

**Redevelopment Agency of Murray City Meeting  
May 18, 2021**

The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) of Murray City met on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. for a meeting held electronically in accordance with Utah Code 52-4-207(4), due to infectious disease COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus. The RDA Board Chair has determined that conducting a meeting with an anchor location presents substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the anchor location because physical distancing measures may be difficult to maintain in the Murray City Council Chambers.

Any member of public may view the meeting via the live stream at [www.murraycitylive.com](http://www.murraycitylive.com) or <https://www.facebook.com/Murraycityutah/>. \*If you would like to make public comments during the meeting please register at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2zpucq7> OR you may submit comments via email at: [rda@murray.utah.gov](mailto:rda@murray.utah.gov). Comments are limited to 3 minutes or less, and written comments will be read into the meeting record.

**RDA Board Members**

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

**Others in Attendance**

Blair Camp, RDA Executive Director  
Melinda Greenwood, RDA Deputy Executive Director  
Jennifer Kennedy, City Council Executive Director  
Brooke Smith, City Recorder  
Jennifer Heaps, Chief Communications Officer  
G.L. Critchfield, City Attorney  
Brenda Moore, Finance & Admin. Director  
Danny Astill, Public Works Director  
Trae Stokes, City Engineer  
Jay Baughman, Economic Development Specialist

Rosalba Dominguez was absent.

Mr. Cox called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Approval of the March 16, 2021 RDA meeting minutes**

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

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

Motion Passed 4-0

**Approval of the March 16, 2021 RDA closed session meeting minutes**

MOTION: Ms. Martinez moved to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Hales.

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

Motion Passed 4-0

## **Citizen Comments**

### **Email Comments (comments are included with spelling and grammar as emailed to RDA staff)**

#### **Darlene Morgan – Murray City, Utah**

My Name is Darlene Morgan and my husband and I own a home in Murray Utah. These are my public comments: There are quite a few indicators I am aware of that point to what specific property the city is looking to purchase. This purchase will demolish historic buildings.,remove low income housing that can't be replaced and consequently turning more onto the streets or unstable housing and drastically change the skyline of our downtown without any public participation in the process.

Thank you for giving the citizens a right to speak out.

Sincerely,  
Darlene Morgan

#### **Stacey Garcia – Murray City, Utah**

Why are we tearing down buildings that are historical and still being used?? Why are we removing buildings from the historic list, then tearing them down?! Why are we putting high density housing here? We don't need more restaurants or grocery stores in this high density development when those things are available a few blocks away in either direction. We are Murray!! We are not downtown Salt Lake City!! If I wanted to live in an area like downtown Salt Lake City I would move there!! I live in Murray (born and raised) because it's a smaller community and people know their neighbors and care. Why are you not listening to Murray Residents??

We already have a lot of high density, go build where the vacant lot of AISU is, there's already high density there and it's by transportation options.

It's sad when the only thing being considered is making a buck instead of maintaining our heritage, dignity and integrity!! I'm so disappointed and disgusting with recent events and the illogical placement for these types of developments. How can you go against your constituents WHO VOTED FOR YOU?? You live here too!!

Sincerely not happy,

Stacey Garcia  
A Murray Resident  
Employed by Murray School District  
3rd Generation of 5 Generations to live in Murray

**Terrie Townsend Butler – Murray City, Utah**

As a long-time resident of Murray and Townsend family history going back to 1900, I would like to make a few points about the Townsend properties which you propose to tear down. Both the Harker Building/Murray Merc and the Townsend home on Poplar Street were added to the National Registry of Historical Places on 9/26/2006 as contributing buildings in the Murray Downtown District. I do know that being on this registry means very little to you since you have chosen to remove the Harker/Murray Merc building from the Murray Registry. And I do acknowledge that that building is in very bad shape.

