

MINUTES
Downtown Development Authority Meeting
Wednesday, June 4, 2003

Place: Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Time: DDA Chair Bob Gillett called the meeting to order at 12:09 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Rob Aldrich, Ron Dankert, Dave DeVarti, Bob Gillett, Rene Greff, Leah Gunn, John Hieftje, Lorri Sipes, Dave Solo

Absent: Fred Beal, Dave Fritz

Staff Present: Susan Pollay, Executive Director
Joe Morehouse, Deputy Director
Adrian Iraola, Project Manager
Sarah Armstrong

Audience: Jim Corbett, Republic Parking System
Brandt Coultas, Chamber of Commerce/Get!Downtown Program
Ray Detter, Citizens Advisory Council
Poornima Gupta, Ann Arbor News
Bob Henderson, Citizens Advisory Council
Mark Hodesh, Downtown Home and Garden
Donna Johnson, City Planning Department
Ethel Potts, Citizen

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Dankert moved and Ms. Gunn seconded the approval of the May 4, 2003 minutes.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Beal, Fritz

The motion carried.

3. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

4. CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

All DDA members are invited to the annual "Downtown Party" tomorrow evening, 6:30 p.m., in the back yard at 120 North Division. Children are welcome.

On Tuesday, July 1st, 2003 at 5:00 p.m., a ceremony will be held on South State Street between the Michigan Union and the LS&A Building to dedicate seven new glass exhibit frames that are being added to the Downtown Ann Arbor Historical Street Exhibit Program. Immediately after, the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan, in cooperation with the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority and the State Street and South University Area Associations, has invited several hundred guests to the University of Michigan Museum of Art for a festive celebration, with music, food and drink, honoring those who have helped make this community project possible.

The Street Exhibit Program would not have happened if it had not been for the support of the DDA. We hope all Board members will be able to attend.

Last month the Citizens Advisory Council expressed its opposition to any attempts to impose temporary or permanent height limitations on downtown buildings except as prescribed by development standards that move in the direction of implementing the Downtown Plan of 1988 and the Central Area Plan of 1992.

The Citizens Council discussed that issue once again last night in relation to the proposed changes in the DDA resolution on building heights. Members of the Citizens Council asked me to communicate our support for the amended resolution proposed by the DDA Planning Committee. We will, continue to express our support, --as the Downtown Plan does-- not for height limitations, but for height flexibility with emphasis upon guidelines and incentives (premiums) to avoid undesirable massive and tall buildings that do damage to the downtown context for which they are proposed.

Finally, we spent some time last night discussing the issue of DDA renewal. Many members of the CAC have been around long enough to be able to recognize and appreciate the importance of DDA achievements over the years and, of course, we strongly support DDA renewal.

We also recognize the importance to the Mayor, the City Council and the community of making excellence the primary basis for selecting and keeping DDA Members. The selection of top quality people with special skills to the DDA Board is what has made DDA achievements possible. It has not always been so.

We are pleased with the kind of expertise that members of the current Board contribute to the goal of wise downtown development. Expertise in housing and residential issues, business issues, development issues, construction and finance is essential to the successful operation of what has become a very complex DDA task. We all have particular political persuasions, but the possession of talent and specific skills and abilities should be the major factor in judging whether or not a person should be on the DDA Board.

We have a crucial need for experts on the DDA-- diverse people with ability. With DDA renewal in the offing, we should not limit our search for talent and expertise only to those who live in the city--particularly since significant amounts of DDA TIF funds come from other County taxing authorities. And, of course, as was pointed out last night by one of our members, we greatly admire our new City Administrator, Roger Fraser, even though he lives outside the City limits.

Some of our best, as well as some of our most promising, DDA members do not live within the city limits. Membership in the DDA should be judged by the way members contribute to the goal of wise downtown development. Ability and excellence, combined with diversity, should continue to shape the character of our successful DDA Board.

Mr. Beal enters.

