

**ANN ARBOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 7, 2010**

Place: DDA Office, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Suite 301, Ann Arbor, 48104  
Time: DDA Chair John Splitt called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM

<b>1.</b>	<b>ROLL CALL</b>
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Present: Gary Boren, Newcombe Clark, Russ Collins, Leah Gunn, Roger Hewitt, John Hieftje Joan Lowenstein, John Mouat, Keith Orr, Sandi Smith, John Splitt

Absent: Jennifer Hall

Staff Present: Susan Pollay, Executive Director  
Joe Morehouse, Deputy Director  
Joan Lyke, Management Assistant  
Amber Miller, Planning & Research Specialist

Audience: Peter Allen, Allen & Associates  
Dave Askins, *Ann Arbor Chronicle*  
Sue Burke, Main Street Area Association  
Dennis Carignan, Granger Construction  
Bob Dascola, Business Owner  
Ray Detter, Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council  
Steve Frederickson, Christman  
Ray Fullerton, Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council  
James Glover, Parking Carma  
Scott Huckestein, Parking Carma  
Adrian Iraola, Park Avenue Consultants, Inc.  
Betsy Jackson, The Urban Agenda, Inc.  
Tony Lupo, Main Street Area Association  
Mark Lyons, Republic Parking System  
Kyle Mazurek, Ann Arbor Chamber  
Brad Mikus, Citizen  
Brad Nieuhuis, Spence Brothers  
Mike Ortlieb, Carl Walker, Inc.  
David Olson, Granger Construction  
Pat Podges, Christman  
Ellie Serras, Main Street BIZ  
Ed Shaffran, Main Street BIZ  
Nancy Shore, getDowntown  
Ryan Stanton, Ann Arbor.com  
Rick Warner, Parking Carma

<b>2.</b>	<b>AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION</b>
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Mr. Dascola said the DDA has been a significant catalyst for the revitalization of downtown since 1982. He noted the City asked for early payment from the 2005 City/Parking Agreement, and is now asking that the DDA provide additional funds. He said that overcharging for public parking to generate funds for the City's General Fund places an undue burden and hidden tax on residents, business owners and customers. The DDA is responsible for undertaking public improvements that have the greatest impact in strengthening the downtown area and attracting new private investments – not serving as the City's ATM.

Mr. Lupo said the DDA's Public Parking & Transportation Plan includes good ideas, but MSAA would only support extending parking meter hours if it is accompanied with creative enhancements such as free parking during certain hours. He said MSAA members are incredibly concerned about how evening enforcement would be perceived by visitors. They look forward to future revisions the DDA will make to the Public Parking & Transportation Plan.

Mr. Warner gave a power point presentation regarding his company, Parking Carma and the services it offers, i.e., parking reservations, guidance, local merchant outreach and customer retention and loyalty. He said that he'd like to offer a parking reservation service to DDA parking customers. Mr. Splitt invited him to the next Operations Committee meeting for further discussion.

Mr. Podges provided an update on the S. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue project. The earth retention system installation is complete in the east area and it is anticipated that the west and north side will be completed in coming weeks. He said that water removed from the site during construction will be taken up Liberty Street to South State Street rather than toward the Allen Creek Drain. He said that he would speak to the integrity of the bidding process for concrete work for the project. Sealed bids were opened on March 4<sup>th</sup>, and post-bid interviews were held March 9<sup>th</sup> with the three lowest bidders. He explained that the lowest bidder was disqualified for not providing a detailed schedule and materials handling plan as required in the bid, and for not demonstrating an understanding of the work. The difference in the remaining two low bids was 2/10 of one percent. After reviewing other items included in the bid, the team awarded the contract to CCI which they felt would be the best value for the city. Now that this bid was complete Christman would be returning \$1 million in contingency funds to the DDA for a reduction in the GMP.

**3. REPORTS FROM CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council: Mr. Detter said Ms. Pollay gave an excellent summary of the DDA's Public Parking and Transportation Demand Management Strategies Plan at the CAC meeting. He said that it is an impressive document, and its thoroughness, data, analysis, and creative direction are to be applauded! He said the CAC recognizes it is a dynamic work in progress. The report is a major step toward the larger objective, "developing a full menu of transportation options." The CAC looks forward to continuing to be part of the process.

**4. REPORT ON THE CREATION OF THE MAIN STREET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ZONE**

Mr. Shaffran announced that 95% of the property owners approved the Main Street BIZ assessment which will begin July 1. The assessment will pay for sidewalk snow removal, and cleaning, as well as for flowers in the planters. He thanked the DDA for its grant that enabled them to pursue the BIZ. A Blueprint for Establishing Business Improvement Zones in Downtown Ann Arbor was included in the Board packet as a template for future BIDs.

**5. STATUS OF TASKFORCE EFFORTS WITH DDA MEMBERSHIP**

Library Lot Advisory Committee: Mr. Splitt said there was nothing new to report.

