



MEMORANDUM

TO: Alice Ellis Gaut, CCAC Chair

FROM: Sean Farrelly, Associate Planner

RE: Downtown Organization: Follow-up with Leland

DATE: June 2, 2008

At the May 14, 2008 City Center Advisory Commission meeting, members requested staff to ask follow-up questions to Leland Consulting regarding their recommendation to establish a downtown organization. Here is a summary of my conversation with Chris Zahas of Leland Consulting, using the questions that were posed at the CCAC meeting.

Q: How important is it for Tigard to have a downtown association? What is your basis for making that recommendation?

A: The most important reason for establishing a downtown organization is that the City cannot do everything alone- particularly marketing, business outreach, and advocacy. Organizations with professional paid staff can accomplish more. Having an organization also gives the private sector a chance to “put their money where their mouth is” by forming a BID or other membership funding and eventually becoming self-sustaining. The organization would also foster leadership and create a dialogue between the City and downtown interests.

The timing of forming such an organization is a consideration that Tigard will have to figure out.

Q: Different types of businesses, retail and industrial, have different concerns. A downtown association could function to both assist retail expansion, events planning etc., but also serve as an advocacy group for businesses that will go through a transition during redevelopment. Do you see this as important to a “cooperative effort”?

A: This is very important to a collaborative effort. Chris added the organization should have a balanced membership- made up of business owners who want to remain in the Downtown for the long term, and property owners who may be interested in redeveloping. Chris suggested the City should have a representative (voting or non-voting) on the board and the organization should have a representative on the CCAC.

Process:

Chris also commented on some process issues, if the organization is pursued. Criteria should be developed that any organization must fulfill before any funds are dispersed. Tasks should be set out that will be the basis for judging the success of the organization.