5.	NEW BUSINESS
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None.

6.	OLD BUSINESS
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None.

7.	SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS
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OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Dankert reported on the highlights from the April financial statements. Looking ahead to the end of the year, the Committee anticipates that TIF will show an excess of revenue over expenses of \$192,000. Grant payments were made to the Kerrytown District Association and Main Street Area Association. Meter bags continue to exceed expectations, and are 42% over budget. Meter revenues are up about 4.5% over budget. After ten months we are about 11% over budget on parking expenses. This is largely due to an increase in maintenance projects and our Go!Pass sponsorship. Comparing April parking revenues against last year, revenues are down with the exception of Forest and Fourth/William. Mr. Dankert moved and Ms. Gunn seconded approving this financial report.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried.

Mr. Dankert reported that the First/Huron lot is scheduled to be resurfaced after the Art Fair. The cost will be approximately \$200,000-\$250,000 and includes creating an entrance on Ashley, landscaping, and removing internal curbs. The day shelter is slated to be demolished after the new shelter is open in November, and additional parking spaces will be gained upon its demolition. Mr. DeVarti asked Mr. Morehouse to produce a report showing expenses and revenues for this lot for the past several years.

Mr. Dankert reported that the DDA received a request from the Farmer's Market Manager to lease the Greek Church parking lot for Market vendor parking on Saturdays. The committee is looking into it.

Mr. Beal asked if the meter bag issue has been resolved. Ms. Pollay reported that the Operations Committee approved a new meter bag policy dictating who could lease meter bags and why. There will be a resolution before City Council at their July 7th meeting asking the City to allow meter bags to be placed 6am the day they are to be used, rather than 24 hours in advance.

Mr. Dankert asked Mr. Morehouse to report on the new computers. Mr. Morehouse said that computers will be issued to board members at their committee meetings prior to the July board meeting.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

Forest Parking Structure. Final costs were billed to the University of Michigan, and they were saved \$492,000 from the original estimate. There is a warranty repair yet to be done on the roof level.

Fourth/William. Punch list items are nearly completed. A gas line has yet to be installed, but after many delays this is finally scheduled to go in next week and then that will complete the project.

Fourth Avenue Sidewalk Repairs. The project is now complete, as lights were relocated from the Blake Center to the west side of the street.

State Street Area-Phase I. This project started late but they are working long hours and Saturdays to get caught up. They had a claim for \$150,000 associated with a technicality in the specifications on whether or not they were to provide certain electrical services to the project. It was finally settled for \$25,000.

State Street Area-Phase II. This is being performed by Doan, and it is reported that they are doing excellent work. Mr. Beal reported that many alternates were separated out because it was felt they were too expensive. The committee decided to wait for Doan to complete the current work and if satisfactory, to ask them for a price on what they would charge to do items on the alternative list.

Liberty Plaza Park. Peter Basille and Sons have completed the underground electrical and plumbing work and are going to start paver installation this week. This should be completed prior to Art Fair.

South University. This project has not yet started, and they will begin only those items that can be completed prior to the Art Fair.

Mr. Beal reported that there were several resolutions their committee would like to present at this time. The first resolution that Mr. Beal moved and Mayor Hieftje seconded was:

RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE UP TO \$50,000 TOWARD THE COST OF TREE CARE DOWNTOWN IN 2003/04

Whereas, The DDA Renewal Plan sets forward the aims to make the downtown as pedestrian-friendly and environmentally-healthy as possible;

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor anticipates that the Ash Tree Borer will have a devastating impact throughout the City, and may require the replacement of many hundreds of street and park trees, thus using up all available financial resources, which are already limited due to City budget cuts;

Whereas, A number of trees in the DDA District have succumbed over the winter and need to be replaced, and many others need to be pruned and fed;

Whereas, As a result of the current strain on City resources, the DDA Capital Improvements Committee has

recommended that the DDA partner with the City to provide for the care and replacement of trees in the DDA District;

Whereas, A walk around will be conducted in the coming weeks to determine exact location and number of dead trees and the trees that may need other attention;

Whereas, The DDA set aside \$100,000 in its 2003/04 budget for tree-related needs;

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the expenditure of up to \$50,000 to provide for tree care in the DDA District this summer, including replacement of dead trees and pruning, feeding, and tree pit repair as necessary;

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes its Capital Improvements Committee and staff to work with the City Forestry Division to see this project through.

