

Redevelopment Agency of Murray City Meeting
September 21, 2021

The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) of Murray City met on Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. in the Murray City Council Chambers, 5025 South State Street, Murray, Utah.

Members of the public were able to view the meeting via the live stream at www.murraycitylive.com or <https://www.facebook.com/Murraycityutah/>. Public comments could be made in person or by submitting comments via email at: rda@murray.utah.gov. Comments were limited to 3 minutes or less, and written comments were read into the meeting record.

RDA Board Members

Dale Cox, Chair
Brett Hales, Vice Chair
Kat Martinez
Diane Turner
Rosalba Dominguez

Others in Attendance

Blair Camp, RDA Executive Director
Melinda Greenwood, RDA Deputy Executive Director
G.L. Critchfield, City Attorney
Doug Hill, City Administrator
Jennifer Kennedy, City Council Executive Director
Brooke Smith, City Recorder
Jill Sherman, Edlen & Company

Mr. Cox called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of the July 20, 2021 RDA meeting minutes

MOTION: Ms. Turner moved to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Dominguez.

Ms. Martinez	Aye
Mr. Cox	Aye
Ms. Turner	Aye
Mr. Hales	Aye
Ms. Dominguez	Aye

Motion Passed 5-0

Citizen Comments

Janice Strobell, Murray, UT – Ms. Strobell went over the stated purpose of the RDA and two of its goals. She asked if the RDA can combat blight while it works to redevelop the 48th and State Street area. She stated that Murray has a historic core and if we redevelop that area we will lose that. She thanked the Board for the open house and feedback opportunities.

Sheri Oliver Cox, Murray, UT – Ms. Cox recounted some of her family history in Murray. Her children are not able to live in Murray because there are not suitable job opportunities. When she grew up in Murray people were able to live and work here. She is for the development, but not as it is proposed. Murray needs core families back in the area. She does not want renters in apartments but condos with owners instead. She wants the city to look to its future and having housing for future generations.

Rachel Morot, Murray, UT – Ms. Morrow is president of Historic Murray First Foundation. She was recently asked about the Edlen development and said it is all wrong for the block 1 site. She encouraged Edlen to incorporate historically compatible design and architecture into their project. She expressed her belief that the site is not the place for high-density housing and mixed-use and spoke about her understanding of city code regarding historic preservation. She said the Foundation seeks to educate people about the historic architectural resources still available. Ms. Morot expressed concerns about the mayor and administration's approach to the project, their motivations, and public involvement in the project.

George Lukasiewicz, Murray, UT – He spoke on behalf of himself and neighbors as a representative of the Murray Cottages HOA, asking decision makers to carefully consider the impact of the 48th & State project on infrastructure, especially water, air quality, and traffic. He stated that the studies and information presented by the RDA do not illustrate the full impact of this project on infrastructure, quality of life, and safety of Murray residents. He stated that the materials presented by the city do not detail information about water, such as where it will come from and how it will be used and shared by the project and existing consumers. They request additional analysis regarding water availability. He noted an absence of analysis or reporting on expected impacts that this project would have on air quality and presented data about areas of the city that have had days of poor air quality. They request additional analysis regarding environmental impact. Mr. Lukasiewicz gave information from UDOT about traffic collisions on State Street in the project area. He requested that the city work with UDOT on safety measures beyond those cited in the RFP and limit traffic.

Charles Kulp, Murray, UT – Mr. Kulp spoke about the Fehr & Peers traffic analysis commissioned by the city. His interpretation is that the study says that traffic is terrible, but the project at 48th & State Street is not going to make it much worse. Traffic noise is an issue where he lives near Van Winkle Expressway. Air quality is affected by parents who let their cars idle while they pick their children up from school. He is concerned about traffic noise and bad air. The project height is 70 feet and the building across the street is 60 feet. He thinks that having a building that tall along the whole block with the proposed setback from the street is an issue. He is worried about the building blocking sunlight. He said he wants the project managed better than it is now.

Brent Barnett, Murray, UT – Mr. Barnett has spoken with planners around the Salt Lake area and feels that the project is all wrong and that is because of the RFP that was sent out. He cited a development in Holladay as an example of a good development and encouraged the Board to go there and see it. He also encouraged the Board to see what Millcreek is doing with their plaza and the community programming they have there.

Clark Bullen, Murray, UT – Mr. Bullen went over the reasons that the previous commenters had for opposing the project. His main concern about the project is that we would be missing a great opportunity to use the block as a gathering space. He wants to incorporate everyone's ideas and make it a destination. Revitalization of the area starts with this block.

