



Rail Yards Advisory Board

December 1, 2021

8:30 am

Council Committee Room

9th Floor, Suite 9081

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

II. Welcome & Overview

Members Present:

City Councilor Isaac Benton, Chair

Rep. Miguel Garcia

Lawrence Rael, COO

Margarita Archibeque for Commissioner Steven Michael Quezada

Jay Rembe, ULI-New Mexico

Leba Freed, WHEELS Museum

Eddie Garcia, South Broadway Neighborhood

Dorothy Chavez, Barelvas Neighborhood

Staff Present:

Petra Morris, City Council Services

Diane Dolan, City Council Services

Nathan Molina, City Council Services

Karen Iverson, Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency

Ed Adams, project manager

Others:

Christopher Frechette, Rail Yards Market Board Chair

Alaska Piper, Rail Yards Market Manager

III. Approval of Minutes: August 4, 2021 RYAB Meeting

Councilor Benton made a motion to approve the minutes.

Rep. Garcia seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Report from Administration on status of construction work at the site and on 2nd Street

COO Rael introduced Ed Adams to report:

The City has successfully spent every dime of funding for the Rail Yards. We desperately need funding for additional work.

Lead contamination has been cleaned.

We have a conditional Certificate of Substantial Completion from EHD.

Flue Shop has a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). There are two minor things to do - a door and paper barrier. It is heated, air conditioned, lit, has bathrooms, and is ready for occupancy. Window frame panels same size but double pane low E Boiler Shop roof is complete, atrium skylights have been replaced. Saved 3000 sf of creosote blocks to repurpose and the building now has 15000 sf polished concrete floor.

At the Tender Repair Shop, there is a lot of clean up completed. This could be used for special events kinds of things but there is no CO yet as there are still things that need to be done. A new roof is needed (the old roof had asbestos). There is still work to do at the Boiler Shop. The large swinging doors will be reused and made operational.

We are also putting new roll up and man doors on the Tender Shop.

The trail project is partially federally funded and has started. All demo work has been done. We need to complete rough grading trail and put in retaining walls. Electrical conduits and future data conduits have been installed as well as additional conduits in for security at WHEELS building (Councilor Benton provided some funding). Conduits will extend across the driveway. We are working on other minor design projects for when funding comes; all big work is pending funding to continue restoration and stabilization.

COO RAEL:

The last bond issue included \$2.5m of additional funding for the Rail Yards. We will probably have more thorough discussion as we work w/legislators.

The Fire House is an iconic building on the north end that needs work. It has environmental and roof issues.

Goal is to try to get enough of the facility activated to use for activities.

Want presence on site on daily basis in addition to WHEELS.

Still working w/CNM on Blacksmith Shop to do a film program there. Trying to see if we can get a timeline from CNM.

From construction side, hats off to Ed, he has knowledge of how to make things work, government process, and working with the state.

Work completed includes storm drains, conduits, and a lot of things we don't see that are in the grand but that make the site usable.

BNSF donated 20' of ROW from curb to second fence to create the trail to connect to the Rail Yards. It doesn't impact 1st Street.

This will make a nice corridor from downtown to the Rail Yards.

Thanks to the City Council, Mayor, and advisory board for support.

Putting in some traffic calming amenities along trail and along new project on 2nd Street, particularly at the Santa Fe Ave intersection to reduce speeds, get more presence from the site.

Tried to get SHPO to let us have access off 2nd St from the very end of the south side. A loading dock runs along 2nd St so we are blocked out of access there.

Hoping state will allow us to build a driveway on the south end so we can access the turntable and other buildings behind WHEELS.

It is a long-term project.

Ed has done a great job, great contractors Jaynes, gone above and beyond, have taken care of little things we would usually pay for.

Ms. Freed:

Thank Lawrence and Ed, Jaynes have been wonderful, kind, helpful.

Fire House – We have always anticipated using that as part of the WHEELS Museum, think its highest use. We have fire trucks.

Applied to get the Pattern Shop but were not selected for a tenant. Is there anything going on?

COO Rael:

One of the main entryways will be between the Pattern Shop and Fire House.

Project put on hold a bit related to street work. Pattern House might be an auxiliary facility because it is smaller. Not as significant, maybe tear it down, maybe incorporate into greater project, still having conversations about that.

Ms. Chavez:

When we went to RPF, the Pattern House was the one picked to use, now Spirit Station has moved to a different building, new design. How does that change without going to another RFP? Their presentation/what they are going to put in there has changed. If I'd known, I would not have approved. Detrimental and insulting to neighborhood. Going to put in a perfumery related to sewers and butcher shops that used to be there. I don't think people want that to represent the community.