But both of these buildings have been important in the history of Murray. The Harker Building was built in 1898 by Henry Harker, whose daughter, Lovenia Harker, married Arthur Townsend. The Murray Merc started shortly thereafter and was one of the very first stores opened in the area. The store soon became one of the largest in the country and rivaled ZCMI downtown. The workers and their families of the Murray smelter would purchase their monthly goods from the Merc. Arthur would receive the paychecks of all the employees, and after settling their credit accounts, would disperse the remainder to the workers. And as with everything else, when the smelters workers were moved to Garfield, Arthur was left with a staggering debt of delinquent bills and the business deteriorated. Arthur not only ran the Merc, but he was on the City Council for two terms and was elected Murray Mayor in 1930. The Townsend home was also built in 1898 by Arthur Townsend.

My Grandfather, Delbert Townsend, took over the business in the 1950s when Arthur retired. Deb not only ran the store but his first love was the Murray Fire Department. He joined in 1916, but was inactive for a few years because of the War and time spent working in Midvale. But in 1929, he rejoined the Department and served as a fire firefighter until January 1948, when he was appointed Fire Chief. He served with the Fire Department for 35 years, 14 of which were spent as Chief. Quoting from one of the numerous newspaper articles written about Deb: "We feel that Mr. Townsend is one of the most colorful figures in our community. Being Chief of the Murray Fire Department is a great responsibility, and Deb Townsend handles the job most efficiently. The Townsend Mercantile and Deb Townsend are landmark in the community. We felt that to honor Deb in the 'Who's Who' was paying a tribute to one of Murray's leading citizens."

My own father, Earl Townsend, owned a business, Mr. Debb's Clothes for Men, on State Street for over 25 years before being forced to close because of the various Malls.

I tell you this because of the dedication and hard work of my Townsend ancestors in the establishment of Murray. I understand the need for the removal of the Harker/Murray Merc building in the grand scheme of Murray. But Murray's history should also not be erased as I see it slowly happening.

I think at least the Townsend home should be moved and be made useful like the Murray Manor and old Church you are keeping. Maybe a replica of the Harker Building/Murray Merc could be built to recognize its importance in our history. The history of both of these buildings in Murray is as important as the Murray Manor and old Church buildings.

Terrie Townsend Butler  
4796 Atwood Blvd.  
Murray, Utah 84107

**Lindsey Hector – Murray City, Utah**

I'm shocked that Murray City Council would consider demolishing our unique and historic downtown. In addition, it's irresponsible for any public administrator to be considering a plan that removes affordable housing when our state is experiencing a housing crisis. We need MORE deeply affordable housing units and to preserve the unique character of Murray.

Lindsey Hector  
4422 S 120 W, Murray, UT 84107

**Amy Thomas – Murray City, Utah**

I am writing to express concern that the Murray RDA has not provided transparency to the public or an opportunity for feedback regarding the purchase of property in the heart of Murray's historic downtown and plans, such as potential demolition. At this time, please vote "no" on the decision to purchase the Harker Building and Murray Mercantile (located on 4836 and 4844 S State St.)

While I am concerned about losing many clearly viable historic structures, my primary concern is asking for the Murray RDA to be more accessible and open to the public. Not only is it your obligation to share information with citizens needed to make informed decisions, but public engagement also enhances your effectiveness and improves the quality of decisions being made. Decisions that directly impact our community in the present and our children in the future.

My secondary concern is regarding the decisions the Murray RDA has been making to turn a beautiful historic community into an urban blight. Carl Elefante, former president of the American Institute of Architects, said, "The greenest building is the one that already exists." A report by the US National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2016 found that "it takes between 10 and 80 years for a new building that is 30 percent more efficient than an average-performing existing building to overcome, through efficient operations, the negative climate change impacts related to the construction process." The report concluded that "reusing an existing building and upgrading it...is almost always the best choice regardless of building type and climate." We have a responsibility to the future to do our best to create the best opportunities for our descendants, and I do not believe we have been given the time or opportunity to do so.

If we continue to demolish affordable housing in favor of high-density development, it will only continue to shape Murray into another urban blight. For example, State Street presently isn't walkable, bikeable, or green. It kills every business that isn't a strip mall or a car dealership.

