

DRAFT Minutes
LDDA Board Retreat
350 Main Street, Longmont, CO 80501
February 20, 2013 - 8:30 a.m.

Present: Bill Sawyers, Sharon Smith-Eisler, Burbidge Austin, Robert (Bob) Goff, Alex Sammoury, Ex-Officio Member: City of Longmont, Jim Golden, Joe Perrotto, Larry Stauss
Guests: City of Longmont: Brien Schumacher, Shawn Lewis, Brad Power, David Starnes, Times Call
Facilitator: Eric Hozempa: Longmont Community Foundation
Staff: Executive Director; Kimberlee McKee, Marcelo Fernandez, Del Rae Heiser, Emelie Torres

A. Introduction – 2012 in Review

Kimberlee showed a comprehensive slideshow of downtown events and developments including Festival On Main, Concert Series, Clean and Green, Alleyscape and its incentives, Roosevelt Park Apartments groundbreaking, Bicycle Longmont, storefronts (vacant and occupied), Arts Incubator research, Farmers market, Every Friday, Downtown Longmont being a Prospective Colorado Creative District, new ventures and new businesses recently opened. She also shared the 2013 work plan.

B. Vision

a. What are other Downtowns doing? A slideshow of several inspiring downtown in the country were displayed. Kimberlee also shared her vision of different downtown look and feel and observations such as signage, clean and safe, historic preservation, catalyst program, great use of outdoor space, art spaces, storefronts etc.

LDDA Mission: To develop, support and promote a vibrant and valuable Downtown Longmont.

b. What is our strong vision for Downtown?

Erik showed a slideshow of 300 block east and west storefronts taken the day before the board retreat. Everyone separated into 4 groups and walked the 300 block to make observations and create a vision.

c. Exercise: The perfect Block - How do you envision a perfect 300 block?

Group 1:

Architectural uniformity, getting rid of hodge-podge of presentation which currently is too overwhelming, create common signage, 21st century businesses with 20th century buildings, Bring in anchor tenants, get rid of parking misconception and dispel the myth of no parking downtown.

Group 2:

Create a one-stop incentive program, enforce signage and other codes, consistent design standards – signage should protect the unique character of each building while keeping it eclectic but to standards, bring in long range tenants.

Group 3:

Sharon stated that corners of each block need to be more attractive, review zoning and type of uses along Main St., restore the JC Penny building's façade back to the original look, encourage active uses instead of storefronts converted as a residential use, restoring theater to the original look and feel, restoring alley signs that reflect the community going back.

Group 4:

Restoration of building façades, removal of slip covers hiding historic façade (no plastic awnings), daily street-sweeping, create gateways to downtown (north and south) and carry the theme throughout downtown, clusters of niche retails – specialty stores/boutiques, incentives to new businesses, more 2nd floor lofts instead of storage, make sidewalk surfaces more visually interesting, open a grocery store downtown, murals around downtown, use design committee to enhance signage design.

d. Craft the Vision - Description of downtown crafted by everyone:

- Packed with people spending their money
- Nightlife
- Unique character
- More downtown residents
- Cohesive
- No vacancy – thriving
- Vibrant
- Stores open during normal business hours
- Source of community pride
- Regular and artistic entertainment
- Desirable downtown
- Attracting a cross-section of people in the community
- Neighborhoods in Downtown
- Quieter traffic
- Downtown is a unique living, cohesive, thriving place to work and play.

Hope of vision to accomplish – what sets us apart? Why is ours better? Why do we show up on someone's downtown list?

- Longmont downtown - real downtown, safe, quaint
- Longmont is a vibrant community
- Tourist downtown not a collection of businesses
- Get local people to be interested with Longmont downtown
- Mix use of spaces
- Downtown is geographically lengthy – germinate a variety of things, events, etc.
- Focus on pedestrian traffic and core area
- Marketing and offering could be better
- Parking – community awareness of parking availability
- Signage – visibility against trees blooming
- Events and stores to open longer
- Make downtown a place to stay and enjoy as an escape to everyday life.

Future discussion regarding LDDA mission statement: Sharon, Shawn, Kimberlee and Alex to craft a vision to present in the board meeting in March.

C. Tools to create the vision (Funding and Timeline/Priorities)

a. Parking Fund – 200 lot was purchased at 350T, TIF fund used on east lots, current permit fee is \$20/mo., last time fee was raised was in October 2007, taking effect in 2008. A comparison of permit fees between surrounding cities and Longmont was also shown. Kimberlee expressed there was interest in increasing parking permit fees.

