

ANN ARBOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 6, 2010 12:00 Noon
DDA Offices, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Place: DDA Office, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Suite 301, Ann Arbor, 48104
Time: DDA Chair Joan Lowenstein called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Gary Boren, Russ Collins, Leah Gunn, Roger Hewitt, Joan Lowenstein, John Mouat, Keith Orr, John Splitt

Absent: Newcombe Clark, Bob Guenzel, John Hieftje, Sandi Smith

Staff Present: Susan Pollay, Executive Director
Joan Lyke, Management Assistant
Joe Morehouse, Deputy Director

Audience: Dave Askins, *Ann Arbor Chronicle*
Ray Detter, Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council
Ray Fullerton, Allen Creek Greenway
Adrian Iraola, Park Avenue Consultants, Inc.
Mark Lyons, Republic Parking System
Diana Neering, Shelter Association Washtenaw County
Ali Ramlawi, Jerusalem Garden & "The People"
Ellen Schulmeister, Shelter Association Washtenaw County
Ryan Stanton, AnnArbor.com
Julie Uden, Self

2. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Ramlawi said he was speaking as a business owner and Ann Arbor resident, and that he was unhappy with the direction the DDA is taking. For example, he said no one is using the "Art" bike hoops, the new bump outs are not practical, and he has heard from some people that they do not like the new parking meters. Mr. Ramlawi stated that he felt the DDA is imposing its will without taking into consideration what is best for the downtown.

Mr. Guenzel and Mr. Hieftje enter.

Ms. Neering said she and Ms. Schulmeister were available to respond to any questions the board might have related to the resolution providing a grant to the Shelter Association later in the meeting.

3. REPORTS FROM CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council: Mr. Detter invited everyone to the dedication of the new historic exhibit on State Street across from the Michigan Union, October 14th honoring JFK's Historic 1960 speech that led to the creation of the Peace Corps. CAC is very pleased that City Council appointed a Downtown Street Outreach Task Force to identify problems and suggest solutions. The sky is not falling, but it is good to be proactive and avoid the situation getting any worse.

4. STATUS OF TASKFORCE EFFORTS WITH DDA MEMBERSHIP

Library Lot Advisory Committee: Mr. Splitt said the committee has not met.

Mutually Beneficial Committee: Mr. Hewitt said the committee discussed the recommendations that came from the DDA retreat regarding parking enforcement. The committee directed Ms. Pollay to draft a list of recommended changes that will become an amendment to the Parking Agreement. He said there appears to be general consensus about the DDA and redevelopment.

5. MINUTES

Mr. Mouat moved and Ms. Gunn seconded approval of the September 1, 2010 regular Board meeting minutes and the September 22, 2010 DDA Retreat meeting minutes.

A vote on the motion to approve the minutes showed:

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

NAYS: None

Absent: Clark, Smith

The motion carried.

6. PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

Energy Saving Grant Program: Mr. Collins reported that 64 energy audits have been completed and 27 others are underway. The 2010/11 program application deadline was moved to November to allow the energy auditors to catch up with their backlog of audits.

Downtown Skate Park: Mr. Collins said the committee discussed how a proper facility might benefit downtown by encouraging skateboarding away from planters and railing, but details remain unclear, and the concept has been set aside for the time being.

Downtown Redevelopment: Mr. Collins said the committee talked about the details within the conceptual plan proposed by Ms. Pollay. It was the committee consensus that the current process can be improved and that the DDA's mission "to strengthen the downtown area & attract new private investments" makes the DDA uniquely qualified to take this assignment.

Nuisance concerns: Mr. Collins said that the Committee had noted concerns with cigarette butts and weeds, and staff reported back that the DDA could provide grants, but the better, more impactful solution would be to have the DDA support the expansion of the BIZ and/or encourage other new downtown BIDS. As the IDA conferences have made it clear across the country, BIDs are best able to combat these sorts of nuisance issues.