Benjamin Brown, Murray, UT – Mr. Brown held up a rendering of the project and said that it is no imagination and said that in 30 years it is going to look like every building built in the 80's. He said that no one walks on State Street and said the only businesses we are attracting are tattoo parlors and pawn

shops. He said there is nothing new and vibrant and nothing that says "Man, that's a happening thing." He said we have lost our historic feel and the County is trying to put in new roads to make transportation faster and we can let the County walk all over us or stand up to them. He said Murray is a self-sufficient community, expressed concerns about tearing down historic property, that the kidney thing doesn't look like anything else in Murray and looks like a piece of the Death Star that fell out of the sky. He does not believe that this will create a walkable community and that State Street's only use is to go north and south. He expressed his concerns regarding parking with the Ice Haus and Club 48, the Fireclay area and with the proposed project.

Belinda Johnson, Murray, UT – She stated she lives in District 3 and is also on the Board of Education but was speaking as an individual. She said that area needs core families which will drive the area forward and said she had told the RDA Board a million times that Parkside can't keep having turnover and high-density housing because that area is taking the hit. She said she won't tell her family to go and walk State Street to go to dinner. She said she worked on a project with the school district and they received alternatives to high-density housing on that project.

Michael Valentine, SLC, UT – He attended the open house and wants to advocate on behalf of historic Murray. He said he is a candidate for Salt Lake City Mayor in 2023. He mentioned Logan, Utah and used it as an example of a good, revitalized area. He encouraged the city to not make the same mistakes that Salt Lake City has and wants Murray to protect its historic sites.

Terry Townsend Butler, Murray, UT – She said she has a vested interest in the Townsend home and the Harker building and mentioned that building has always been old and decrepit but that it was history. She said those buildings on the site that are associated with her family and she feels her history and a part of her soul is being taken away in addition to the city's history. She asked the RDA Board not to take away the history of this place.

Kathy Bridge, Murray, UT – She said she lives in the Clover Crest area. She said she is impressed with the Holladay area and the weekend programming at the development. She thinks preservation is a great idea. Her grandchildren cannot afford homes in the Murray area. She spoke about a program that helped her purchase a home when she was younger.

Susan Wright, Murray, UT – She and her husband restored the Murray Manion. She has a plan that she cannot reveal, but said it will solve all the problems in the area and that we will love it.

Ola Robinson, Murray, UT – She lives near the project area. He feels the project as designed is too tall, too big, and removes a lung from the heart of Murray. She recognizes that we need increased density of housing but thinks it is good to do smaller projects spread around. Her perspective is that the public sector is a counter to the profit motive.

Thelma Benfell, Murray, UT – Her relatives are buried in the Murray cemetery. She wants the Board to use funds to fix the cemetery because she cannot walk there.

Robert Stefanik, Murray, UT – (comment was read into the record by staff) He is a resident of one of the buildings on the project site and does not want it torn down. He referenced his hometown in New York with historic buildings. That city gets tourists because of its Market street and museums. He goes on to

say that Murray could have this sort of attraction as well. He asks the RDA to not tear down the buildings at the project area.

Peter Hrusa, Murray, UT – He stated that the project area is prime property, and you are not going to see another building like it on State Street. He questioned if that is the legacy that we want to leave. He also questioned if we want to look like Sugar House.

Presentation and Discussion of Comments Received on the 48th & State Street Project – Presenters: Melinda Greenwood and Jill Sherman

Ms. Greenwood said that the citizen comments that have been received prior to today's meeting have been collected and sent to the RDA Board for their review. These comments will be posted on the city's website shortly. About 266 comments were received, 74 of those were from outside Murray, and about 180 were from Murray addresses. This part of the meeting is intended to be an opportunity for the RDA Board to have a dialogue with the developer to address some of the comments presented by the public.

Ms. Sherman said she has read the comments and stated that in their proposal, she felt that her team was responsive to what was desired as stated in the RFP with a mixed-use project in a downtown location with ground-floor activated use, restaurants, retail, and residential up above. There are a number of categories that the public comments can fall into, but some of the major concerns were around design, the size and height of the building, demolishing the existing buildings. She feels like she can address some of those concerns. The building design is not a completed idea and her firm can work with interested parties, perhaps through an advisory committee to participate more regularly. The density and height of the building is subject to city ordinance, which currently requires a minimum of four stories and their design is five, so anything less than that would require a change to existing zoning. She said Edlen had looked at preserving the DAR property initially but found it to be more expensive to rehabilitate rather than build new. They can look at further details regarding preservation to see what form that may take but they are willing to come to the table to address the comments that have been made about historical preservation. Ms. Sherman stated that her firm has invested a lot of time and expense into this project and would need some assurance that the project will go forward if they invest more into looking at historical preservation options and redesign. Edlen has received the comments and they are listening to them and they want to go forward with a plan to address concerns, but they need to know that there will be a project at the end of all of this.

Mr. Cox expressed his appreciation that Edlen & Company is willing to listen to public feedback on the project and asked for comments from the Board.

Ms. Dominguez also expressed her appreciation for Edlen's willingness to listen and stated that she still feels they are the right firm for the project. She is not sure how to move forward.

