

Arvada Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) Board Meeting, January 7, 2015

Notes taken by Nancy Young

Hotel at former Brooklyns Streetscape & traffic signal at Arvada Plaza/Arvada Square

5:30 pm. The meeting was called to order. All Commissioners were present - Jacobson, Bolin, Cline, Delaria, Parker, Piz Wilson, and Willaims. Three citizens were present, as were two individuals who later made presentations.

During public comment, citizen John Kiljan asked if the AURA board knew anything about a sale of "the storage place" (presumably the mini-storage on the Wadsworth ByPass just south of Grandview). Apparently Mike Miles, Executive Director of APEX, had made a comment to that effect at a meeting the night before. No one on the AURA Board appeared to know anything about it.

NOTE: Subsequently, this information was proven in error. The storage place has not been sold, nor do the owners appear to have any intention of selling.

Another citizen, who did not state her name, noted that she had questions for the Commission. Chair Jacobson repeatedly asked her to state her name, to which she responded that when she arrived, everyone seemed to know her name. Chair Jacobson repeated that if she did not state her name, then her comments could not be heard. The Chair then moved on to the next item on the agenda.

Hotel at the former Brooklyns, now the Vineyard Church

The AURA Board approved a Development and Disposition Agreement with Renascent Partners to develop an hotel at this site. Groundbreaking is scheduled for mid-October 2015. The agreement calls for selling the land to the developer for \$500,000, all of which will be used to reduce AURA's loan from the City. The City of Arvada will raise the hotel tax from 8% to 10%, with the entire additional amount (2 percentage points), up to \$800,000 through 2028, to be rebated to the developer. Groundbreaking is scheduled for October 2015.

Notice to vacate will be given to the Vineyard Church on submission of the Preliminary Development Plan, estimated at late March or early April. It appears that the City intends to assist the Church in finding a new location within Arvada, preferably on the southeast side.

Maureen Phair noted that she met with the City Council on Monday, January 5, 2015, and received their "Okay" on a proposal to lower the interest rate to 1.5% from 3.5% on the City's \$2,745,000 loan regarding this property. [NOTE: City loan was made in 2010; AURA initially acquired the property in 2007 for \$2,800,000 and, in 2008, acquired an adjacent parcel for \$542,800, for a total AURA investment in the property of \$3,342,800.] Commissioner Williams quickly noted that this Council "Okay" was an informal approval. The proposal will need to be presented to the City Council for formal approval during a public meeting.

Streetscape near proposed Walmart

Pacland, represented by Mike Beach, will install a new streetscape on private property at three corners of the proposed Walmart development in the Arvada Square: Ralston & Garrison (at the KFC), Ralston & Independence (at US Bank) and Independence at W. 57th (the former Valero gas station). The streetscape design was created by Britina Group and approved by the AURA board.

On the US Bank corner, relocation of street lights and other infrastructure will be needed. The corner will be “moved back”, allowing more room for a right turn from Independence onto Ralston. The sidewalk and related plantings will eliminate all of the parking spaces on the west side of US Bank. The Bank accepts this change and incorporated it into their plans to construct a drive-thru on their property.

At the KFC corner, there are two alternatives. The ideal alternative would eliminate 4 parking spaces which is unlikely to be accepted by KFC. The less ideal, but more realistic alternative, would eliminate one parking space. The fire hydrant and other utilities will need to be moved back from the corner to enable widening the sidewalk and allow planting of trees. The Board spent considerable time discussing ways to make the nearby bus shelter and bench more attractive.

At the Valero corner, the streetscape will only include the area from Ralston to W. 57th. W. 57th will be narrowed by 7 feet to allow construction of a 4-foot wide sidewalk and a bike lane along the Walmart side of the project.

The cost of this streetscape totals about \$560,000, including an estimated cost of obtaining the right of way of \$43,300 and the cost of construction of about \$516,000. This cost does not include any costs for Pacland as the consultant for the project. Construction costs include moving utilities. Ms. Phair noted that she is attempting to negotiate with the owners of these properties to obtain the right of way “for nothing”. The preference is for the City to own the property rather than to have an easement.

