



City of Colorado Springs

Regional Development
Center (Hearing Room)
2880 International Circle

Meeting Minutes - Final Downtown Review Board

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

9:00 AM

2880 International Circle, 2nd Floor, Hearing Room

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Present: 8 - Board Member Nolette, Board Member Kuosman, Board Member Kronstadt, Board Member Hensler, Board Member Lord, Board Member Friesema, Board Member Mikulas and Board Member Luciano

Absent: 1 - Board Member Coats

2. Changes to Agenda/Postponements

3. Communications

Ryan Tefertiller - Urban Planning Manager

Ryan Tefertiller, Urban Planning Manager, relayed to the Board that on April 7th the City Council upheld the Downtown Review Board's decision denying the appeal for the One Vela project, the 27-story apartment mixed use building on Costilla and Sahwatch. The decision of the DRB was upheld to approve with a 6-1 vote, with Councilman Donelson opposed and Councilmembers Risley and Henjum absent.

Mr. Tefertiller said Thursday, May 8, there are public events related to the update to the Downtown Master Plan, the Coffee and Chat at the Pioneers Museum, and the Walk and Talk leaving from UCCS Downtown Space, where people can visit some relevant sites Downtown and provide input to the consultant team.

Mr. Tefertiller said consultants will be making formal presentations about the Downtown Master Plan to the DRB later in the fall, and the item is expected to come before the Board for adoption around February of next year.

Board member Friesema asked if the form-based code revisions are happening now or will they take place after the plan is adopted. Mr. Tefertiller said the intention is to wait for the Master Plan to be more current so the code can be consistent with it. He said the decision-making bodies, Downtown Review Board, Planning Commission and City Council, should

review them concurrently.

Mr. Tefertiller noted that members Board member Kronstat and Board member Luciano terms will expire in August and are eligible for reappointment. Mr. Tefertiller requested the members to inform him whether they will consider reappointment to start the process or to begin recruitment for new members.

Board member Kronstadt asked if there is a particular process to fill his position as he represents the Mill Street and Shooks Run area. Mr. Tefertiller replied that any time the seat is vacant, the Department will contact the associations to nominate an individual. If there were more than one nominee, interviews would be conducted with City Council representatives to appoint a qualified member.

Mr. Tefertiller mentioned the next meeting is on June 3rd, but there might not be any items scheduled, and Board Members will be notified if the meeting is cancelled.

4. Approval of the Minutes

[DRB 2298](#) Minutes for the March 3, 2025, Downtown Review Board Meeting

Presenter:

David Lord, Downtown Review Board Chair

Attachments: [DRB_Minutes_3.4.25 Draft](#)

Motion by Board Member Friesema, seconded by Board Member Hensler, to approve the minutes for the March 3, 2025, Downtown Review Board Meeting The motion passed by a vote of 8-0-1.

Aye: 8 - Board Member Nolette, Board Member Kuosman, Board Member Kronstadt, Board Member Hensler, Board Member Lord, Board Member Friesema, Board Member Mikulas and Board Member Luciano

Absent: 2 - Board Member Coats and Alternate Pence

5. Consent Calendar

6. Items Called Off Consent Calendar

7. Unfinished Business

8. New Business

Early Connections Learning Center

- 8.A. [FBZN-25-000](#)
[1](#) An FBZ Minor Improvement Plan to allow for the conversion of an existing two-story building into an early childhood education center including façade enhancements, as well as exterior and landscaping improvements with an associated warrant to allow a five (5') fence within the common lawn lot frontage typology on a .65 acre lot zoned FBZ-CEN (Form-Based Zone Central) located at 415 Sahwatch St. (Quasi-Judicial).

Presenter:

Johnny Malpica, AICP, Senior Comprehensive Planner, Urban Planning Division

Attachments: [Early Connections Learning Center - Staff Report Draft - JPM](#)

[Figure 1 - Site Plan](#)

[Figure 2 - Project Statement](#)

Johnny Malpica, AICP, Senior Comprehensive Planner, presented the application for an FBZ Minor Improvement Plan and a Warrant to allow for the conversion of an existing two-story building into an early childhood education center. Mr. Malpica said the current zone is FBZ-CEN and the proposed land use is for an early childhood education center. Mr. Malpica explained the project proposal includes a five-foot fence surrounding the children's play area, additional landscaping to be installed between the fence and the sidewalk within the city ROW. Standard public notice was done, and no comments were received. A City Agency Review was done, and the installation of a sidewalk will be required. Technical comments were received and have been addressed. The project is compliant with PlanCOS and the application meets the review criteria.

Board Member Questions

Board member Hensler asked for clarification about whether the fence is located around the building, as shown in the renderings, or around the parking lot, as shown in the site plan. Mr. Malpica said the site plan shows the property line rather than the fence, as the fence is located on the north and south sides of the building, enclosing play areas.

Board member Friesema asked if this project is moving forward instead of the project proposed by the same applicant the previous year, behind the Antlers at early childhood center. Ashely Grove, Vice President of

Community Engagement at Early Connections, said they operate a facility behind the Antlers Hotel and were considering moving that facility to the corner of that space, but decided a new construction was not a good fit. She mentioned that 415 Sahwatch Street is a better fit for a renovation.

Board member Friesema asked if there were any gates on the fenced areas. Mr. Malpica replied that there are gates on the fenced areas where people can enter and exit. Christine Costa, with RTA Architects, explained that the perimeter fences have a panic bar and blocking hardware on the outside; and the three -foot internal fences have pass-through gates.

Board member Mikulas asked about the programming of the childcare facility. Christine Costa, with RTA Architects, described the number of rooms for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Public Comment

Austin Wilson Bradley, Director of Economic Development with the Downtown Partnership, spoke in support of the project. Mr. Wilson Bradley noted that the Downtown Development Authority provided a \$50,000 grant toward this project, as it enhances the value of a property in Downtown.

Motion by Board Member Mikulas, seconded by Board Member Friesema, to approve the application as submitted based on the finding that the Warrant criteria in Section 5.4.3. of the Form-Based Code is being met. The motion includes the requirement to work with Staff to implement one remaining technical modification.

- Technical Modification:

o Resubmit the plan depicting a sidewalk along Sahwatch Street that meets Development Review requirements and adjust the final landscape plan as needed.

The motion passed by a vote of 8-0-1.

Aye: 8 - Board Member Nolette, Board Member Kuosman, Board Member Kronstadt, Board Member Hensler, Board Member Lord, Board Member Friesema, Board Member Mikulas and Board Member Luciano

Absent: 2 - Board Member Coats and Alternate Pence

9. Presentations

10. Adjourn