I am not asking that we halt development. I am asking for the Murray RDA to make informed decisions. For example, by soliciting independent, expert opinions on the structural soundness of the existing buildings, sharing information with the public, and providing a forum for informed public feedback before taking any further action. Please fulfill your obligation to share information with citizens that are needed to make informed decisions, which will enhance your effectiveness and improve the quality of decisions being made.

At this time, please vote "no" on the decision to purchase the Harker Building and Murray Mercantile (located on 4836 and 4844 S State St.). Thank you for your time.

Amy Thomas  
205 E Vine St.

**Kathleen Stanford – Murray City, Utah**

From the 2017 Murray General Plan:

We regret much of what we've built; we regret much of what we've torn down. But we've never regretted preserving anything.

Preserving historic structures, neighborhoods, and business districts provides a tangible link to the past that can tie people to a place.

Goals were listed as:

- Preserve key historic landmarks.
- Capitalize on historic resources as opportunities for investing in the unique character of Murray City from an economic development perspective.
- Increase the awareness and education of residents and visitors regarding Murray City's history and heritage through the preservation of significant sites, structures, and areas.

MY QUESTION

What vision now guides development in the downtown area?

**Mary Ann Kirk – Murray City, Utah**

I decided to do a follow-up email. May I suggest the following.

1. Rethink your process for public buy-in - not just "token" public input. Get key players involved in finding and implementing solutions. Ask for and value input from your advisory boards. Better yet, use some of their ideas!!
2. Better educate yourselves in historic preservation and its benefits - not just the viewpoint that they are old, unsafe buildings. Technically 2/3 or more of Murray City's built environment including our homes were built before updated codes drastically changed. Does that suggest we tear them all down? No, we address those issues while preserving materials and efforts of those who invested much to build them in the first place. There are preservation experts who can guide you through that process. And new building codes have historic exceptions and ways to provide safety so that we can continue to enjoy the architectural uniqueness of prior time periods.
3. Maybe create a committee with key players from history board, arts board, Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses, etc to discuss what needs to happen for both new and old buildings to create visual variety and a sense of place. That sense of place is extremely important and hopefully communicates in a visual way an appreciation for Murray's past and future. I thought some historic preservation was identified in the master planning process but apparently it has been thrown out with the bath water. Celebrating Murray's past merely in a museum is a slap in the face to its rich history.
4. One idea - at one point, there was talk about creating a historic park. Why not create a destination site - something like Gardner Village around the Cahoon Mansion with the chapel and move the Townsend home across the street? Yes, it will take money, but that money would be an investment in something that brings people and business to the area for receptions, dinners, arts and crafts shopping, entertainment, etc. This area has SO much potential that the city has ignored for decades. Bill and Susan Wright provided a small flicker of light which was supported somewhat with infrastructure but the city never grabbed ahold of the bigger possibilities.
5. Start talking now about how to preserve the buildings on the east side of State Street with appropriate transition to a historic neighborhood. The Sheranian Clinic (Vision Center) on 4800 South and the other

small businesses alongside Desert Star should be front and center in the discussion and proactive plans. The twin duplexes on Jones Court are one-of-a kind homes - the only ones of that architectural style on Utah's historic data base. If properly cared for, these smaller homes throughout the historic residential district provide some of the affordable housing that is desperately needed - although I must admit their value is increasing.

I really encourage you to think outside the box!

Mary Ann Kirk

**DeLynn Barney – Murray City, Utah (Email)**

My name is DeLynn Barney                      May 18, 2021

My home and address is:

4902 S Box Elder Street

Murray, Utah

I disapprove of the wholesale destruction of historic downtown Murray City.

I do realize that change happens and economic development is expected and that the Murray City Redevelopment Agency owns much of the property between 4800 S and 4th Ave and State Street and "Poplar Street".

However with the growth, change and economic development the historic nature of Murray has changed and is changing it is no longer as unique and interesting as it once was. It is beginning to look like any other city, Murray / Salt Lake what is the difference, crowded streets and congestion.