Mutually Beneficial Committee: Mr. Hewitt said progress is being made in informal meetings and there may be ideas to share at the Operations committee meeting.

**6. MINUTES**

Ms. Gunn moved and Mr. Mouat seconded approval of the March 3, 2010 DDA minutes and the March 16, 2010 DDA Retreat minutes. Mr. Hieftje asked to correct the March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes to reflect that he was not present.

A vote on the motion to approve the minutes as edited showed:

AYES: Boren, Clark, Collins, Gunn, Hewitt, Hieftje, Lowenstein, Mouat, Orr, Smith, Splitt

NAYS: None

Absent: Hall

The motion carried.

**7. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

Financials: Mr. Hewitt said the February 2010 hourly parking report reflects a 7.75% revenue increase and a 1.22% patron number increase over February 2009. Ms. Hall said it would be helpful to see a chart that includes gross parking revenues for the past 3-4 years. Mr. Hewitt said the chart will be presented at the next committee meeting.

Mr. Hewitt moved and Mr. Mouat seconded the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE DDA PUBLIC PARKING & TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES PLAN**

Whereas, On December 21, 2009 City Council approved a resolution requesting that the DDA present a public parking management plan to City Council at its April 19, 2010 meeting that was to include:

- a communication plan to Downtown merchants and evening employees
- options for low cost parking for evening employees

- variation of rates and meter time limits based on meter location
- hours of enforcement
- methods of enforcement

Whereas, The DDA Operations, Transportation and Partnerships Committees energetically undertook this assignment, and over the past several months assembled a multi-faceted plan that sets forward many dozens of tactics garnered from citizen input and parking strategy ideas in use in comparable communities;

Whereas, The DDA Partnerships Committee will continue refinement of this plan in the coming week before submitting the document to the City in time for its April 19<sup>th</sup> deadline;  
RESOLVED, the DDA endorses the DDA Public Parking & Transportation Demand Management Strategies Plan.

Mr. Hewitt complimented DDA staff on the Plan, saying that it encompassed an enormous amount of work taken from surveys, focus group meetings, and research. The committees worked on this every month, and the document will be reviewed one final time at Partnerships next week. He said that the Plan includes many dozens of recommendations within 9 overarching strategies, but unfortunately, only one— a recommendation about hours of meter operation – received attention.

Mr. Clark complimented staff for a very thorough document and said he will support moving it forward. He said that he thought it was imperative that the DDA carefully monitor the impact on the net revenue when it begins to implement some of the strategies. Mr. Clark also stressed the importance of balancing the “sticks with carrots.”

Ms. Gunn thanked staff and committees for their work on this Plan. She said unless we try some of these strategies we won't know the results. She stated the DDA will do as it has in the past, pilot some of these strategies and study the results before implementing them system wide.

Mr. Mouat said the Plan is dynamic, and it recognized that evening activities demand different transportation choices.

Mr. Orr said he would support this resolution and thanked the staff. He said he agreed with Mr. Clark that the DDA should pilot strategies before implementing them system wide so it would be clear how revenues would be affected, as they did with the Nelson/Nygaard report.

Ms. Smith thanked the staff for a heroic effort writing this Plan, even as they were handling other projects such as the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Underground structure and 5<sup>th</sup> & Division. She noted that a personal unofficial survey showed that some visitors don't even know that enforcement stops at 6PM as they continue to feed the meters. She is not sure evening enforcement will be as dramatic as some people think it will be.

Mr. Hieftje said the report was excellent and City Council should applaud when they receive it. He stated obviously the extended hours item is the most controversial item and not everything in the report will happen immediately. It is a great report that took considerable effort by staff and the work will continue to evolve.

Mr. Hewitt said that the Plan will be presented to Council on April 19 and perhaps a Work Session could be held with City Council in the future if City Council should request it.

A vote on the motion to approve the resolution showed:

AYES: Boren, Clark, Collins, Gunn, Hewitt, Hieftje, Lowenstein, Mouat, Orr, Smith, Splitt

NAYS: None

Absent: Hall

The motion carried.

<b>8. PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE</b>
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Energy Saving Grant Program update: Ms. Smith reported energy audits had been approved for another 150,000sf that included two large office buildings and a church. Approximately 15 buildings have installed \$138,000 worth of improvements representing a savings of \$24,500/yr.

Parking/Transportation TDM Management Plan: Mr. Collins said the committee provided input on the plan format and offered specific tactics.

**9. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

getDowntown update: Mr. Mouat said as of late March, 457 downtown businesses have purchased 6,200 go!Passes which is an increase over last year, and go!Pass ridership is also increasing. Ms. Shore told the committee that the go!pass will be swipe-able this fall, which will allow more data to be collected. It will also be possible to turn off passes when an employee leaves and will allow getDowntown to provide more information to the employers about their employee use – and thus document the value of the pass.

Commuter Challenge 2010: Ms. Shore provided information to the committee and urged all DDA members to participate this year.

Parking & Transportation Plan: Mr. Mouat said that much of the meeting was spent going through the document so committee members could provide edits.