Mr. Beal said that \$100,000 was budgeted for downtown tree and tree pit care this year. This resolution is aimed at helping the City on a special one-time basis since they must deal with replacing perhaps thousands of diseased Ash trees in Ann Arbor. These funds will provide the City with monies to use for downtown tree replacement, thereby freeing up funds to address problems elsewhere in the community. Mr. DeVarti asked if the funds would be given to the Parks Department or would be used to hire an independent forestry service. Mr. Beal said that Parks staff would be asked to determine the best course of action. Mr. Aldrich asked if the full \$100,000 would be needed; Mr. Beal said the Committee would come back to the Board if more was needed. Mr. Dankert asked about fiscal year; Mr. Beal said that they would come out of the 2003/04 budget.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried.

Mr. Beal moved and Ms. Sipes seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DDA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR TO CONDUCT MONTHLY INSPECTIONS OF THE FIRST & WASHINGTON PARKING STRUCTURE AND ADDRESS CONDITIONS AS NECESSARY (\$105,000)

Whereas, *The First and Washington Parking Structure Condition Appraisal Update Report* completed by the Carl Walker, Inc. (CWI) reported that the structure had experienced significant structural deterioration;

Whereas, CWI has provided recommendations for maintaining the supported slab loads by installing additional supplemental steel beams and performing concrete column and beam delamination repairs, thereby allowing public use of the parking structure;

Whereas, These recommendations were acceptable to the City Building Department Director, and the DDA has annually conducted these repairs and steel beam installations as advised;

Whereas, Most recently the DDA approved additional repairs and steel beam installations in the First and Washington deck, at its November 2002 meeting;

Whereas, CWI has recommended that the DDA hire a contractor to inspect the structure on a monthly basis to remove loose concrete, and install additional structural steel beams and asphalt patching as necessary;

Whereas, It has been estimated that this inspection, concrete removal and other work may cost \$105,000 over the next two years (\$52,500 per year);

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to hire a contractor to inspect the First & Washington parking structure on a monthly basis to remove loose concrete, and install additional structural

steel beams and asphalt patching as necessary for an amount not to exceed \$105,000 for FY 2002/03 and FY 2003/04.

Mr. Beal said that the Committee will be keeping a closer eye on the condition of the deck, and that increased inspections and repairs may enable us to keep it open the two years it may take to get underway with a replacement parking structure. It is anticipated that these funds will cover the cost of monthly inspections and any necessary repairs through fiscal year 2004. Mr. DeVarti said he supported this resolution as time is short, and this would allow us to keep the deck in operation as long as possible.

Mr. Aldrich asked to make a friendly amendment, citing the date of the CWI report (December 18, 2002). Mr. Beal accepted this amendment.

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried as amended.

Mr. Beal moved and Mr. Solo seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DDA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE TO PURSUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ALONG HURON STREET AND ALONG FIFTH & DIVISION STREETS, AS WELL AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUTSKIRT PARKING LOTS

Whereas, At its Winter 2002 retreat, the DDA spent time discussing the DDA's role providing for downtown vitality, and in particular, how the DDA could improve access to downtown;

Whereas, At its January 2003 meeting, the DDA reviewed a draft Goal Statement, which set forward ideas to improve access to downtown, including fostering alternative transportation, developing a wayfinding program to assist visitors come to and through downtown, and mitigating traffic congestion;

Whereas, This Goal Statement identified two initiatives that meet the goals of the DDA Plan, and address this broad group of concerns:

- "Outskirt Parking/AATA"
- "Access: North/South Streets & Huron Street"

Whereas, This Goal Statement also identified that efforts to improve access to the downtown may need to be undertaken outside the DDA District;

Whereas, Since January the DDA Capital Improvements Committee has researched conditions, met with City staff, and discussed these projects, and has resolved to recommend that the DDA pursue streetscape and other improvements along Fifth & Division Streets and Huron Street, but not Ashley and First Streets, along the following portions of these streets:

- Huron Street, from Chapin to Thayer
- Division Street and Fifth Avenue, from Packard to Beakes

Whereas, These projects may include recommendations regarding traffic issues, as well as streetscape improvements;

Whereas, The Committee has also recommended that the DDA pursue the development of additional outskirt parking in partnership with AATA and other potential partners, including UM, AAPSD, private property owners, and others;

Whereas, These projects will be undertaken in association with the City Alternative Transportation Coordinator and Committee, in order to meet the City's alternative transportation and non-motorized goals;

Whereas, It is anticipated that significant funds may be needed to pursue planning, design, and development of these projects, perhaps as much as \$500,000;

Whereas, The Capital Improvements Committee seeks authorization to commit DDA resources to these projects, with the understanding that the DDA will be provided the opportunity to approve specific project budgets;

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to pursue the development of additional outskirt parking for use by downtown stakeholders;

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to pursue the development of an improvement project along Huron street, from Chapin to Thayer, as well as the development of an improvement project along Fifth and Division Streets, from Packard to Beakes.

