



GERDING, KORTE & CHITWOOD

Professional Corporation

Certified Public Accountants

January 20, 2012

Mayor Bob McDavid & Columbia City Council Members
 City of Columbia
 701 E. Broadway
 Columbia, MO 65201

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

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 Columbia, MO 65201

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As the chair of the Downtown Leadership Council, I am writing to update you regarding a recent meeting that took place between the DLC and the Community Improvement District (CID).

The Executive Committees of the two groups met on January 16th to discuss the recommendation by City staff that the DLC be merged into the CID. As I explained in my December 15, 2011 letter to you, the members of the DLC are opposed to this merger because of their concerns about the narrower range of representation provided by the CID and because of the CID's smaller physical boundaries. The DLC also believes that the focus of the two groups is fundamentally different, with the DLC concentrating on long-range planning for greater Downtown Columbia, and the CID responsible for providing services and amenities to its taxpaying constituents.

PARTNERS

Robert A. Gerding
 Fred W. Korte, Jr.
 Joseph E. Chitwood
 James R. McGinnis
 Travis W. Hundley

At the joint meeting, the CID board explained that their main concern with the existence of the DLC is confusion about who represents Downtown. The board believes that only one group should purport to be the voice of Downtown, and they contend it should be the business and property owners who have invested their money downtown.

The DLC board responded that we doubt anyone is "confused" by the fact that more than one organization is an advocate for downtown. We believe that stakeholders in Columbia's downtown area include all of us, not just landowners and merchants. We also feel that the possibility of the two groups having differing opinions about downtown issues can be a good thing, raising awareness and encouraging dialogue among all Columbia citizens.

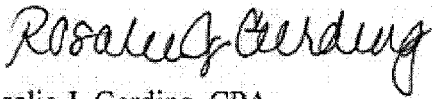
The two groups also discussed their past history of working together. The CID board members expressed their disappointment that the DLC did not do more to include them in the H3 Charrette planning process. The groups agreed that it was important to keep each other apprised of the other's plans, to prevent duplication of efforts. Further, since the Special Business District disbanded, no representative of the CID board had been attending DLC meetings. The DLC agreed that it would ask the City Council to change the DLC membership so that a representative of CID would always be part of the DLC board. The CID members also expressed their concern that DLC's current assurances of cooperation might end once its present members no longer served on the board. To that end, the DLC agreed to amend its bylaws, adding a requirement that the two groups meet annually to exchange ideas and share plans for upcoming projects.

I'm very happy to report that these concessions satisfied the CID Executive Board members, and at the end of the meeting the groups expressed their good wishes for each others' continued success.

Yesterday I received a letter from the City Manager and the City Clerk, requesting feedback on the proposed merger. I'd like to have a discussion with the full DLC board first, but I anticipate that we will very strongly encourage the City Manager to withdraw his proposal. The DLC members are excited about the work that we do, we believe that we are making Columbia a better place, and we are proud of the broad representation that we provide to Columbia citizens.

I look forward to keeping you updated with our progress.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rosalie J. Gerding".

Rosalie J. Gerding, CPA
Chair, Downtown Columbia Leadership Council

cc: Mike Matthes, City Manager
Tony St. Romaine, Deputy City Manager