

Downtown Economic Development Committee
Meeting Notes

June 28, 2007 ~ 8:30 AM
Civic Center Lower Level
Meeting Room B-8

In Attendance:

Council: Mayor Pro Tem Debbie Cook; Council Member Jill Hardy

Staff: Tom Graham; Herb Fauland; Kellee Fritzal; Jim Lamb; Naida Oslone; Nova Punongbayan; Chris Rey; Mike Reynolds; Stanley Smalewitz; Bob Stachelski; Catherine Von Holle

Public: Steve Daniel; Steve Grabowski; Ron McLin; Doug Traub

Guests: Shawn Gracey (Joie De Vivre Hospitality/The Strand); Ethan Thatcher (Makar/Pacific City); Rob Wurl (CIM Group/The Strand)

Mayor Pro Tem Cook called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and asked the committee and guests to introduce themselves.

1. Public Comments – None

2. Joie de Vivre Hospitality

Smalewitz introduced Shawn Gracey, General Manager for Joie de Vivre Hospitality, a boutique hotel. This hotel chain is scheduled to be a part of The Strand project. Gracey stated that a presentation is scheduled for the next Downtown Economic Development Committee meeting on July 26. Additionally, Smalewitz introduced Rob Wurl, Vice President of CIM Group who indicated that The Strand will begin framing in August and that the entire project should be complete in summer of 2008. Wurl noted that he is very excited that Joie de Vivre is on board.

3. Pacific City

Ethen Thacher, Project Manager for Makar Properties, presented a PowerPoint that showed numerous renditions of the Pacific City project. He reported that all of the surrounding streets will be widened by the end of summer and that most of the underground utilities are completed. They are proposing 516 residential units, a 212-room hotel, and possibly four restaurants along Pacific Coast Highway incorporating public art with a water theme. The project is on schedule. Thacher stated the name of the hotel will be released shortly.

4. Business Improvement District

Pedenko reported that the BID had applied for a 501c6 which should be received soon. She added that the BID is in the fast track to ensure their insurance is in place.

5. Downtown Issues

Downtown Huntington Beach Business Association Report – Steve Daniel reported:

There is currently an art show scheduled in September; a Car Show and Halloween event scheduled for October; and they are working on Christmas events. In order to continue with Surf City Nights, the Downtown BID is trying to raise funds and is looking for sponsors to assist with the costs. He added that a board meeting is necessary to approve additional expenditures. He asked staff to complete the meeting notes within one week of the committee meeting and email them to the committee at that time. He feels that if the meetings notes are distributed sooner that some of the recurring issues will be handled. Smalewitz replied that staff has been looking at

improving both the agenda and meeting notes and would meet with staff to discuss the possibility of distributing the meeting notes within one week of the meeting. Daniel also commented on the cleanliness of the downtown and felt that it is going in a very positive direction.

Huntington Beach Conference and Visitors Bureau – Doug Traub reported:

The Bureau is ready to distribute the 2008 Visitors guide and added that Tiger Oak Publishing was selected to publish the magazine to improve the “look” of the guide. The goal is to distribute 500,000 guides. Additionally, and on a very positive note, Traub reported that Disney would be signing on for a full-page ad for the 2009 Visitors Guide. He added that Westways Magazine, with three million subscribers, is doing a cover story on the Huntington Beach Lifeguards.

Huntington Beach Restaurant Association – Ron McLin reported:

Currently working on a new Dining Guide and are trying to get additional restaurants included in this publication. They will be printing 40,000. He added that the downtown restaurants have been very successful on Tuesday evenings and the clientele has carried over to other nights of the week also. He is hoping to improve the late night atmosphere.

Special Events – Naida Oslone reported:

- July 4 holiday – Will be celebrated downtown from Sunday through Wednesday.
- July 7 and 8 – Surfing Competition
- July 8 – Concert on the Pier
- July 21 through July 29 – U. S. Open of Surfing
- July 26 – Surfing Walk of Fame
- July 26 – Cowabunga Cattle Drive

Downtown Development – Herb Fauland reported:

Tuesday's Surf City Nights has been extended for one year as it received both a Temporary Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit. He added that Pacific City has received approval for their Phase I housing. Fauland announced that the July 10 Planning Commission consisted of a CUP for Sharkeez Dancing and an appeal to the DRB's approval of a Planned Sign Program at 526 Main Street. Additionally, the July 24 Planning Commission will consider approval for the first restaurant for The Strand.

Main Street Closure Update – Stanley Smalewitz reported:

The Downtown Specific and Parking Master Plan contracts will be presented to Council on July 16 for approval. Smalewitz noted that the bollards and arches would be folded into the Plan to fast track their approval as part of the Specific Plan.

The new Bicycle racks should arrive in three weeks. Mayor Pro Tem Cook queried if staff were looking at any special areas for bicycle parking and suggested converting parking spaces into bicycle parking spaces. A recommendation to secure a location in front of Jax Bicycle Shop was mentioned. Smalewitz said that staff is looking at the fourth block of Main Street as part of the downtown study. Mayor Pro Tem Cook will provide a presentation of how other cities deal with bicycle parking at the next meeting on July 26. Smalewitz added that this will need to be included in the Parking Master Plan and we will need to advertise for a consultant. A BID member asked if a parking study was completed on Father's Day weekend. Smalewitz replied that staff would provide him with preliminary numbers.

An application was submitted to Cal Trans to close the first block of Main Street and Smalewitz said that he is expecting a reply shortly.

Regarding the condition of the newspaper racks, Code Enforcement is contacting the companies that are responsible for the condition of the racks. The City Attorney is working on a possible ordinance to ensure that all newspaper racks are uniform in appearance and kept in good condition.

Punongbayan announced should a parking problem be identified, a service will be implemented to shuttle people from City Hall to the downtown area. Also, Smalewitz mentioned that Verizon will be sponsoring a Surf City Night event.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 26, 2007.

Meeting notes prepared by Catherine Von Holle