

## Arvada Urban Renewal (AURA) Board Meeting, September 2, 2014

Notes taken by Nancy Young

*NOTE: Visitor seating is directly beneath a very noisy fan. Most Commissioners speak in subdued tones. As a result, it is very difficult to hear what is being said. Anyone who was present is welcome to add comments correcting these notes.*

Board members Jacobsen, Bolin, Cline, Delaria, Parker, and Piz Wilson were present. Marc Williams was absent. AURA staff members Phair and Walker were present, along with City attorney Mike Polk. Five citizens were present for the entire meeting until executive session began.

John Kiljan commented during the opening public comment session. [NOTE: Having arrived late, these comments were concluding upon my arrival. I would encourage John Kiljan to summarize his comments here].

The Commissioners approved the third amendment to Maureen Phair's contract. The substance of this change was not revealed. Newly-appointed Commissioner, Moni Piz Wilson took the oath of office.

Maureen Phair updated the Commissioners on the status of the MKS/Solana project. This project is slated for 15 acres on the east side of the Wadsworth ByPass, east of the storage units and between Grandview and W. 56th Avenue. The proposed project includes 352 luxury multi-family rental units. The project will be built on 2 sites - 4 acres known as the Enger property and 10 acres belonging to Lectra Products. Both sites are under contract to the developer, MKS.

On October 17th, there will be a workshop to discuss a draft "term sheet" for this project. Due to certain issues with the location, the developer will need assistance from AURA, as stated by Ms. Phair. One of the issues is environmental contamination (TCE) from the manufacturing of fasteners by Lectra. A second issue is the topography, including a steep hill that will require reinforcement. Furthermore, the site requires all new utilities: electrical needs to be put underground and all new water/sewer lines need to be put in place. Furthermore, a "streetscape" consistent with a luxury building is needed. The south side of W. 56th is the edge of the Columbine neighborhood - built in the post-WWII housing boom.

Also, according to Ms. Phair, the Parks Department requires new developments to have open space, preferably a public park/gathering place. MKS/Solana is proposing that this open space be placed along Grandview, for the enjoyment of both residents of the project and residents of the Stocke-Walter Historic District.

*[NOTE: It is my understanding that the City of Arvada, not the Parks Department, requires a certain amount of open space in high density developments like this one. This requirement is part of the Comprehensive Plan.]*

At the September 17th AURA meeting, Ms. Phair will have a draft term sheet for the Commissioners' review. MKS can be present to provide an update on their plans.

The Commissioners then discussed a new "Visitor Protocol" to apply to citizens attending AURA meetings. The protocol essentially follows guidelines similar to those for City Council meetings. Commissioner Tony Cline stated that speakers during public comment periods should not be required to identify themselves. He noted that some might fear retribution and/or desire to maintain their privacy. Other Commissioners noted that having an address, or at least a statement of "where they are from" carried weight in AURA's deliberations. Most Commissioners seemed to feel that it was

important to know whether a speaker was from our community. Ms. Phair noted that Candelas was a different community than, for example, Olde Town. The consensus was that the Commission would be flexible. However, the motion to approve the Visitor Protocol was passed without amendment to accommodate individuals who preferred to retain their privacy.

Ms. Phair provided a developer update. A group from Lincoln, NE, approached her with a proposal to build a hotel in Arvada. She referred them to Bill Mosher of Trammell Crow, who is developing the “9 acre site” (aka TOD, between Vance and the Wadsworth ByPass, Grandview and W. 56th). Mr. Mosher, after speaking with the group, referred them back to AURA.

It appears that this group is “hot” to build an hotel in Arvada, and is willing to look at the Brooklyns/Vineyard Church site. They are ready now to build a Fairfield Inn (Marriott Hotel brand). Mr. Mosher’s project will not begin for another 18 months until the parking structure by the Arvada Flour Mill is completed. This group is unwilling to wait until then.

Ms. Phair noted that she has spoken with the church’s Pastor Jay. The Church might have an interest in purchasing the Brooklyn’s site that they are now renting from AURA. The ensuing discussion focused on a) past disappointments with potential hotel developers, and b) whether it would be appropriate to sell the site to the church. Several Commissioners opposed selling to the church. The final consensus (no motion) was that Ms. Phair was authorized to continue discussions with both parties. It was anticipated that more definitive information would be available in about two months (i.e., November 2014) regarding plans for both the Nebraska group and the Church.

