

CITY OF HUDSONVILLE

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES September 10, 2013

Approved May 13, 2014

Voting Members Present: Dale Sall, Ken Jipping, Larry Gemmen, Philip Koning, Jim Roskam, Dr. Brad Dykstra, Joel Keegstra, Mayor Don Van Doeselaar, Greg Slater, and Doug Butterworth

Non-Voting Attendees: Patrick Waterman, Jan Sal, Michelle Fare, and Dan Strikwerda

Voting Members Absent: None

I. Call to Order:

Vice-chairman Sall called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

II. Election of Officers:

Since Jim Roskam is no longer on the DDA a new chairman needs to be elected.

There was a motion by Gemmen, support by Dr. Dykstra, and unanimous approval to elect Dale Sall as chairman.

The suggestion was made to hold off on electing a Vice-chairman until it was determined how much of a time commitment it would be.

III. Minutes:

There was a motion by Dr. Dykstra, support by Butterworth, and unanimous approval to accept the minutes of the April 30, 2013 meeting.

IV. Finance:

Sal reviewed the current status of the TIFA and DDA financial statements.

- The TIF has a fund balance of \$283,669. There is \$825,138.87 cash on hand. At the beginning of FY 2013-2014 there was a balance of \$1,461,056.72.
- The current DDA operating budget has a fund balance of \$13,100.61. There is \$30,343.36 cash on hand. At the beginning of FY 2013-2014 there was a balance of \$18,792.41.

V. Update on Saladbowl Bash:

Fare provided an update for the Saladbowl Bash. Overall it was seen as a success with about 4,000 people coming to the event. The city went for the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest salad bar. The information is currently being reviewed. It was determined to be 688.13' long. There was also a movie that was not as well attended as

last year in part due to the cold evening. About 100 people attended that. Jensen Jewelers was thanked as the main sponsor.

- Did the event help the business community?
 - Gemmen said there was a lot of new traffic.
 - Keegstra stated that you do not necessarily get the return that day. There were extra people from out of town in the store that day but it is hard to judge because it is not a one day only return. Overall it was a positive.
 - Slater said a lot of new people came in that day.

VI. Urban HayDay sponsorship:

Fare provided an update on the Urban HayDay event. This year the hay ride will be reduced to 2 stops to make it more efficient. It will have two loops continuously running so the wait will be shorter than last year. The hay ride will go from Gemmens to Farmers Co-op instead of to the DDA property, which can be used for parking instead. This way it will run in front of businesses.

In looking for another wow factor this year, a Lumberjack is going to be hired. He will do 3-4 shows throughout the day in the Gemmens parking lot. There will be a stage with music by Farmers Co-op.

The cost for this event is \$1,700, which will leave enough money for the other events the DDA sponsors.

- The need for a tent was questioned. It was estimated that it could be \$700-\$800 to rent for the day.
- The event will be on October 19.

There was a motion by VanDoeselaar, support by Butterworth, and unanimous support to contribute \$1,700 towards the 2013 Urban HayDay.

VII. Holiday Parade sponsorship:

The DDA has been a gold sponsor for this event at the \$1,000 level. This year there is going to be a City/Chamber float.

There was a motion by Dr. Dykstra, support by Keegstra, and unanimous support to contribute \$1,000 towards the 2013 Holiday Parade.

VIII. DDA logo approval:

Since the DDA sponsors a number of events, to help get recognition, a logo was created by a local student. The intent is to put it on a banner for use at events.

- It was appreciated that a local student made this and will be able to take credit for it.
- It was suggested to make sure "Downtown Development Authority" is bold enough to stand out.

There was a motion by Jipping, support by Dr. Dykstra, and unanimous approval for an amended DDA logo as submitted with bolder letters, and to increase the size of the first letter of each word so the name stands out more. The revised logo will be sent to the DDA Board via email for final approval.