Mr. Beal said that the genesis of this resolution went back to ideas generated during the winter DDA retreat. He noted that the proposed project area goes slightly beyond the DDA District. Ms. Gunn expressed support for the resolution, saying that she would look forward to the Committee coming back with specific project details. Mr. Gillett asked if the focus was on alternative transportation; Mr. Beal said these are key streets for all transportations. He said it was not anticipated that all three streets would be torn up at the same time, and that there are no preconceived ideas about traffic patterns although it is acknowledged that these streets operate as a system. Mr. Gillett asked if this was an opportunity to develop some wayfinding elements. Mr. Beal said it might. Mr. Gillett reported that the Partnerships Committee discussed its role developing outskirt parking as it may involve partnerships with the Schools, AATA, etc., but resolved that this was best undertaken by the Capital Improvements Committee.

Mr. DeVarti said that he liked the first "resolved" paragraph, but that he wasn't ready to support the second. He asked Mr. Beal if this would lead to pedestrian improvements. Mr. Beal said that most likely, yes, but that sidewalk improvements wouldn't drive the projects. Rather, a more holistic approach to these streets was needed.

Mr. Dankert asked what the next step would be. Mr. Beal said that the Committee would meet again with the City Alternative Transportation Coordinator, Don Todd, and would commission a survey for these streets. There would need to be an inventory of existing conditions and we would need to amass traffic data. Mr. DeVarti said that although he supported the Committee's work, he would vote against future construction projects before we've decided on policy issues. Ms. Gunn said she disagreed, saying that the resolution emphasizes the DDA commitment to meeting the City's alternative and non-motorized transportation goals. Ms. Greff said that the Planning Committee will be working with the Greenway Collaborative with the goal of expanding their bicycle/pedestrian safety study to develop such valuable information as bike counts, which may in turn impact how we develop these projects on Huron and Fifth/Division, as we'll know more about where people are coming from and where they are going. Mr. Aldrich said that there was not a lot of specificity about where the \$500,000 would be spent. Mr. Beal said that it is anticipated that these funds would be used to hire consultants, particularly during the study and planning phase of the project.

Mr. Hieftje asked to make a friendly amendment in the second "resolved" paragraph, which was seconded by Mr. Solo:

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to pursue the development of an improvement project along Huron street, from Chapin to Thayer, as well as the development of an improvement project along Fifth and Division Streets, from Packard to Beakes, **and to partner with the City and AATA to better enable alternative and non-motorized transportation.**

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried as amended.

PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

Upon motion by Mr. Solo and a second from Ms. Gunn, the following resolution was presented:

RESOLUTION APPROVING \$83,445 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO BAKER COMMONS

Whereas, The DDA created a Housing Fund with which it works to meet its Development Plan goal to address problems of urban decline, with a specific objective to participate in programs which stimulate new, converted, or renovated housing;

Whereas, The DDA received requests from the Ann Arbor Housing Commission to provide funding to replace an old chiller unit and their front entry at Baker Commons, located at the corner of Packard and S. Main Streets;

Whereas, Baker Commons houses individuals with very low income and extremely low income, including many residents 60 years old or older and many non-elderly mentally and physically disabled;

Whereas, Air circulation and adequate cooling in this building has been a long-standing concern, as residents must rely on a 30-year old chiller which is insufficient to moderate temperatures, thus creating problems for many senior and disabled residents;

Whereas, Security is another important concern, and the need to replace the existing front door and upgrade security equipment has become an essential priority for residents, who have signed a petition requesting this work;

Whereas, At its April 2003 meeting the DDA authorized hiring a mechanical engineer to assess conditions at Baker Commons and to make a recommendation regarding the chiller unit;

Whereas, The recommendation came back with an estimated project cost of \$67,000, which would include purchase, installation, insulation of new piping, inspection and engineering costs;

