A rescheduled regular meeting of the Downtown Advisory Commission was held on Thursday, September 21, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. in the board room of the Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce, 100 SW Water Street, Peoria, IL 61602, with Chairman Mark Misselhorn presiding and with proper notice having been given.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call confirmed the following Commissioners physically present: Mark Misselhorn, Becky Frye, Ray Lees, Jon Jenkins, John Gibson (6).

Absent: Kip Strasma, Adam Hamilton, Katy Shackelford (3).

City Council Present: Sid Ruckriegel

City Staff Present: Chris Setti

Chairman Misselhorn announced that Commissioners Strasma and Hamilton have resigned. Both are moving out of Chicago. Commissioner Hamilton has taken a new job in Chicago with McDonald’s. Commissioner Strasma’s wife is being relocated to Deerfield with Caterpillar. Chairman Misselhorn stated that Alma Brown would be replacing Commissioner Hamilton. Ms. Brown works in Guest Services for Caterpillar and was a long time City employee. She will be appointed by the City Council on September 26.

MINUTES

Commissioner Lees motioned for approval of the minutes of the regular Downtown Advisory Commission (DAC) meeting held on July 13, 2017 as printed; seconded by Commissioner Frye. The motion was approved unanimously.

PEORIA LAKES COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN

Commissioner Lees, representing Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC), presented an outline of the Peoria Lakes Comprehensive Conservation Plan effort. He explained that the project was a collaboration with the Corps of Engineers. He said the project was not grant funded. Rather, TCRPC and the Corps were donating staff time. Others involved in the partnership included the Nature Conservancy and Heartland Water Resources Council.

Mr. Lees stated that the purpose of the effort was to identify challenges and opportunities regarding conserving the lake. He described the importance of Peoria Lakes to the ecology and economy of the region. The goal is to have a broad collaboration of partners working towards conservation. He described the mission and vision of the effort.

Mr. Lees outlined the project’s timeline. The project kickoff was in April 2017. The first set of public meetings was held in July. Two sessions were held at the Ivy Club and were well attended. Partners are now working to create a draft plan which will be reviewed by the public in January 2018. A final plan will be presented in April 2018.

Mr. Lees discussed issues facing the Lakes, including sedimentation, water quality and invasive species. He further discussed the impacts those issues were having on the Lakes and the adjacent communities. He said the project will result in a prioritized list of projects to improve the Lakes. Implementation of those projects would be based on available funding.

Chairman Misselhorn discussed the importance of Peoria Lakes to downtown and the Commission. In response to his question, Mr. Lees stated that the conservation planning project would impact downtown by identifying ways to

**UPDATE BY THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ON VARIOUS INITIATIVES**

Michael Freilinger, CEO of the Downtown Development Corporation (DDC), provided an update to the Commission of various DDC projects. He stated that the DDC was continuing to pursue the creation of a Special Service Area (SSA) to serve downtown and the Warehouse District. He outlined the public engagement that had been done. Based on feedback, the SSA committee reconvened and made changes to their proposal. They changed the boundaries to include portions of the North Valley and remove sections at the southwest end of the Warehouse District. They are no longer suggesting an increase to the sales tax. Doing so requires an increase in the suggested property tax rate from $0.58 to $0.65. The budget was reduced, mainly in the area of wayfinding. They are also making changes the advisory commission and have pledged to voluntarily comply with the Open Meetings Act. He outlined the process for creating an SSA and stated they hoped to make their pitch to the City Council in early 2019.

In reply to a question by Commissioner Frye, Mr. Freilinger stated that if approved, the property tax would not be collected until 2019. In response to Chairman Misselhorn, Mr. Freilinger stated that the boundary pushed north a few blocks because of some interest by entities in that area to be a part of the SSA.

Mr. Freilinger then discussed a project to review the Warehouse District Form Based Code. Their group was looking primarily at three areas: building separations, parking setbacks, and first floor residential restrictions. He provided a brief update of their parking study, which he said was in a near final draft. He also showed a portion of a new video highlighting downtown living options. The video was the idea of the Peoria Area Association of Realtors (PAAR) who wants to help market the area. He stated that videos would also be created to feature activities for downtown residents. He announced the downtown living video would be debuted at a screening at Dozer Park on October 11 at 5 pm.

**PRESENTATION OF NEW BUSINESS: EPIC CLIMBING GYM**

Mark Bell discussed his project to bring an indoor climbing gym and health club to the Warehouse District. He started by showing a video highlighting the benefits of climbing. He discussed the elements of his project, including a climbing wall, bouldering area, traditional gym equipment, retail sales and other programming. He stated that the facility would be at 927 SW Washington, next to Haggerty Industrial Supply. While the business has a name, that is not being announced yet.

In response to Commissioner Daly, Mr. Bell said that pricing had not been finalized but there would be a variety of levels including memberships and day passes. He stated that the facility would also cater to student groups, parties, etc. In response to Chairman Misselhorn, Mr. Bell said they chose a downtown location because they believe in the area, they were impressed with the increasing numbers of residential units, and appreciated its centrality in the region.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Daly discussed a car show called “Friday Night Lights” that was held at Persimmon Lofts and was successful. She also discussed hosting a “Late Night BU” event at the Warehouse on State.

Grace Elisco, the Commission’s liaison to Bradley students, discussed her interest in organizing a fashion show charity event. She also encouraged improving communication with professors and encouraging them to use downtown for educational opportunities.

Chairman Misselhorn discussed the new Abe Lincoln statue. He also reminded attendees that there were only two Saturdays left for the Riverfront Market. He stated that Bearded Owl Brewery has announced their opening in the old Rizzi’s space on State.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jon Walker inquired about the PeoriaCorps project going into 813 SW Washington. Assistant City Manager Chris Setti described the program and stated that a small portion of the building, which is owned by the City, would be converted into office space for that staff.
**ADJOURNMENT**
The Downtown Advisory Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:05 pm.

Chris Setti, City of Peoria
City Manager’s Office