Ms. Iverson:

Thank you for bringing that up, didn't know community's opinion of that, something we can work through with them if there are specific aspects of their vision the community is unhappy with. Applied for grant w/EPA to help pay for exhibit space. We need that grant in order to pay for the City's portion of the project. Looked at moving them to accommodate discussion related to conversation about stadium, but that is no longer relevant and we could look at moving them.

Ms. Chavez

Don't think it should be the Pattern House because that's the entrance to neighborhood and we think there should be something better there. Maybe

Tender Shop is a better space. What they are doing is not what the neighborhood wants, better space reflecting the neighborhood.

COO Rael:

Will take a look at that.

Mr. Griego:

Thanks and congrats, great to drive by every day and see so much happening. Between the bond issue, are we piecing something for funding – legislature, repurposed city bonds, maybe county?

COO Rael:

One of the issues we're working through right now is getting those numbers together. Number of things that could be helpful to the proposal.

Proposal from solar manufacturer interested in converting roofs to use solar. Looking for ways to use infrastructure to create additional revenue. \$15m – 149,000 sf.

Everything we've done so far is to deter deterioration of the buildings.

Did a lot more work in Flue Shop to make sure we had usable space so we can have more of a permanent presence.

Still have to do windows, SHPO has taken a strong stance on how, materials, etc. Parking, asbestos, conversations about uses.

Putting numbers together, could ask for \$20m and get a lot further down the road. \$17m has been invested in 4 years to get the buildings and site to where it is

Agreement w/film production company that will start in January, contributing \$1m in rent over 9-10 months. They will use the entire site but left dates open for the market and community uses on weekends, they will provide support (tents, etc).

Looking for additional uses for revenue to support the facility

Will notify the board about what we will be asking the legislature.

Councilor Benton:

With regard to the grt bill, I am opposed to it on principal, not the money or any specific projects, don't know if it will pass or not, up in the air if it will pass, most likely not.

We will have capital budget cleanups.

Interested in what we'll get from infrastructure/build back better funds.

Will support any funding request to legislature.

As far as long-term capital funding, the Administration, I am committed to it, will continue to push forward. Solid commitment to Rail Yards.

For all the other efforts, roof is still the top priority.

Optimistic we'll be able to identify funds from the federal funds.

Mr. Griego:

Ms. Chavez mentioned the entrance. The bike trail – Santa Fe goes right into the Rail Yards but it looks like the entrance is still being pushed further north. Santa Fe goes all the way through the neighborhood, major street, intersection w/senior center, community center. as far as how we're getting people to the site from the west, it doesn't look like it will accommodate entrance.

Mr. Adams:

It is there, that will be one of the access points in the future, but it's not being built onto the property yet, but it is accommodated by the ROW and work we're doing. Built retaining walls. In short term, definite security problems, still suffering repeated vandalism on new work. Two on Flue Shop, damage to Boiler Shop roof, 7 atrium panels damaged. We have some replacement panes on site from added stock, didn't have to purchase yet. Until we have more activation on the site, we'll continue to have problems

Councilor Benton:

Do we have cameras elsewhere on site?

Mr. Adams:

We have some on site, some APD cameras DMD is looking to relocate, to the courtyard, north parking, working w/ISD to connect to city hall, the conduits are for that purpose.

Councilor Benton:

Does Flue Shop have capability of adding cameras?

Mr. Adams

Yes, right now have wireless connection to city hall, have cameras there now, but hard conduit is better, a lot installed already but still a little way out.

COO Rael:

Once we get that fiber line into the area, it will be available for neighborhood use as well, will benefit the neighborhood to have that infrastructure in place.

Councilor Benton:

Riots downtown, damage to KIMO no one was prosecuted. Huge issue, need to work w/APD to prosecute.

Ms. Freed offered APD meeting at WHEELS.

COO Rael:

We do have APD advising us. Once in place, real challenge is that we have extraordinarily creative thieves, how they get up on the roof is interesting. Looking at construction issues, do we have places where there are ladders to the roof, create deterrents along facades of buildings.

Ms. Freed:

There was a crazy woman on the site screaming, lots of vandalism. Are we going to get security on the site?

COO Rael

With the film, there will be full-time on-site security.

Mr. Garcia

Is there a rapid response/real time number we can call? Live on other side of site, see people along the tracks all the time.