If the apartments are constructed between 4800 S and 4th Ave and State Street and "Poplar Street" will there be enough parking OR will their overflow parking be allowed in the New Murray City hall parking area, or will there be street parking like at Murray Crossing, Inverness Square (240 W 4790 S), apartments at 4623 S Urban Way (that park on 200 W), the Fireclay area, or most recently when basketball games are played at the former Salt Lake Indoor Soccer bldg, congested parking on Box Elder Street between 4th Ave and Vine St and even on 4th Ave, traffic is limited to one lane.

How much development is worth losing our heritage, increase in congestion, and increased risk to the health and safety to the people of Murray?

Thank You For Your Time.

**Rachel Morot – Murray City, Utah**

Dear RDA committee;

As a Murray citizen and voter, I would like to voice my disappointment with the direction being taken by Murray City in the redevelopment of our commercial districts. Many citizens, including myself have requested at public meetings that the city take a thoughtful and measured approach to the type of development allowed in our downtown. Something that blends better with the appearance of the east side of State Street and surrounding neighborhoods would be a far better option and it has been suggested many times. I firmly believe, along with many others, that the current Edlen project is not right for downtown Murray. It does nothing to represent the unique character and individuality that has always been associated with Murray and is a point of pride for many of us. I am not originally from Murray, but

chose to buy a home here 7 years ago because I had long admired the qualities I mentioned above as well as the love that the people have always displayed for their heritage. Our city decision makers can and must do better on behalf of the people they serve. You have that ability and obligation, please don't let us down.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Morot

**Brent Barnett – Murray City, Utah**

Dear RDA Board.

This current proposal for downtown Murray is, frankly, a complete embarrassment to the firm of Gerding-Edlen. Gerding-Edlen is a firm with lots of experience and a good reputation. Yet, this proposal is a blot on Gerding-Edlen's otherwise good reputation. The proposal is mundane and wasteful of this crucial block in Murray's downtown. Gerding-Edlen -- with all its experience -- is worthless to Murray city if they cannot have a vision of what this block should be.

**1. We Need a Real Downtown Murray Commercial Center**

The owners of this property have an opportunity to create a vibrant commercial center in downtown Murray. So far Gerding-Edlen has failed to produce anything with any creative energy. Their pedantic plan is primarily an apartment block. It lacks the good design to draw in people from across the city as a good city center should.

This crucial block is the heart of downtown Murray. It should be designed as a gathering place, with open space for public gathering. It should create interesting streetscapes with interesting pedestrian space.

**2. We Don't Need Only High-Density Housing**

The current design could be produced by any of many incompetent firms. This design suggests that Gerding-Edlen has no real expertise in city planning. They have an opportunity to create a space that could be a showcase in Utah for their genius. Yet they have given us mostly high-density housing.

High-density housing might be appropriate if this were just any other block of the city. But Gerding-Edlen has failed to see that in a downtown commercial district, unless positioned correctly, high-density housing just contributes to traffic - making the downtown less accessible to its citizens.

**3. We Need A Commercial Center for the Entire City**

Gerding Edlen has failed to understand that this block should draw crowds from the entire city.

40,000 cars go by this block every day. 40,000 cars. Gerding Edlen has failed to see the enormous potential of this block as a commercial center for all the surrounding downtown blocks.

This block should attract people to the downtown from all around the city. To do this it needs unique public features that bring in crowds on evenings and weekdays.

**4. We Need an Economic Nucleus for Downtown**

The city put out a proposal that while well-meaning, in retrospect was quite inadequate. The city's proposal naively focused on this block as an independent block to be maximized for revenue.

A good planning firm has to see beyond any weaknesses of the local perception. Any good planner should know that the project should be framed in the context of the entire downtown.

Planners must be the experts who bring vision and expertise. But so far, Gerding Edlen has shown

themselves to be naive and incompetent in understanding the need for a holistic view.

#### 5. We Need to Understand the Best Use of the Block

It is the job of the mayor and the job of any planner he hires to understand the best use of any city block. The horrendous mistake made with the new city hall was not understanding the tremendous value of that property for commercial use.