Mr. Collins moved and Ms. Gunn supported the following resolution:

RESOLUTION PROVIDING A GRANT TO THE SHELTER ASSOCIATION OF WASHTENAW COUNTY

Whereas, The Shelter Association of Washtenaw County is an important downtown anchor and service provider, providing temporary shelter and supportive services at the Delonis Center to meet the needs of individual adults who are homeless;

Whereas, Many of the clients served by the Shelter Association are in downtown Ann Arbor, and in addition to the Shelter's residential program, clients receive medical attention, access to showers and washers/dryers, employment assistance and other services to help them move out of homelessness;

Whereas, The Shelter Association has developed a plan to make energy saving improvements which will enable them to conserve energy and overhead costs, as well as make improvements to their medical services area to enable them to improve their service delivery;

Whereas, This plan includes the following costs:

New washers/dryers including maintenance	\$ 30,000
Lockers and chairs	\$ 8,000
Emergency generator	\$ 60,000
Water conservation/lighting/HVAC energy conservation measures	\$ 84,050
Medical equipment and software	<u>\$ 36,000</u>
	\$218,050

Whereas, The plan also includes \$98,210 for solar/photovoltaic panels as an energy saving measure, in addition to \$15,000 for computers enabling medical case managers to work off-site engaging individuals

Whereas, The DDA Partnerships Committee and DDA staff met with Shelter Association representatives several times to review this plan, and the Partnerships Committee recommends DDA approve \$218,050 in support of the Shelter's efforts, which would allow further Committee discussion of the remaining project elements;

RESOLVED, The DDA recognizes the benefit to downtown Ann Arbor by approving a DDA Housing Fund grant in the amount of \$218,050 to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County for the purchase of energy saving and medical services improvements;

RESOLVED, With this resolution the DDA is amending its 2010/11 Housing Fund 001 budget.

Mr. Collins said that the Shelter provides services for individuals affected by homelessness, mental illness, and other issues, and these individuals can dramatically affect the downtown, so it is vitally important to have a well-run shelter. The Shelter assists 1,500 individuals /year, has a 75-bed residential program, and non-residential programs e.g. washer/dryers and showers, medical assistance i.e. helping people stay on their meds, job training, and housing assistance. The Committee strongly recommends the grant as a strategic opportunity to help the Shelter reduce costs and improve service, and thus strengthen their ability to help the downtown.

Mr. Hieftje said this resolution is very much in keeping with previous DDA grants and he was happy to support it. Ms. Lowenstein said she supported the resolution as it is within the DDA practice of providing Housing Funds for capital and infrastructure improvements. Mr. Guenzel asked if the county had been consulted about the energy audit and generator; Ms. Schulmeister said yes.

A vote on the motion to approve the resolution showed:

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

NAYS: None

Absent: Clark, Smith

The motion carried.

6. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Bike Parking Count & Cyclist Survey: Mr. Mouat said Ms. Miller coordinated a bike study this summer and the results will guide the DDA in decisions about placement of bike parking. It appears that bike parking is generally meeting demand, but there are four areas where more

racks could be used, including two areas where bike lockers could be removed from covered areas thus making room for more bike hoops.

Approximately 76 individuals responded to the bicyclist survey and the results indicated they were generally downtown shopping – not surprising given that most surveys were captured in front of the People’s Food Coop. On average survey respondents anticipated spending \$21.43, which is a compelling reason to add more bike parking. Mr. Hieftje said he appreciated the staff effort gathering this information, as he felt it was very valuable, and he hoped the Transportation committee will continue to track this data.

Ms. Lowenstein said there was an exhibitor at the Fort Worth IDA conference providing information about a bicycle rental service. The Committee will look into this idea and possibly schedule a demonstration within the next few months.

Mr. Collins acknowledged Ms. Miller’s hard work on the study and survey. He said he appreciated the comments by Mr. Ramlawi at the beginning of the meeting. He explained the bike survey and study is an example of the thoughtful process the DDA uses whenever it makes decisions about downtown, including parking meters, wayfinding signs, bike hoops, etc. He explained that the DDA may not always make the right decision but it does use data when making decisions and it does take comments into consideration to help it in its work.