Whereas, The Housing Commission received a cost estimate to replace and upgrade the existing front entry at a cost of \$16,445;

Whereas, The Housing Commission has received substantial cuts in its federal funding and does not have sufficient means to purchase all the improvements needed at its housing sites;

Whereas, The DDA Partnerships Committee has met with the Housing Commission Director on two occasions and recommends the expenditure of \$83,445 to assist with improvements at Baker Commons, including \$67,000 for the new chiller unit and \$16,445 for the new front entry;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves funding in the amount of \$83,445 from its Housing Fund for improvements at Baker Commons;

RESOLVED, The DDA will oversee installation of the chiller unit, and will provide the remaining funding to the City of Ann Arbor Housing Commission to oversee the construction of the new front entry;

Mr. Solo said that at its April 2003 meeting the DDA approved hiring a mechanical engineer to determine the best way to address cooling problems at Baker Commons, and a recommendation has now been made. In the interim, a new problem has arisen, which is concerns about front door security as existing equipment needs replacement. Mr. Solo said that the initial estimate for the chiller was \$100,000-\$125,000; the revised estimate of \$67,000 includes an upgrade. The Committee recommended that since Adrian has overseen the chiller project from the beginning, that he see this through, but the Housing Commission will be asked to oversee the front door replacement.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried.

Upon motion from Mr. Solo with a second from Ms. Gunn, the following resolution was put forward:

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF A THREE-PHASE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DDA DISTRICT WEST OF MAIN STREET AND TO ADDRESS THE IMPENDING LOSS OF PARKING AT FIRST AND WASHINGTON

Whereas, The DDA Plan sets forward several objectives, including the construction of parking facilities to support existing and new developments and DDA participation in efforts to encourage mixed-use developments in conjunction with public improvements;

Whereas, Carl Walker Inc. has issued reports indicating that the existing First & Washington structure is reaching the end of its useful life;

Whereas, In 2000 the Ann Arbor City Council and Downtown Development Authority resolved to replace the deck with a mixed use building that was to contain 200 public parking spaces; in 2002 a development agreement was approved for the project; and in 2003 this agreement was terminated due to the limitations of the site;

Whereas, One of the important lessons gained from this effort was that a mixed-use neighborhood is a more important goal and makes more economic sense than forcing a variety of uses, including public parking, into a single building on a limited site;

Whereas, After the termination of the First and Washington agreement, the DDA Partnership Committee researched information about several sites on the west side of downtown where the City's parking needs might be better met;

Whereas, After researching several possible sites, the Committee identified the First and William lot and the S. Ashley (Kline) lot as potential sites for larger parking structures that would better meet that area's parking needs;

Whereas, The Committee also elicited comments from community members and other area stakeholders about their development goals for the DDA District area west of Main Street.

Whereas, The Committee's research determined that the First and William site is the optimal site for a public parking structure;

Whereas, The Committee also concluded that the S. Ashley (Klines) lot is best suited to commercial development, and that residential should be developed on the First and Washington site;

Whereas, the Committee concluded that developing these three sites through a coordinated development plan will best serve the needs of the City and the downtown;

Whereas, A brief presentation was made to the Planning Commission who announced general support for a multi-faceted, multi-location development approach;

Whereas, Based on this information, the Committee has framed a three-phase recommendation for DDA approval as follows:

Phase I: Build a public parking structure on First and William containing at least 597 parking spaces, with an access point on S. Ashley Street, at an estimated project budget not to exceed \$20,000,000. This project would include relocating the Allen Creek drain (or finding another solution to provide for its long-term maintenance needs), and partnering with the Ann Arbor Railroad to enable the deck to utilize air rights to span the tracks. It is hoped this will be undertaken as soon as possible to anticipate the impending closure of the First and Washington parking structure.

Phase II: Build a mixed-use building or series of buildings on the S. Ashley (Kline) lot, including retail on the first floor, and office or residential units above. This project may include parking, including at least

one level of underground parking, which may or may not be owned by the City.

Phase III: Build a residential development at First and Washington with a small amount of parking to serve the needs of the building. The City may or may not opt to sell the property to private developers to enable this project to go forward.

