

CITY OF RED LODGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC MEETING
September 9, 2021
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5:30PM

Purpose of meeting: Notice of the meeting was mailed to property and business owners several days in advance. The meeting consisted of a presentation by James Caniglia, Community Development Director, on the proposed North Community Entrance Urban Renewal District followed by a Q&A with attendees.

Public in attendance: 14

City Council members in attendance: 3, including Planning Board liaison

James introduced himself and summarized the purpose of meeting and why this district is being considered. He presented on the proposed URD. H

Public comments:

1. Dave Westwood (Ward 1)- summary of questions from constituents

- What is blight?
- Addressed concern over “imminent domain.”

No more or less likely with a TIF (tax increment finance) district

- Is this the government telling people what they can and cannot do?

Westwood says, “no” that URD provides the incentives to encourage development beneficial to community. James noted that developers want to know a) can they build and b) are there incentives?

- Concern that property values will go down because of “blight.”

Objective is to increase values

- Concern that taxes will increase.

Hopefully, yes but the right mechanisms need to be in place.

2. Jim Mercier- real-life example of Cabins on Cooper

- The cabins increase property value from \$500/year to \$18,000/year over a 12-year period.
- In favor of URD, wants to see Pea Cannery prioritized
- Notes that we don’t need large projects to benefit the community

3. Paul Pilati- Grizzly Peak Realty

- Involvement with Pea Cannery for a long time. Notes recent upgrades, but that the area is lacking in good streets and has lousy lighting. We need to consider safety for new people coming in and the ones that have been there.

4. Chelsea Ditmore-

- Question regarding benefits to property owners, especially with sewer. James noted that it is mostly for new development, not existing, but could be considered for an ADU (accessory dwelling unit). Westwood commented that any projects will have to be approved by City Council, so would be difficult to get approval on renovations that the homeowner should take on.

5. Tim Weamer-

- Supports James' and City's efforts for a proactive solution for the housing crisis. He has been involved with housing for years, and is willing to volunteer on the Urban Renewal Agency. He sees only positives in the plan and Jim's comments. Has seen positives from other towns. Asks of the room to bring up any negatives they may see so that it can be addressed during the meeting.

Public asks questions on what could be considered negatives. Some note that this plan does not seem to have any. Others comment that some may come up during implementation but cannot predict them.

James gives examples of other cities with URDs, and comments that many cities have more than one. This to him shows that it is a tool that works. In regards to downsides, only one he sees is if there is no tax increments.

Westwood comments on a couple of projects he likes: streets, lights.

Tim W. adds that developers are looking for incentives to keep rent lower and still get their ROI (return on investment). He comments that there is a better chance of money with this plan than without.

Question from public: Are there incentives for other parts of town? James says, "no". City Council could reduce impact fees but would need a study done (\$\$). The URD still pays for the impact fees but out of TIF.

6. Jim M.-

- solution in Jackson, WY for workforce housing to require new building for workforce to put money into a fund for housing or provide housing within the building. Doesn't want to see this happen in Red Lodge. This URD doesn't penalize, but incentivize.

7. Chelsea Ditmore

- Could section on 2nd go over east more?

James said that we want to limit the size of the district as much as possible.

Courtney shows group where to access information on the City's website. The presentation and minutes will be available.

James wraps up, encourages people to consider being on the Urban Renewal Agency, and will people know when the draft plan is available for review.

PUBLIC MEETING ENDS.