You mentioned cameras, we had some downtown along several streets and they had monitors.

Mr. Rembe

In our projects, we give access to all of our cameras to the tenants to monitor. Any idea where the stadium will be going?

COO Rael

Not sure yet, still analyzing the options. From Admin prospective, with the message voters sent in disapproving the bond, it's up to the team to determine how they want to move forward, a smaller stadium paid by team or maybe they'll go to legislature. It's our issue as a community. Can't speak for ownership group, exploring options.

Rep. Garcia

What is the current status of on-site security?

Mr. Adams:

There is part time security, we've tried different schedules, hasn't been super effective. Kids out run them, not the success you would think having on site. Challenges with success, funding for 24hr presence. Not armed security, have yet to apprehend one, outrun them.

Rep. Garcia

Coordinate w/APD, when there is a shift change, units congregate and do briefing, could that presence be made in Rail Yards or abutting? Lends a presence, at least 3 times during the day. Ed mentioned you worked w/historic preservation in state, ran infrastructure down which building and what were you able to accomplish.

Mr. Adams

Transfer table between the Boiler and Machine Shops. Worked with SHPO to remove one of three panels of concrete to put all utilities for future in the gap. Stubbed out for future Boiler Shop use, already tied in to Flue Shop. Water line, sewer line, data.

Rep. Garcia

In terms of capital request for legislature, what are you looking at and for what purpose?

COO Rael

Don't know number yet but it would be \$2.5m to finish work Fire House. Think it would be great if we could get the other two buildings cleaned up and fortified as well. Big one is the Machine Shop, getting estimates, getting it done is a major task but if done could clean up floor. Goal has been to activate the place by having interim uses. If we can get environmental work and get buildings to cold shell, makes it more enticing to developers. As long as those issues are still hanging over, it doesn't make sense for most developers. Want to get more interim uses and people on site, hopefully security issues will dwindle, then start looking at how to proceed with land to the south. Would like to see us within the next two years get to the south side.

Rep. Garcia

Solar company that suggested putting up a solar arrangement, would the Machine Shop roof need to be installed?

COO Rael

The scenario for us is that in lieu from giving us payment from installing panels, they would want to sell the energy to pnm. They would need to reroof and it is a great opportunity to get it reroofed, benefit the community. Hopefully better sense w/in next 30 days. If they take that role, our request to legislature will include north buildings and south side of site.

Councilor Benton

Last meeting before legislature but can inform board so they can advocate on behalf of the project. Solar – has the SHPO weighed in?

COO Rael

Ed is exploring with them.

Mr. Adams

We believe that solar is expressly permissible on historic structures. Doesn't mean there won't be a lot of problems between here and there and getting conditions that satisfy them

V. Report from Rail Yards Market

Mr. Griego

Quick comment, in all honesty, we wouldn't be having these conversations if not for WHEELS and the Market. Totally community driven volunteer effort, on the

cover of Albuquerque Magazine. Think it would be terrible if the Market was not part of the foundation of the space moving forward. Moving them around might be reasonable, but having an anchor is important. Huge success story. Mayor was early supporter in legislature, support around this table, legislators and Councilor Benton.

VI. Report from Administration on programming interim uses of the Blacksmith Shop, the Plaza, and newly available spaces in the Boiler Shop, Tender Repair, and Flue Shop

Councilor Benton

Rail Yards Market came to me and said they need some predictability. The Department tasked w/special events and permits is Cultural Services. Also programs other events that occur on the site. Timely, done all of this terrific work, kudos to Keller administration, came in and supported the site. More spaces will be available going forward, time to start talking about interim uses and a plan. Master Plan discussion should occur at our next meeting. Hope we don't throw out baby with bathwater, but tweak the master plan. One idea I've been thinking of, could we internally as the City talk about our permit system for this site at least. City is paying the City essentially with funding Council appropriates. Take from COO Rael about how we program space and users, not just the Market but other users. As word gets out, there will be demand.