Resolved, The DDA approves moving forward with the development approach recommended by the Partnerships Committee to encourage development in the DDA District west of Main Street;

RESOLVED, Because development would take place on three City-owned parcels, the DDA will work with City Council to ensure that the plan as recommended by the DDA will contribute to the public good and City planning goals.

RESOLVED, That the Capital Improvements Committee is authorized to move forward in planning for the proposed parking deck on the First and William site;

RESOLVED, That staff is authorized to contract to obtain such further tests and drawings as may be necessary to continue to proceed with the planning of a deck on the First and William site;

RESOLVED, That the Partnerships Committee is authorized to continue planning for the development of the Kline's lot site and the First and Washington site as set forth in this resolution.

Ms. Gunn said that First & William is an ideal site for a parking structure, particularly now that the Eaton plant has come up for sale. Mr. Aldrich said he respected the Committees work coming up with this plan, saying that they had become more productive since he stepped down from the Committee (All laughed.) Mr. Aldrich continued, saying that this represented a lot of work, and that after our disappointment about the termination of the First and Washington project, their work has led to a better plan.

Ms. Sipes asked to make a friendly amendment, which was seconded by Ms. Gunn, and agreeable to Mr. Solo as follows:

RESOLVED, That the Capital Improvements Committee is authorized to move forward in planning for the proposed parking deck on the First and William site, **including further testing and investigation.**

~~RESOLVED, That staff is authorized to contract to obtain such further tests and drawings as may be necessary to continue to proceed with the planning of a deck on the First and William site;~~

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Sipes, Solo

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried as amended.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Beal made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sipes to present the following resolution:

RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING DDA'S STATEMENT ON DOWNTOWN BUILDING HEIGHTS

Whereas, At its November 2001 meeting, the DDA approved a statement regarding downtown building heights;

Whereas, The issue has become a topic of interest once again, and the DDA has been asked to provide input;

Whereas, The DDA Planning Committee has considered this question, and has recommended a reaffirmation of the DDA's earlier Statement on Building Heights in Downtown Ann Arbor;

Resolved, The DDA reaffirms its earlier Statement on Building Heights in Downtown Ann Arbor as follows:

DDA STATEMENT ON DOWNTOWN BUILDING HEIGHTS
JUNE 4, 2003

- Tall buildings of 6 or more stories in Ann Arbor's DDA District can be positive contributors to our vital downtown
- Tall buildings serve as landmarks from the surrounding countryside to identify downtown and its importance as the cultural and financial center of the community, they add density that provides an alternative to urban sprawl and encourages reliance on a centralized transportation system, they provide for attractive residential views, they more efficiently reuse existing infrastructure and are a vibrant market response to the high cost of real estate and downtown construction and development;
- More important in many ways than the height of a building is the design of its lower floors. A healthy downtown attracts a concentration of people and those people are attracted to streets that have a richness of material, design and experience including:
 - Retail storefronts all along the block (not offices, blank walls or surface parking lots)
 - Entrances into stores/buildings every 20 or 30 feet on grade
 - Wide sidewalks, outdoor cafes, and seating areas
 - Vegetation, signage and street furniture
 - Cars parked at the curb to protect the pedestrian from moving traffic (and, by inference, a recommendation for two-way traffic which slows traffic speeds)
 - Lower cornices or canopies that define the height of the first floor, reflecting human scale.
 - The spaces between buildings (streets and sidewalks) are dominated by foot traffic rather than vehicular traffic
 - A diversity of style and material on building facades
- Tools that might help planning and elected officials evaluate building proposals and encourage more pedestrian-friendly spaces can include:
 - Designs that follow the recommendations of the Downtown Plan
 - Designs that put an emphasis on the pedestrian experience
 - 3-D animation or modeling at the street level of the design of a new building from a variety of perspectives ("how does it feel to walk down this street with this new building?").

RESOLVED, The DDA supports the following recommendations on building heights in Downtown Ann Arbor:

- The directions set out in the 1988 Ann Arbor Downtown Plan should be embraced. For instance, the Plan sets forward that "Encouraging more intensive (and diverse) development within this central portion of the DDA District (the Core Area) will create a critical mass of activity in a compact, walkable area, promoting the interaction between uses which is essential to its economic vitality. In addition, this development approach can reduce pressures for redevelopment and commercial expansion on the downtown's edges by encouraging new development to "fill in" gaps in the urban fabric, and to grow up, instead of out. (page 16).
- Maintain the current Floor Area Ratio (FAR) system which allows flexibility in design.
- Maintain a minimum height of two stories for new buildings in C2B and C2B/R zoning and possibly even a minimum of three stories in the core downtown zoning districts of C2A and C2AR.
- Utilize technological communication tools to better understand the design of the first two floors of a building.