IX. Improvement Project Alternative selection:

Waterman presented project options the DDA could financially support that can make an impactful change in the community. The acquisition grant that was awarded for the Village Green was not accepted. There are a couple other directions the DDA can go with financially supporting future improvements.

Chicago Drive landscaping improvements would be a good next step. This is a \$600,000 project. Planting needs to be timed right with the seasons. When a project costs over \$100,000 City Commission coordination is needed, so there would be a joint meeting with the City Commission.

The other suggested project is to install a non-motorized trail along Buttermilk Creek under M-121 and the railroad. This is a key piece to a network that is being developed along the creek through Hudsonville. The existing parts of the trail are well-used. There is a development grant for up to \$300,000 we can request from the MDNR. A developer is looking at the former Summergreen Golf Course. A trail extension would be part of that development. Hudsonville is tentatively scheduled to get financing from GVMC for this piece of trail in 2015. Hudsonville Public Schools are currently building the trail through their property. North of the existing trail along Elmwood Lake, it is currently being extended all the way to Port Sheldon Road.

A financial projection chart for DDA funds presented. It shows a conservative 1.5% growth rate. Michigan legislature is amending Personal Property Tax law. Those with less than \$40,000 in personal property will not have to pay. In 2 years, personal property tax will be completely phased out. A replacement form of revenue is being promised but it is not known what that will be. There will be a vote in August of 2014 on this issue. The proposed Chicago Drive landscaping improvements will cost an extra \$4,600 per year in maintenance.

If the DDA is supportive of these 2 projects, they would move forward with a joint meeting.

- Preference in spending money on making downtown more of a downtown was suggested.
- Concern was expressed over more annual cost due to the additional landscaping.
- The Chicago Drive landscaping plan is designed to be relatively low maintenance.
- The landscape design is intended to draw motorist attention to the south, with a more ornate design to the south. The median landscaping draws the view away from the power poles.

- There are strips of stamped concrete included in the design.
- There was a comment that this design felt like too much.
- What has been the general feeling on the lights? Have they enhanced business? A comment was received before the project went in that it is too expensive, but after the lights were installed there was a tremendous amount of positive feedback.
- The benefits of landscaping the corridor in Allendale were mentioned, including that it helped to bring speeds down.
- Lighting was installed with the understanding that landscaping would be installed to complete the intended design.
- The importance of Chicago Drive's appearance was noted since it is the "front door" to downtown.
- Comments are received often about the need to improve the appearance of the Chicago Drive corridor.
- Landscape improvements will help make downtown a draw for residents and businesses.
- It was asked if the bike path would have a maintenance cost to the DDA? Bike path maintenance comes out of the city's budget.
- There was discussion about going under a bridge, including concerns for crime and vandalism. There is graffiti there now. With regular traffic on the trail, vandalism would probably be reduced. The purpose for the bike path is to create a safe crossing for Chicago Drive.
- There were a number of comments regarding the benefits of creating a safe non-motorized crossing of Chicago Drive for safety, gaining access to downtown, and connecting the two sides of town.

Dr. Dykstra left the meeting.

There was a motion by Gemmen, support by Buttwerworth, and unanimous approval to actively pursue the Chicago Drive landscaping improvement projects pending support from the City Commission.

- It was stated that landscaping will have the big overall impact for the community. The bike path is more of a cool piece.

There was a motion by Koning, support by Jipping, and unanimous approval to actively pursue an MDNRTF grant for the Buttermilk Creek Pathway in the spring of 2014 pending support from the City Commission.

X. Other business:

Strikwerda mentioned some of the activity around town:

- Family Dollar & Snap Fitness plan to open around the end of the month. Space available in the new building going up on that site.
- Jelsema Veterinary Clinic is moving next door to their current facility. They removed the exterior façade and were surprised to find a nice brick exterior underneath.

- A groomer hopes to move into the back of their current facility, with the front space being available for rent.
- A developer is working on creating lots on the vacant property surrounding Burger King. The car pool parking lot will be expanded as part of the lot creation.

XI. Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Daniel J. Strikwerda, AICP