Gerding-Edlen's analysis must thus start with an evaluation of different ways for the block to serve as an economic nucleus. This nucleus should energize the entire downtown and serve as an economic driver for the entire town.

So far Gerding Edlen has not shown that they have even the remotest ability to carry out this vital step. If they can't handle this, then we need to find someone who can.

#### 6. We Need Active Public Space

The teeny corner of public space in their design is laughable. We need a plan that includes real public space where the public can gather for outdoor events and music.

There are proven ways to create active public space. If Gerding-Edlen had taken the time to talk to the planners of Millcreek's new city center they would see how good design of a commercial center can bring in public events and create a draw bringing people downtown from all around the city.

Gerding Edlen has the ability to design good public space. Look, for example, at the Capitol Hill Station in Seattle. But they have produced nothing of this quality for Murray. Their reputation suggests that Gerding Edlen has the ability to design good public space. But their meager proposal here shows ineptitude.

With Gerding-Edlen's laughable design of public space, the citizens can never accept this until the design provides serious public gathering space.

#### 7. We Need Interaction With The Public

Finally, a good planning firm also needs to have the ability to interact with the public. This means presenting alternative conceptual options for consideration. This ensures that the final design has all the best features and beauty it can have..

One would think an experienced planning firm would have this expertise. But Gerding-Edlen has so far shown no such ability.

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have to ask ourselves: Can this firm do justice to a central block of our city? So far they haven't shown that they can.

This proposal does not utilize the potential of this block. Remember, 40,000 cars go by this block every day.

The current proposal is a stain on our city and on the otherwise good reputation of Gerding-Edlen.

So far Gerding Edlen has not shown that they have the vision and good sense we need. If they can't handle this, then we need to find someone who can.

And our citizens will have nobody to blame but Blair Camp if this block is sold to someone who does not see its potential.

Brent D. Barnett  
Vine Street, Murray.

**Joseph Stanford, MD – Murray City, Utah**



Dear Sir or Madame:

As a committed and concerned resident of Murray, I am writing to register my objection to proceeding with the plans to demolish an entire city block of Murray's historic downtown (including the Harker and Murray Mercantile buildings). This is a dramatic change to Murray's identity that has not been vetted in the public. In my opinion, it will have more negative impacts than positive ones. The negative impacts include potential increase in the homeless population from loss of low income housing, a homogenization of Murray to become indistinguishable from the rest of Wasatch front suburbia, and a further loss of the unique historic downtown look of Murray. In several ways, this action will not serve Murray's long-term interests well. There has not been adequate public information and discussion to elucidate alternative approaches that can achieve the city's development goals without eliminating Murray's irreplaceable legacy.

I would appreciate acknowledgment of receipt and dissemination of these comments.

Sincerely,

Joseph Stanford, MD  
487 East Vine St.  
Murray, UT 84107  
joseph.stanford@utah.edu

**Richard and Beverly Crangle – Murray City, Utah**

For Citizen Comment:

To: Members of the Redevelopment Agency and the Murray City Planning Commission  
From: Richard and Beverly Crangle, 1628 Vine Street, 801-278-9419  
Re: Need Time and Discussion for Taxpayers Before Decisions Are Made

Please defer any decisions on changing the Downtown Area of Murray without public discussion and time for collaboration on how our tax dollars are spent. The anticipated size of this project will have both benefits and inherent problems, both of which need to be reviewed by taxpayers before contracts are awarded. The increase in population density, alone, will affect utilities, transportation, and other major areas of the lives of all Murray City residents, especially taxpayers.

What is the highest and best use of the land, if altered, for Murray residents?

Is the subject property included in the rezoning moratorium?

What are the costs to the taxpayers?

What benefits will this project have on the surrounding businesses and neighbors?

What problems will be created for the surrounding business and neighbors?

What will the impact be on schools? There are many high density buildings in the area, added in the past few years, that will start having an impact on the current school system.

Details need to be disclosed and discussed so that evaluations of the highest and best uses can be achieved for the long term benefits to Murray City taxpayers.