WATS: Mr. Mouat said that WATS is looking for a DDA member to serve on its Policy Committee. It would provide a valuable opportunity to work with municipal representatives from around the County, and he asked DDA members to let him know if there was interest.

LINK/future Circulator: Mr. Mouat said Committee members met with AATA board members in August and one of the topics of conversation was the possibility of restoring the LINK. The Committee gave AATA its scenario for an ideal circulator: every 5 minutes, 12 month/year, 16 hours/day, and AATA recently responded to this very robust concept with an equally robust cost estimate, making it clear the committee needs to reduce its expectations to make this workable. Mr. Orr volunteered to create a circulator concept to help the committee explore its options.

Ypsi/Ann Arbor Transit. Mr. Mouat reported the committee reviewed AATA-generated statistics to understand more about current transit service and use, and where service can be enhanced. The #4 Washtenaw route appears to have promise, and more needs to be learned about the percentage of ridership heading downtown versus to UM Hospitals. Ms. Pollay announced an AATA public meeting that night at the Ann Arbor Public Library, which is one of dozens being held by AATA so they can gather input to help them develop a 30-year County wide transit plan. She encouraged all to participate.

ZipCars: Mr. Mouat announced two new downtown Zipcars have been added to the fleet and will be placed in the McKinley Towne Center lot off E. Washington Street. This brings the total number of downtown Zipcars to eight. Because of the continued success of the Zipcar program, these last two cars are being paid for by Zipcar with no subsidy from the DDA.

8. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

S. Fifth Avenue Underground Structure: Mr. Splitt reported the earth retention drilling along the full perimeter of the site has been completed. Forming and steel installation continues on the east leg, and the first floor concrete pour on the east leg will begin this month. Mass excavation is 85%

completed, with approximately 210,000 cubic yards excavated so far. The contractor is working with the City to ensure compliance with their proposed dewatering plan.

Fifth/Division Status: Work along S. Fifth will be completed by mid-November; items remaining include brick and furniture installation. The sidewalk in front of Fire Station #1 will be completed this week and reopened to fire trucks next week, with site details installed over the next few weeks.

6. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Hewitt compared August 2010 to August 2009 gross parking revenues, saying that a slight decrease was attributed to the closure of the Library Lot and completion of UM projects resulting in a decrease in meter bag fees from UM contractors. Ms. Pollay said that even as parking revenues remained strong the number of go!Passes in distribution and in use continues to grow.

10. OTHER DDA BUSINESS MATTERS

Mr. Hieftje said he had attended a meeting with the Mayor of Dearborn to continue talks regarding Ann Arbor-Detroit commuter rail service. He said a refurbished railcar will be on display at the October 28 SEMCOG meeting, and some special event excursion service could begin this fall.

Ms. Lowenstein said that at the retreat the DDA had discussed changes to its committees, and she asked for feedback on a draft outline, with Transportation and Partnerships Committees remaining, Operations and Capital Improvements Committees merged, and a new "economic development and communications" committee created. Mr. Collins said the concept seemed reasonable, however he cautioned that the committees should match staff resources; Mr. Mouat agreed both to the general concept and to the potential need to add staff. Mr. Hewitt said that he and Mr. Splitt had discussed a merger of their committees, and they looked forward to serving as co-chairs of the new committee which he suggested be named "Bricks and Money" (all laughed). Ms. Gunn suggested the new committee invite non-DDA members to participate, citing Partnerships Committee as an example where this is useful; Mr. Orr said he agreed. Ms. Lowenstein said that she would work with Ms. Pollay to bring this committee structure forward as a resolution at November 3rd DDA meeting.

Mr. Hieftje asked how the \$30 off peak permit was being promoted; Ms. Pollay said that not much had been done recently, but posters could be resent to the area associations to share with their members. Mr. Hewitt said this idea is included in the Strategies Plan that was submitted to the City in April and Republic will be asked to promote this option.

11. OTHER AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Fullerton reported several street lights on the Broadway Bridge are burned out. He encouraged citizens to report street light outages to the City.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Ms. Lowenstein declared the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director