan.

Mr. Frink asked, "Do you want to do the road as a project and then a year later do the fence or do the whole thing or phase it in as you get money?"

Mr. Canaday stated it would be a lot easier to do one big project and chip away at it.

Mrs. Hansen stated call it a project and then you can have phases.

Mr. Frink asked, "And prioritize your phases into phase one and phase two?"

Mrs. Hansen replied correct.

Mr. Dahlgren stated because there are some things you can't do until you do other things.

Mrs. Hansen stated funding is always an issue.

Mr. Dahlgren stated in every city and every state it's an issue and always will be whether in good times or bad.

Mr. Gordon stated these are the kind of visuals that really help the public buy into stuff. I wish we could find the stuff that was done in the early 1970s. It's really been done once before.

Mr. Dahlgren asked, "Do you mean that downtown development plan?"

Mr. Gordon replied yes.

Mr. Dahlgren stated I have that in my office.

Mr. Gordon asked "Where did you find it?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated I think I found it in my office and I know there is a copy in the Main Street office.

Mr. Frink asked, "What do we need to do to start writing the plan?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated for right now we need to decide on areas. For the next meeting do you want a copy of the City map?

Mr. Frink stated yes.

Mr. Dahlgren asked, "What size do you want?"

Mr. Frink stated 11" x 17" is big enough.

Mr. Frink asked, "Can you send us the guidelines for what blight is?"

Mr. Dahlgren replied I will send you the blight study I did.

Mr. Canaday asked, "On 2<sup>nd</sup> South Street do you know what Parks and Recreation is planning for extending their pathway through there?"

Mr. Dahlgren replied I don't know. I will try to get Mr. Allan Wilson to attend the next meeting.

Mr. Dahlgren stated when you get the map, look for areas of blight for the whole City and prioritize them and bring your comments to the next meeting.

## 2) Officer Elections (tabled)

Mr. Frink made a motion to untable the officer elections.

Mr. Norberg seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the motion carried.

Mr. Norberg nominated Mr. Gordon for Chairman.

Mr. Frink seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the motion carried.

Mr. Norberg nominated Mr. Frink for Vice Chairman.

Mr. Canaday seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the motion carried.

### URA CONCERNS/UPDATES

Mrs. Hansen stated it might be a good idea for the board to set up a Gantt Chart with a timeline to show what kind of timeframe you want to stick to in moving forward in case it comes up at City Council. Another thing I would recommend is after you have that timeline have one of the board members present it to City Council to let them know you are making progress.

Mr. Gordon asked Mr. Dahlgren, "Can you have a draft of a Gantt Chart for us with milestones to review at the next meeting?"

Mr. Dahlgren stated I can do that.

Mrs. Hansen stated my concern with this whole thing is the budget. With the budget coming up and the budget being very tight it is very important to have the URA show that yes we are working on this and please continue supporting us on this. It is more of a budget issue.

Mr. Dahlgren stated we will have another meeting in March. It will be on March 23, 2010 in the Multi Purpose Room downstairs.

### STAFF UPDATES

None

**(Note: The foregoing is intended as a general summary of the proceedings before the Board. It is not a verbatim transcript of the taped proceedings).**

### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Norberg made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Canaday seconded the motion.

All votes were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

  
Chairman

  
Date