COO Rael

First, I'm also a supporter of the Market. Success has many fathers and failure is an orphan. Great success story we are all excited about. We call these spaces interim uses to keep flexibility. If CNM comes in and does their facility, that's obviously not an interim use but permanent so space would not be available for the Market, would have to find another space. The fact that I put into the contract with the production company that we will save dates for the Market, should demonstrate that the Market will continue to have space on the site and will continue to be supported by the City. I do think there are some things we can do differently, such as permitting. Market is no longer a week to week operation. Didn't have space to grow it, in some sense we still don't. In order to use any spaces for a permanent use, we have to have a CO or we have AFR with a pumper and staff on overtime stationed there to manage issues with fire. Prepared to look at that and see how we can work that. Would be a shame to not have the Market going forward, heat is a challenge, although a little cooler in Blacksmith Shop. Work together to:

1. Look at feasibility of having a place for the Market, how we structure that. Issue with permitting we can manage. Maybe a seasonal permit for the whole season, one-time application. Market is a huge piece of success at the site and our progress so far.
2. Other challenge is the parking. The issue of having a second access point on the south and creating parking at least interim, to support additional activities on the site. We're working on that.

3. Become a favorite for two things – weddings and small gatherings. Seniors for proms and senior pictures, other events. Other business uses. On a one-off basis. With all due respect the Market has graduated from special event to seasonal yearly event that should have a different permitting process. Car shows using Boiler Shop also.
4. Until we revisit and update the master plan, for a flexibility standpoint, it may be too early to identify permanent site for Market. Can figure out a better way to make it work until the plan is revisited.

Councilor Benton

Mostly a matter of adding allowable uses to the plan. Hesitate to open up, start from beginning, for small changes to the plan. Wary of starting that until we're really ready.

Mr. Garcia

Simple. The market has become an integral part of the neighborhood, city. Had almost a million people visit, that's a lot of votes.

COO Rael

One thing is politics, other is the right thing to do.

Mr. Jembe

The Rail Yards Market is so New Mexican. Such a community event, proven how well it is run. Look at them as an anchor, use that to help get additional funding. Could still be a shorter, like 5-year lease. Civic project, always will be. Encourage you to look at how they are the piece/anchor and how to build around it. Everyone knows it's the perfect NM use and serves the neighborhood. Issue with the neighborhoods with traffic is you would rather support this type of use with traffic than some other large use that is going to create even more traffic. This supports local businesses. Traffic will always be a problem.

Ms. Freed

Empathize and sympathize, have participated almost every year. WHEELS does not have a lease, were promised a 15 year lease but do not have one. In same boat, no security. Going to ask legislature for \$500k to repair tracks and bring rail cars onto the site. Would ask the same consideration of what's next, WHEELS will be understood as an important historical use on the site, can bring more visitors. Thankful to be working w/everyone, would like to be considered too.

Rep. Garcia

What does the City have in place as far as individuals or entities who would like to use the site. Do they call 311, what is in place, who do people call?

COO Rael

Cultural Services Special Event Division is the entity to get hold of. We are looking at a system to put in place. Last year, we were getting more and more

interest in using the plaza. Now that we have two buildings almost at a point we can use them – for the Boiler Shop, we are going to be dealing with a bigger situation. Boiler Shop does not have a CO so in order to use the building, we need a fire watch for immediate response. Additional cost. Trying to figure out if there's a way once work on 2nd Street is done, think we can find a way to get a second exit at Boiler Shop, may still need fire watch but at maybe a smaller scale.

Councilor Benton

Should there be a role beyond Cultural Services, such as Economic Development? The CSD permit system shouldn't limit us, want to involve MRA and Economic Development.

COO Rael

Flue Shop does have CO but only 1000 sf and more of an office space, maybe move film office or MRA to the site so that we have more uses, presence on the site.

Councilor Benton

To clarify, the CO is in place for the Blacksmith Shop.

Mr. Adams

Flue Shop is a little different than Blacksmith Shop. Blacksmith Shop has dry sprinkler system. The Flue Shop is a little more open, approved for occupancy, can use several hundred.

Councilor Benton

What about the Tender Shop?

Ed

Tender Shop does not have CO. Fire is the biggest issue, it is not sprinklered. Have a plan that would include sprinkler but do not have the funding. None in the Boiler Shop. In the future, lots of funding, meantime limited uses. Working w/Land Clark to determine that the Tender Shop is an open air gazebo, but would still have fire requirements.

VII. Other Business

Ms. Freed described the WHEELS Museum's intent to get rail cars at the site.

The 2022 RYAB Meetings are scheduled for:

Wednesday, April 6 at 8:30 am

Wednesday, August 3 at 8:30 am

Wednesday, December 7 at 8:30 am

Ms. Chavez

We would like to also update the MRA plan for Barelás. Does it incorporate the Rail Yards. Current plan is from 1992.

Mr. Griego

In addition to the Market, collecting toys for toy drive. 75th Annual Los Posadas. All invited. Starting location not yet determined, trying to get the community center.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 am.