Suggestions – raise permit fee up to \$35/mo. Increase will cover for maintenance on all parking lots, parking fund/GID – split the maintenance fund to accommodate for repairs, cleaning, and other maintenance needs. Current maintenance cost per lot is at \$15,000 more or less. Kimberlee suggested an increase of \$5/mo. Kimberlee will continue to gather more information and share with the board prior to taking it to city council.

b. BID (Business Improvement District) – a plan for property/business owners to get together and identify important things they need for their business in return for their fees. BID plan was originally put aside for \$25,000. Kimberlee shared her observation when at a Downtown CO Inc. meeting that Denver downtown had a tiered-funding. Kimberlee sees this as a good model. Kimberlee also suggested having a consultant present during smaller group discussions with focus groups to come up with a plan on funding and report back next year. She will continue to look at candidates and cost. Kimberlee recommended no election in Nov 2013 and put plan in place in 2014 allowing one year prior to election. Schedule to pricing for consultants is by April.

c. Mil Levy – Jim stated that according to state statutes, DDA is allowed to have up to a 5 operating mil levy. Debt authorization was voted at 5 mils 30 years ago. Adjustment was made down to 3.31 mils to avoid having a large tax increase. LDDA Board looked at raising it back up to 5 mils 10 years ago, taken up to Bond council and to City council. It was advised against. The Board requested Kimberlee and Jim make plans to take the increase back to the council executive session as part of the general discussion in April.

d. 501 c3 – Sponsorship outreach –its board will create a sponsorship package that is sustainable. Art focused organizations within and outside downtown is essential to getting word out and for sponsorship. Xilinx is a good example where employees got involved in the art show at Festival on Main. Kimberlee suggested that the board would meet quarterly once foundation is in place. LDDA board will partner with 501c3 board.

e. Incentive Allocations – Kimberlee shared a worksheet showing grants that included allocations and funding to existing incentives but without criteria set yet. All façade improvement grants over the years were also shown. Overall, there was a lot of positive work done. Kimberlee also shared the 2013 amount already slotted. Year 31 TIF estimates were also shown with or without negotiations happening.

LEGI program – Alex suggested talking to LEGI about their small business program and how LDDA can partner with them. Incentives must be provided to self-sustaining businesses.

Incentives with criteria set aside:

Retail - \$300,000 rent incentive total to be used to fill vacant storefronts.

Residential - \$100,000

A&E - \$350,000

Other tools for vision – naming rights to alleys on each block, encourage sponsorship on each block.

Review Strategic Plan:

1. Clean and Safe – issues and resolutions discussed:
 - Homelessness issues have increased in 2012
 - There needs to be a monthly meetings occurring with city staff and police
 - Alert businesses of downtown issues via email
 - Street-cleaning only happening once a month instead of twice a month. There is cost involved for street cleaning. The GID funds it and BID pays for additional cost.
2. Marketing
 - Future steps – create a vision on all blocks. One way to achieve this is to have meetings with block captains and their merchants

- Encourage merchants to leave lights on windows on even after store hours
3. Downtown Development / Historic Preservation
 - 700-900 Block – bring in these blocks to match with the downtown feel. Kimberlee stated that she has had mixed reactions from business owners on these blocks
 - Concerns from the board include more incentive requests from the new blocks and immediate expectations from LDDA regarding time, funding and other resources
 - Future steps – down the line it will be reasonable. Need to look at how much revenue the businesses would bring to LDDA.
 - Focus on smaller areas rather than the whole 2 blocks right away
 - BID boundaries need to be considered. Losing part of mil levy is a major concern.
 - Parking on Main Street – the board suggested that Kimberlee should meet with CDOT and discuss solutions to parking.
 4. Business Development and Retention
 - Add incentive strategy – identify goals, priorities and vision
 - Current incentives not used are being reviewed to identify best usage of these within their criteria
 - Identify criteria and timeline for business loan incentives

On Hold Projects/Discussions:

Connection to airport, Light Rail transport, Front Range Community College presence in downtown – long range plan

5. Arts and Entertainment
 - Car show event could be a focus on 3rd and Martin to Main. This event would encourage car dealer sponsorship. The LDDA is planning to meet with Steve owner of Steve's Automotive to discuss partnership with auto repair shops and dealers within the district on future car related events.
 - A board member suggested bringing back 'cruising' which Longmont was known for in the 1970's.
 - Theatre – make it a performing arts partnership between LTC and Jester's. LTC is looking at expanding workspace. They will possibly contact CA Actors' Studio and work out a partnership
 - A&E Manager's role is to work on the organization's plan
6. Financial Development
 - Committee has been identified - will look at the financial packet, revenue streams and simplify it as a benchmark for each meeting

Butterball Building Vision - top 5 suggested usage:

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| 1. Convention/Event center with flex space | 4. Movie Theater |
| 2. College campus | 5. Mixed use – Industrial loft/Park, Plaza |
| 3. Residential | |

2013 Work plan was reviewed and key participants were identified to work on putting the plan to action (updated worksheet attached).

Meeting adjourned: 4:00 p.m.