Regarding the Arvada Plaza, Walmart has submitted its final development plan (FDP), which is being reviewed by the city. Tenants (16 remaining) have been given their 6-month notice to vacate. AutoZone has also submitted their development plan for the south side of the Arvada Plaza site. AutoZone plans to break ground early next year and expects construction to be complete within 90 days. They will lease the land from IRG, but will own the building. Ms. Phair noted that AutoZone’s sign has been a matter of significant negotiation. AURA is requiring additional “bells & whistles” (also called “the Taj” by Ms. Phair).

Regarding the streetscape at US Bank, Ms. Phair met with a representative of the Bank and described AURA’s requirements, suggesting that the cost be shared 50-50. The Bank representative has taken the proposal to corporate headquarters for their assessment.

Regarding the Arvada Square, the developer is performing his “due diligence”. He is talking with Amoco (presumably about acquiring the gas station on the corner of Garrison & Ralston). He is working with 24-Hour Fitness about locating in the former Safeway location. Regarding a swimming pool for the neighborhood, Ms. Phair spoke with John Marriott, Council member for the district, who was concerned about limiting access to the pool to just “the neighborhood”, especially if public funds were involved with its construction. The ensuing discussion focused on potentially having the City own the land and private funds construct the pool. In that case, it would need to be open to all Arvada citizens. Parking would therefore be needed in “an urban development”, contrary to the “urban” concept. Ms. Phair also noted an alternative location on the south side of Ralston Road at Garrison - currently City property.

Ms. Phair stated the new park at Ralston & Garrison was encountering parking problems. Visitors are currently using the Arvada Square lot, which will be unavailable once construction begins on the new development there.

With regard to other items: Big-O Tire has moved, and the PPOT apartment construction (on McIlvoy Park) is proceeding. The parking structure by the Arvada Flour Mill has passed scrutiny by the SHPO (State Historical Preservation Officer). It now awaits approval by FTA (Federal Transit Authority), which is expected within the week. Construction is expected to begin in October.

During the Commissioner comment session, Commissioner Delaria expressed concern about pedestrian access to commercial centers, i.e., proper sidewalks. Commissioners Bolin and Jacobsen welcomed the new Commissioner, Moni Piz Wilson. Commissioner Parker noted that at a recent Business Roundtable breakfast meeting sentiment was unanimously positive, compared to the nearly unanimous pessimism of a few years ago.

Regarding the Flash Report (monthly financials), a negative \$415,000 balance for the Ralston Fields urban renewal area was questioned. It appears that there was a transfer from the checking account to investments that created the negative value. As Ms. Phair explained it, the item refers to anticipated property tax revenues and stated that it is an “arbitrary number”. [NOTE: these financial statements were not available to the public, so only comments without proper context can be reported.]

Ms. Phair noted that the 2015 budget is being prepared by the AURA Finance Committee. The City Council, which has a right to review, but not approve, the budget will make their review on October 21. In November, there will be a public meeting regarding this budget.

Ms. Phair also noted that the Littleton Planning Commission and Urban Renewal will attend an AURA Board meeting to learn about AURA’s success. Greeley representatives are planning a similar visit. In response to a recommendation by Commissioner Delaria, AURA and the City are developing talking points regarding the benefits of high-density developments, which seems to generate negative sentiment among citizens.

Commissioner Delaria noted that recent studies show that 16-24-year-olds are driving 20% less than the prior generation. Commissioner Bolin noted that her college-age daughter had not “signed on to the program”, although some of her friends reflect this trend.

Upcoming items for AURA’s future agendas include the following:

- Sep 17 Workshop\

  - MKS/Solana update and term sheet\

  - Bill Mosher, Trammel Crow (TOD 9-acre site) - project concepts

- Oct 1 - Regular meeting - Lakewood update on the West Line (a city’s perspective)\

- Nov 1 - Regular meeting - RTD update on the West line (RTD perspective)\

- Nov 19 - Joint dinner with Arvada City Council (this is an open meeting)\

- December - no date mentioned - Richard Schierburg, developer of the Target shopping center, will discuss possible plans for 11 acres on the north side of Ridge Road

It was noted that regular meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of every month. Workshops are held every other month.

The Commissioners then went into executive session - topic not disclosed, after which the meeting was adjourned.