Mr. Hales thanked the citizens for coming out to the open house and this meeting and for their comments. He estimates that 85 to 90% of respondents were not in favor of the project. He wanted staff to explain what the next steps are for the project.

Ms. Greenwood explained that the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement (ENA) that was approved by the Board last November expires in December (it would have expired in June but has been extended). The

agreement was extended by the RDA Executive Director (the Mayor), as allowed by the terms of the agreement. With feedback from the public, RDA staff would work with Edlen to develop a formal funding request that would come back to the Board for consideration of approval. The format that the request would take could possibly be an agreement for them to vote upon. In the past, parties have submitted a request for the RDA Board to consider. She gave the example of the Jesse Knight Legacy Center that was put before them last year and approved. This involved a funding request that the RDA Board discussed and deliberated over several meetings and eventually approved. A difference between these projects is that the RDA owns the property in question here. There would need to be a purchase and sale agreement as well as a development agreement.

Mr. Hales clarified that there has been no contract signed. Ms. Greenwood stated that the RDA only has the ENA that states that for the term of the agreement the City will not solicit projects from other developers and will only work with Edlen & company.

Ms. Turner hoped that during the process that the financial implications of the development will be more transparent and how much funding required of the RDA will be more “up front.” Ms. Greenwood explained that any financial implications of an agreement would be explained in public meetings as has been done in the past with prior development agreements. Ms. Turner explained that some of the financials on this project have not been sufficiently transparent for her and she would like to have that going forward. Ms. Greenwood explained that staff would work with Edlen over the next several weeks to determine what an RDA participation request from Edlen would entail and bring it to the Board so that it could be deliberated in a public meeting. Projects such as this take time and it is not uncommon to be eight or nine months down the road and the parties are still negotiating.

Ms. Dominguez said that a concern that she has heard from many citizens is about giving the RDA property for the project to Edlen at a value of \$6 million and how the city would recoup that money. Ms. Greenwood said that details such as that have yet to be worked out. There are financial factors to work out in a project like this and a request such as that would be brought to the Board as a formal request. Ms. Dominguez asked when the ENA extension ends. Ms. Greenwood stated that there are options for two 90-day extension, the first of which expires at the end of September and the second would expire at the end of December.

Mr. Hales asked about the extension of the ENA. Ms. Greenwood explained that the Board could approve an additional extension past December if negotiations with Edlen and the process for coming to an agreement looks to go past the current time allowed. Mr. Hales clarified that if the Board does not approve anything, that the ENA will expire by December 31st and nothing more will need to be done by the RDA on the project. Executive Director Camp explained that once the ENA expires it would end the exclusive nature of the agreement and would allow the RDA to work with any developer. Ms. Sherman added that her intent is to have a proposal, with any needed financial request, to the RDA Board before the ENA expires.

Ms. Dominguez asked when RDA staff and Edlen plan on bringing in the community in for further counsel. Ms. Sherman said that any sort of community advisory committee would be put together before they start a redesign. Her firm also needs the RDA to commit to the project before they put any more funds toward a redesign.

Ms. Martinez thanked the public for their feedback and thanked Edlen for their design. She appreciates their communication and that their proposal has extra parking provided beyond that which is required. She appreciates the design and how it ties into the historical flavor of the area and while it may not appeal to everyone, she appreciates Edlen's efforts.

Ms. Turner expressed her appreciation for the feedback from the community.

Mr. Hales expressed thanks to Ms. Sherman and their efforts on the project.

Ms. Dominguez expressed her thanks and admiration for the community that have gotten involved and provided feedback.

Executive Director Camp explained that the project area is zoned for mixed-used and if that is not what the community wants it used for then the City Council needs to have a discussion about that. A lot of comments condemn staff for producing an RFP requesting a mixed-use project but that was done in accordance with its currently intended use.

Mr. Cox expressed his appreciation to Edlen as a good partner and hoped that the group can come to a speedy next step in the project to be fair to the developer.

Project Updates – Presenter: Melinda Greenwood

The Jesse Knight Legacy Center received approval for their clean-up plan from the Utah Department of Environmental Quality. They will now be working to obtain permits over the next few months to be able to begin the clean-up phase of the project in November.

Staff have been working with Corey Solum of Think Architecture for the proposed Think Architecture headquarters project south of the new Murray City Fire Station on Box Elder and 48th. A request from Mr. Solum to the Board for participation by the RDA on his project is pending.

The Habitat for Humanity project in the Fireclay Area is still in the works. Once staff has final steps and information on their funding request, staff will bring that information to the Board for their consideration at a future meeting.

At the October RDA meeting staff would like the Board to discuss an opportunity provided by recently passed legislation in Utah. RDA project areas can be extended by up to two years if it is believed that an area was negatively affected by COVID-19. If the Board would like to pursue this, a resolution would need to be passed before the end of the year and taxing entities notified.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Meeting Minutes transcribed by Jay Baughman, Economic Development Specialist