Mr. Beal said that a discussion is underway about setting a cap on downtown building heights. In his opinion, the current system works well. Premiums were established to encourage development, especially downtown residential. Previously the DDA's position was that density was a good thing, and he felt increasing restrictions was inappropriate.

As the minimum height restriction hasn't yet been implemented, **Mr. Aldrich asked to make a friendly amendment, seconded by Mr. Beal:**

- ~~Maintain~~ **Implement** a minimum height of two stories for new buildings in C2B and C2B/R zoning and possibly even a minimum of three stories in the core downtown zoning districts of C2A and C2AR.

Mr. Hieftje said he couldn't support the DDA resolution, as the PUD approach was still available. He said the City needed more discretion to ensure a project was in context with its setting. For instance, he would support very tall buildings along Huron Street, but this was not currently possible. Mr. Beal said that he was concerned about the subjectivity of "context", as a buyer should know in advance what they can do with their property before buying it. Current system has the right amount of flexibility. Moreover he said he is concerned about restricting building heights to 3-4 stories, as he personally likes tall buildings; this is a city. Ms. Sipes said she supported Mr. Beal's statements and she opposed homogeneity across the landscape. She much preferred a diversity of building stock.

In response to Mr. Hieftje's earlier statement about building height limitations on Huron Street, **Mr. Gillett asked to make a friendly amendment to add a new recommendation at the end, which was seconded by Ms. Gunn:**

- Oppose establishing a maximum building height or floor number in the downtown area.

It was asked to modify the resolution title and first resolved to indicate that this statement had been amended. It was also asked to reduce the first recommendation to a single line stating DDA support for the Ann Arbor Downtown Plan. It was also asked to use the word "support" rather than "maintain" the current FAR system. The amended resolution now reads as follows:

RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING DDA'S STATEMENT ON DOWNTOWN BUILDING HEIGHTS AS AMENDED

Whereas, At its November 2001 meeting, the DDA approved a statement regarding downtown building heights;

Whereas, The issue has become a topic of interest once again, and the DDA has been asked to provide input;

Whereas, The DDA Planning Committee has considered this question, and has recommended a reaffirmation of the DDA's earlier Statement on Building Heights in Downtown Ann Arbor;

Resolved, The DDA reaffirms and amends its earlier Statement on Building Heights in Downtown Ann Arbor as follows:

DDA STATEMENT ON DOWNTOWN BUILDING HEIGHTS **JUNE 4, 2003**

- Tall buildings of 6 or more stories in Ann Arbor's DDA District can be positive contributors to our vital downtown
- Tall buildings serve as landmarks from the surrounding countryside to identify downtown and its importance as the cultural and financial center of the community, they add density that provides an alternative to urban sprawl and encourages reliance on a centralized transportation system, they provide for attractive residential views, they more efficiently reuse existing infrastructure and are a vibrant market response to the high cost of real estate and downtown construction and development;
- More important in many ways than the height of a building is the design of its lower floors. A healthy downtown attracts a concentration of people and those people are attracted to streets that have a richness of material, design and experience including:
 - Retail storefronts all along the block (not offices, blank walls or surface parking lots)
 - Entrances into stores/buildings every 20 or 30 feet on grade
 - Wide sidewalks, outdoor cafes, and seating areas
 - Vegetation, signage and street furniture
 - Cars parked at the curb to protect the pedestrian from moving traffic (and, by inference, a recommendation for two-way traffic which slows traffic speeds)
 - Lower cornices or canopies that define the height of the first floor, reflecting human scale.
 - The spaces between buildings (streets and sidewalks) are dominated by foot traffic rather than vehicular traffic
 - A diversity of style and material on building facades
- Tools that might help planning and elected officials evaluate building proposals and encourage more pedestrian-friendly spaces can include:

- Designs that follow the recommendations of the Downtown Plan
- Designs that put an emphasis on the pedestrian experience
- 3-D animation or modeling at the street level of the design of a new building from a variety of perspectives ("how does it feel to walk down this street with this new building?").

