

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 22, 2009 – 7:30 A.M.
MANCHESTER ROOM – TOWN HALL**

Members Present: Timothy Devanney, Chair Robert Schneider
Dan Moran Thomas Tomko
Teri Bogli Aaron Wlochowski
Michael Darby Aaron Ansaldi
Susan O'Connor Gary Sweet

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Neighborhood Services
and Economic Development
Gary Anderson, Senior Planner

Discussion of vision and objectives for the Broad Street redevelopment area

Chairman Devanney convened the meeting. Mr. Pellegrini facilitated a discussion of members' visions for the Broad Street redevelopment area. Staff had e-mailed the Agency three questions regarding the future vision for the Broad Street area: What characteristics and qualities do you think would describe a successful Broad Street Area? How would you like to be able to describe the Broad Street area after a successful redevelopment? What is your vision for the Broad Street area? Agency members were then each given the opportunity to respond to each question. Agency members' responses were as follows:

What characteristics and qualities do you think would describe a successful Broad Street Area?

- Family friendly (ages 7-70)
- Destination (a reason people want to go there)
- safe
- appealing/attractive (architecture and streetscape)
- "green"
- vibrant
- live/play environment
- engenders community pride
- harmonious with (saves) existing businesses

*How would you like to be able to describe the Broad Street area after a successful redevelopment?
What is your vision for the Broad Street area?*

- mixed use – residential (mix of housing types)/business (retail, office, medical)/recreation (community, public)/art/institutional (medical/schools)
- oriented as a "front yard" to the district – green space, uses, and spaces tied together throughout the district
- neighborhood/community focused – area should serve neighborhood and not region
- "sustainable"
- regional market focused
- medical offices only

Mr. Pellegrini asked Agency members what uses they thought would accomplish this vision. Several members suggested a mixed-use development which would incorporate some combination of residential, commercial, office and perhaps public or community uses. Mr. Tomko added including a residential component would support the retail already existing on Broad Street.

Mr. Schneider encouraged the Agency to be open to any possibilities for the area. He suggested attracting a large regional retailer such as IKEA to draw in people from outside Manchester should be considered.

There was discussion about the feasibility of big box regional retail, single uses such as large medical complexes, or mixed uses to be attracted to the redevelopment area. Questions such as what were the location requirements for various types of land uses, whether the Parkade would meet those location requirements, and whether the market would support those uses were discussed. It was suggested the Agency invite professionals familiar with commercial, office, residential, and medical business sectors to provide an overview of the trends and location requirements for those various sectors. Some members expressed their preference that the majority of the redevelopment should be private sector driven, and some members expressed some support by public sector participation as part of a public and private use and development mix.

Mr. Tomko said the redevelopment plan allows the Town to be site specific and illustrate its vision for the area. Mr. Wlochowski endorsed the idea of bringing in market experts, saying the market will drive the redevelopment of the Parkade and Broad Street area and the Agency should understand the needs of the market.

Mr. Anderson presented a map indicating current building vacancies and vacant land in the Broad Street redevelopment area. He said there is only one significant piece of vacant land, which lies on the eastern side of Broad Street and makes up only 2.4% of the entire redevelopment area. Mr. Tomko said that property is currently being marketed as residential.

Mr. Anderson said there are several buildings in the redevelopment area that have some vacancies and several that are completely vacant, including the Broad Street Parkade, a cluster of

former automobile service uses across from the Broad Street Parkade, and the former Zoots cleaners on the Middle Turnpike property. Including the Broad Street Parkade, approximately 33% of the leasable space in the redevelopment area is currently vacant. Not including the Broad Street Parkade, approximately 12% is vacant.

Mr. Schneider asked about the possibility of having a public meeting to encourage residents' visions for the redevelopment area. Mr. Devanney and Mr. Tomko suggested the Agency should first have something to present the public and have them react to. Mr. Pellegrini added that at some point the Agency must hold a public hearing prior to adopting any redevelopment plan.

Monthly Report

Chairman Devanney asked how the Agency wanted to prepare monthly reports for the Board of Directors. By consensus the Agency directed staff to provide minutes of the meetings and a short update indicating the Agency's activities up to this point.

Mr. Schneider suggested advertising the Agency committee meetings on Channel 16.

Mr. Devanney said Doug Smith of the Conservation Commission had contacted the Agency and would like to present a presentation on a Bigelow Brook greenway plan. The Agency agreed to extend an invitation to Mr. Smith to come and make a report.

Mr. Schneider was contacted by the head of the Odyssey Charter School which is looking into the possibility of relocating to the Marshall's building in the Broad Street Parkade.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the Manchester Redevelopment Agency will be ***Thursday, February 5 at 7:30 a.m. in the Manchester Room of Town Hall.***