**10. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE**

S. Fifth Avenue Structure: Mr. Splitt said there was a lunch yesterday at the construction site with DTE and Comcast staff to celebrate the completion of the relocation of all utilities. He thanked them and their contractors for a job well done in a very short time-frame!

Fifth/Division Improvements: Mr. Splitt said that work crews will begin installing light poles on Division this week. Work will start on 5<sup>th</sup> between Huron and Washington in early May.

Other: Ms. Smith asked if the DDA makes provisions for fiber when it undertakes projects; Mr. Iraola said yes, the DDA always installs additional conduit as part of its work.

**11. OTHER DDA BUSINESS MATTERS**

Mr. Orr moved and Mr. Collins seconded the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION ASKING CITY COUNCIL TO APPROVE SANDWICH BOARD SIGN REGULATIONS**

Whereas, On October 5, 2009 City Council passed Resolution R-09-404 establishing a task force to review the existing City policies associated with sandwich board signs, and to frame recommendations regarding placement, size regulations and fees;

Whereas, On February 16, 2010 City Council reviewed staff recommendations that drew heavily on the work of this Sandwich Board Sign Taskforce, but rejected their recommendations;

Whereas, Sandwich board signs are part of a vibrant downtown streetscape, and they add visual interest to the pedestrian experience;

Whereas, Sandwich board signs are also important to downtown's many independent small businesses who rely on these signs as a vital and affordable form of advertisement;

Whereas, In the absence of City Council approved regulations downtown business owners are being warned that they will be fined for using these signs as they had for many years previously;

Whereas, The Sandwich Board Sign Taskforce worked for many hours assembling recommendations for City Council which are well developed;

RESOLVED, The DDA asks City Council to bring back its Sandwich Board Sign Regulations ordinance for approval at its next meeting on April 19, 2010 so that sandwich sign boards can be used once again on downtown sidewalks.

Mr. Orr spoke in favor of the resolution and said as long as the sandwich boards were compliant with ADA he encourages their use and said they were part of the fabric of downtown. Mr. Clark said the sandwich boards are critical to downtown businesses not located on the first floor.

A vote on the motion to approve the resolution showed:

AYES: Boren, Clark, Collins, Gunn, Hewitt, Hieftje, Lowenstein, Mouat, Orr, Smith, Splitt

NAYS: None

Absent: Hall

The motion carried.

<b>12. OTHER AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION</b>
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Mr. Fullerton asked about a complaint regarding the on-street bicycle rack in front of the People's Food Coop last year; Ms. Pollay said that an adjustment will be made to the parking spaces. She said that other than this concern, the temporary on-street bike racks received great support and staff will begin installing the racks in the next few weeks. Mr. Hieftje said cycling is increasing and he expects the numbers will increase even more with the 5<sup>th</sup> & Division improvements project. He stated it was a very positive program to give up a few parking spaces for on-street bike parking.

Ms. Shore encouraged everyone to participate in the Commuter Challenge. She said it would be fun, there would be daily prize drawings and free ice-cream for all participants.

Mr. Allen said he was troubled that the east/west rail from Ann Arbor to Detroit had been postponed indefinitely. He said the DDA should take on a leadership role as the community and the U/M will miss out on a major opportunity if this initiative fails. Mr. Hieftje said there was still a lot being done. For example: locomotives are being purchased and rail cars are being remodeled. Although lack of funds for necessary improvement projects altered the time frame for establishing initial services, it did not stop the project goals. SEMCOG, MDOT and their partners are continuing to work out the details for future passenger rail service.

Mr. Olson, Vice President of Granger Construction, said as low bidder on the contract package, he took exception with the comments made by Mr. Podges earlier in the meeting. He said Granger has constructed parking structures, and he compared Christman's decision to award its subsidiary the contract over two lower bidders to a shell game. In closing he delivered a letter to the Board from Glenn Granger, CEO, Granger Construction.

Mr. Frederickson, President and COO of the Christman Company said there had been conjecture surrounding the concrete bid process and he wanted to provide facts. He said that from the beginning the decision to award the concrete contract was not based exclusively on price. The bid documents stated very clearly due to the complexity of the project the criteria would include experience, a detailed work plan and detailed schedule. Granger did not provide these materials or demonstrate a clear understanding of the project. In addition, their proposed on-site project manager did not have any underground parking structure construction experience. Mr. Frederickson said that they felt that the integrity of the process was maintained.

Mr. Carignan, Granger Company, said he personally has had experience with two parking deck constructions and he disagreed with the statement that Granger was not compliant in the bid documents. He said that he didn't expect anything to change; he just wanted to share the facts.

Mr. Splitt said the Capital Improvements Committee and the DDA Board is satisfied with the integrity of the process and agrees the process for the structural concrete award was fair.

<b>13. ADJOURNMENT</b>
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Mr. Hieftje moved and Mr. Collins seconded adjournment of the meeting at 1:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Pollay, Executive Director