The DDA supports the following recommendations on building heights in Downtown Ann Arbor:

- Embrace the directions set out in the 1988 Ann Arbor Downtown Plan, specifically those stated on page 16.
- Support the current Floor Area Ratio (FAR) system which allows flexibility in design.
- Oppose establishing a maximum building height or floor number in the downtown area.
- Implement a minimum height of two stories for new buildings in C2B and C2B/R zoning and possibly even a minimum of three stories in the core downtown zoning districts of C2A and C2AR.
- Utilize technological communication tools to better understand the design of the first two floors of a building.

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Solo, Sipes

NAYS: Hieftje

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried as amended

Ms. Greff made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sipes, to present the following resolution:

RESOLUTION APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO THE DDA BYLAWS TO SET FORWARD BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Whereas, The DDA operates by a set of bylaws that were first approved in 1984 and last amended in 1993;

Whereas, These bylaws name the DDA's officers and their duties, provides details on the DDA annual and regular meetings, rules for quorum, voting, funding requests, committees and conflict of interest;

Whereas, These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board by a majority vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous regular meeting;

Whereas, The DDA Planning Committee recognizes that the work of the DDA is done primarily through its committees, and has recommended that the bylaws be amended to set forward basic attendance recommendations for board members at committee meetings and regular meetings;

Whereas, These recommended amendments were provided to the board for their review and comment at the April 2003 meeting;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves these DDA Bylaw amendments as recommended, and shall forward them onto City Council for approval.

Ms. Greff said that the Committee was proposing these changes to clarify expectations for Board members. The Board has been on a roll, and we have an incredible mix of abilities and interests. The primary work of the DDA is done in committee, and in order to do this, we need people committed to do the work. As a business owner she has found that one can avoid conflicts by making expectations clear in the beginning, and she said she felt this would be helpful for incoming DDA members to know that they would be asked to attend at least 8 meetings and 8 committee meetings a year. Ms. Gunn said that there was no mention of possible sanctions if a board member didn't meet attendance expectations. Ms. Greff said that the DDA itself had no power to revoke someone's membership on the Board; rather the DDA State Statute set forward the removal of a board member by City Council if warranted. The intent of this bylaw amendment wasn't to remove board members, rather it was intended to be an instrument to reengage members in a positive way. Mr. Gillett said that he had spoken against these bylaw amendments at the last meeting, but having had the intent clarified, he could support these changes.

Mr. DeVarti asked to make a friendly amendment to indicate 66% of board and committee meetings, rather than 70% , which was agreed to by Ms. Greff.

Section 2 - Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at a time and place to be set by the Board. At least six regular meetings per year shall be held. The Board records shall be open to the public. **It is expected that each Board member will attend a minimum of 70%66% of regular meetings per year as a condition of serving on the DDA Board.**

Section 1 - Board Committees. The Board, by resolution, may designate and appoint one or more committees to advise the Board. Committee members shall be members of the Board. The Chair of the Board shall appoint the members and select the Chair of the Board committees. The committees may be terminated by vote of the Board. At the annual meeting, the committees will be evaluated and reappointed or dissolved. A majority of the committee will constitute a quorum. A majority of the members present at the meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the action of the committee. **As the work of the DDA is done primarily through Committee, is expected that each Board member will actively serve on at least one committee, and will attend a minimum of 70%66% of the committee's meetings per year as a condition of remaining on the DDA Board.**

Mr. Beal asked to add another friendly amendment providing for a substitute to serve on behalf of the Mayor or City Administrator board member on DDA committees:

As the work of the DDA is done primarily through Committee, is expected that each Board member will actively serve on at least one committee, and will attend a minimum of 70%66% of the committee's meetings per year as a condition of remaining on the DDA Board. The Mayor or City Administrator serving on the DDA Board may elect to appoint a representative to represent him or her on committees.

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Aldrich, Beal, Dankert, DeVarti, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo, Sipes

NAYS: None

Absent: Fritz

The motion carried.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Ethel Potts said that she felt disappointment that the DDA resolution regarding downtown building heights did not take into account context, as she felt this was very important in any decision surrounding site approval. Ms. Potts was thanked for her comments.

10. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director