Questions from Commissioners, summarized as follows.

Commissioner Cline expressed an unwillingness to spend an estimated \$90,000 on the Valero corner (57th & Independence) - about 280 feet. The ensuing discussion noted that parking for Santiagos will be behind the restaurant once the proposed Walmart is constructed, which will require a curb cut in the sidewalk on W. 57th. It appears that Santiagos has approached Valero to allow parking on their land.

The schedule for bidding this project is expected to coincide with Walmart’s bidding proposal. It would be more efficient to construct the streetscape, including moving utilities, at the same time that the Walmart and its streetscape portion, are being constructed.

Ms. Phair then presented to the Board with the issue of who will maintain the streetscape plantings, particularly the flower pots (only at the entrance to the proposed Walmart), irrigation for the trees, electricity for the signs, snow removal, and related ongoing expenses for the streetscape. While current property owners might be willing to provide these services, in some cases, the quality of service (like snow removal) might not be up to AURA standards. Commissioner Williams suggested that the City might be willing to share these costs through 2028, when this urban renewal district expires.

The Board approved the next step, at an estimated cost of \$92,000, to proceed with the Streetscape project.

At this point, it was noted that the bike shop (formerly at 66th & Wadsworth) had moved to Wheat Ridge. Commissioner Jacobson, owner of Sportline, noted that his business is now clearing snow from the sidewalk up to this business (from about W. 64th Ave. to W. 66th Ave.).

Traffic Light - Ralston & Holland

Chris Derossa, City of Arvada traffic engineer, appeared in place of Ben Waldman, to discuss the traffic signal on the north side of Ralston at Holland. The issue here involves who will pay the estimated \$125,000 to replace the traffic signals. While Walmart will replace the signals on the south side, it appears questionable who will accept this responsibility on the north side.

Buckingham, who has been selected to develop the Arvada Square, seems unwilling to absorb this cost. According to Chris Derossa, the City's budget does not have room for this traffic signal replacement. The issue remained unresolved, with Commissioner Williams noting that he will coordinate with the City regarding this proposal. It might be possible for the City and AURA to share the cost of this upgrade, which means that the street would be torn up only once for traffic signal replacement when the proposed Walmart project is constructed.

Development update: report by Ms. Phair

A summary list of AURA projects, known informally as the "Tony Cline" list (AURA Commissioner who requested it), was presented.

Walmart: Autozone has received construction permits for its new structure where the US Bank drive-thru was formerly located. Once construction begins, estimated completion is 4 months.

Once Autozone begins construction, IRG will commence its "abatement demolition". This demolition will pave the way for Walmart to begin construction, supposedly during the summer.

Arvada Square: Buckingham, the chosen developer for the Arvada Square, is negotiating "every little item", according to Ms. Phair. As a result, the Development and Disposition Agreement (DDA) is taking longer than expected to complete.

PPOT (Park Place Olde Town - 5-story rental apartments on McIlvoy Park): This project is now in a critical stage where they are pouring concrete. Soon, a second crane will be erected.

TOD - Trammel Crow: Ms. Phair continues to negotiate with RTD regarding the move of the existing bus terminal to the north. This move would enable Trammel Crow to begin construction. Trammel Crow continues to work on selecting a grocery store, supposedly to be constructed on the south side of W. 56th (after this street has been extended west across the Wadsworth ByPass).

Solana Olde Town: Preliminary Development Plan scheduled for the Planning Commission on January 20th.

Former McDonalds property (Ralston, north of W. 59th) - Stone Leaf Pottery: the developer is working on financing, which they hope to close by the end of February.

Public comment session: the citizen who earlier had attempted to make a comment again attempted to do so. She noted that she feels intimidated by the Commissioners. Again, the Chair requested her name, and again she noted that everyone appeared to know her name because they greeted her by name when she arrived. She then proceeded to state that she had questions for the Commissioners. She gave each Commissioner a slip of paper, supposedly with these questions. She noted that the Chair of the Commission immediately put her questions in the trash bin.

At this point, Commissioner Williams motioned that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at about 7:10 pm, prior to hearing Commissioner comments.