**In-Person Comments**

**Janice Strobel – Murray City, Utah**

Ms. Strobel asked the Board to consider the 11 comments that have been read into the record in this meeting. She does not blame Edlen for developing the project that they did because they do so according to the guidelines from the city and they developed high-density housing. But it does not fit what the community wants or has prepared for at this time.

**Presentation of Tax Year 2020 Fireclay TIF Disbursement Payments**

Mr. Baughman explained that the RDA remits tax-increment finance payments every year to developers that have completed projects in the Fireclay project area. Payments to developers were in the following amounts for tax year 2020 and a total cumulative amount for the life of their project thus far.

Tax Increment Finance Payments Issued:

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Total</b>
• Avida/Starwood	\$372,996	\$906,177
• Hamlet Development	\$204,583	\$819,160
• Parley’s Partners	\$122,825	\$513,598

Mr. Baughman also reported on the amount of money the RDA has remitted to Murray School District for all of the RDA’s project areas in the city, including Fireclay. The School District received \$740,182 in tax year 2020 for a total of \$1,578,970 from all project areas since 2015.

**Closed Session per Utah State Code 52-4-205-1e to discuss the purchase, exchange or lease of real property**

MOTION: Mr. Hales moved to enter a closed session. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Turner.

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

Motion Passed 4-0

At Ms. Martinez’s request, Chair Cox asked City Attorney Critchfield to explain to those in attendance the need for a closed session. Mr. Critchfield explained that meetings for public bodies in Utah are governed by the Open Public Meetings Act. Legislative bodies are to deliberate in public except in certain narrow exceptions which includes strategy sessions when contemplating the purchase of real property. Closed sessions are allowed by state law so that details of such transactions are not made public – the transaction cannot be completed in a closed meeting. Closed meeting participants must stay close to the purpose for which the session has been called and not stray into other topics, no matter how closely related.

The RDA Board entered a closed session at 4:07 p.m.

*Closed session meeting minutes are a separate document from these minutes.*

The Board resumed the open meeting at 4:46 p.m.

**Consideration of a motion to approve the strategy discussed in closed session regarding the purchase, exchange or lease of real property**

MOTION: Ms. Martinez moved to approve the strategy the Board decided upon in the closed session. The motion was SECONDED by Ms. Turner.

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

Motion Passed 4-0

**Project Updates – Presenter: Melinda Greenwood**

Ms. Greenwood stated that as of yesterday May 17<sup>th</sup>, the Jesse Knight Legacy Center had submitted its plan to the State (Department of Environmental Quality) for the review of their materials management plan.

Staff received costs back through the Brownfields Grant that paid for the cost analysis for the THINK Architecture site south of the new fire station at 4868 South Box Elder Street. Depending on the methodology used, the environmental clean-up costs will be between \$120,000 and \$180,000. Staff will work with THINK Architecture to carry the project forward.

T-Mobile has been working on their array at the cell phone tower. The installation of the new tower and demolition of the existing tower is expected to go through the end of the summer.

A public open house with the Edlen Project at 48<sup>th</sup> & State Street is being planned to be held in June, where the public can be shown the designs for the project. There will be at least two-week's notice given to the public prior to the open house.

Ms. Turner inquired if public comment will be taken at that time. Ms. Greenwood said yes and that they are considering either an in-person meeting format or an electronic one. Edlen would share with the public how they developed their design and then have break-out rooms where a member of the Edlen development team would facilitate comments with those in attendance. She anticipates there being a one week period where the public could submit comments. There would also be a time period in July for the public to make comments to the RDA Board following that open house meeting as well.

The Brownfields Coalition between Salt Lake County, Salt Lake City, and Murray City was awarded an additional \$600,000. The City and RDA have used and will continue to use these grant funds on projects in RDA areas throughout the City.

Ms. Martinez inquired of Board Chair Cox if the July RDA meeting will be in person. Mr. Cox said that it is still to be determined. He believes that the meeting will be in person just like the Murray City Council Meeting will be. Ms. Greenwood stated that the next meeting will be on July 20<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.