MINUTES
Downtown Development Authority
Thursday, January 8, 1998

Place: DDA Office
301 E. Liberty, Suite 690
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Time: The Chair, Maria Harshe, called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Neal Berlin, David Fritz, Bob Gates, Leah Gunn, Maria Harshe, Ed Shaffran, Lorri Sipes
Absent: David DeVarti, Bob Gillett, Karl Pohrt, Deanna Relyea, Skip Ungrodt
Staff Present: Susan Pollay, Executive Director

Audience: Kent Baumkel, Mayor's Taskforce on Increasing Safety for Women
Benny Chenevert, UM Department of Public Safety
Ray Detter, Citizen's Advisory Council
Bob Henderson, downtown resident
Sue Kaufman, Mayor's Taskforce on Increasing Safety for Women
Audrey Libke, downtown resident
Craig Roderick, City Police Department

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Shaffran made a motion, and Ms. Sipes seconded, that the minutes of the December 11, 1997 meeting be approved.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Berlin, Fritz, Gates, Gunn, Harshe, Shaffran, Sipes
NAYS: None
Absent: DeVarti, Gillett, Pohrt, Relyea, Ungrodt

The motion carried.
3. Report by DDA Citizen's Advisory Council

Last night the Citizens Council devoted a major part of its meeting to the discussion of the complex issue of downtown parking permits—not just for residents, but for other individual and group users as well. Joe Arcure, Dick Shackson, Andrew Wright, Audrey Libke, and Robert Henderson have volunteered to participate on a committee headed by DDA member Leah Gunn to try to develop parking policies that will be fair to all users, be most beneficial to the downtown, encourage the use of automobile and parking alternatives. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this important discussion.

At your meeting last month the Citizens Council asked me to congratulate all of you on the direction the DDA is taking in the development of a fifteen year action plan for the future of the downtown area. It was a pleasure to do that and to name the individual Citizen Council members who have committed themselves to working toward implementation of your long range plan and its specific objectives. Last night our membership further identified the immediate specific activities they were undertaking to achieve our common Housing, Parking, Transportation and Pedestrian Improvements goals. At this point, we are eagerly awaiting your formal adoption of that bold and creative fifteen year plan so we can follow your leadership in shaping the future of the downtown to the year 2012.

Last night Citizen Council members also committed themselves to attend the public meeting on the issue of Liberty Plaza Park to be held next Wednesday, January 14 in the Fire Hall Conference Room, 7:30 PM. As you may know, the Department of Parks and Recreation is evaluating Liberty Plaza in an effort to make it a more attractive designation for visitors and residents. Your own proposed plan for 1998 includes the possibility of providing matching funds for the re-design of Liberty Plaza Park in partnership with the City Parks Department. We hope that members of the DDA will be present at next Wednesday’s meeting so we can find a solution to what has become a significant public safety issue in the downtown.

The Citizens Advisory Council believes it essential to the future of our entire Ann Arbor community to maintain both the perception as well as the reality of public safety in the downtown area. We are still in the process of identifying the area’s special public safety needs and developing a goals statement with specific programs and actions to meet them. Our emerging goals statement supports the installation of more monitoring devices in perceived problems areas such as parking lots and structures, generally increasing the number of well-lit public telephones in the downtown area, and providing well-designed and well-lit 911 emergency phones at predictably located sites in the downtown. We believe the DDA should be actively involved in making this happen! Kent Baumkel, head of the Mayor’s Task Force on Safety for Women in the Downtown, has come with others to address the DDA on this issue. The Citizens Council has asked me to strongly support their proposals.

Mr. Gillett enters.
4. **Audience Participation**

Ms. Baumkel introduced herself and members of the Mayor’s Taskforce on Increasing Safety for Women, and said that the perception and reality of women’s safety downtown are important issues, as women spend more than 50% of family income, so they need to feel comfortable. Mr. Roderick distributed maps showing 1997 instances of crime against people downtown; many taking place near parking structures. The Taskforce wants to create a comprehensive network of emergency phones so people can pick up the receivers and instantly be connected to the police. Mr. Chenevert reported that these phones would provide enhanced 911 service, so dispatch would know where the call came from even if a person can’t speak. The system would also know if someone picked up and put down the receiver in error. The UM Department of Public Safety receives calls on their emergency phones for everything from motorists requiring assistance with dead batteries to robberies. This is a good method to help prevent crimes, he said, and adds another level of comfort for patrons.

Ms. Relyea and Mr. DeVarti enter.

Mr. Roderick gave an overview of the Taskforce’s request to the DDA, asking that the DDA install and maintain emergency phones at the pedestrian entrances to all parking structures. These phones would be available, not only to parking patrons, but to any pedestrians nearby. The Taskforce was also asking that the DDA appoint a representative to serve on the Taskforce to help promote their program, and to join them in convincing downtown businesses to also install outside emergency phones, such as at all ATM’s. If the Taskforce is successful, a visitor to downtown would have an emergency phone in view at all times.

The initial cost estimate per phone is $500 each, plus an installation charge of $42, plus a monthly line charge of $16.97. They did not have an estimate for the cost to mount the equipment, nor a cost to run electricity to the site.

Mr. Gates asked how they envisioned the phones would be marked. Mr. Roderick answered that they would be marked with a blue light. Mr. Gillett asked if the DDA would be asked to pay for the entire project, which Mr. Roderick affirmed. Mr. Gillett asked why this project was not paid for by the police, as this is considered to be a public safety matter. Mr. Berlin explained that the Police Department did not have sufficient funds. Mr. DeVarti asked if the UM had separate line to their phones or if this service is connected to their Centrax System, and did the UM have monthly cost estimates. Mr. Chenevert answered that this was part of their campus-wide Centrax System, and bills were received by a different UM department, so he did not know their monthly cost. Ms. Gunn said that the monthly costs did not appear to be too great, and that the DDA Parking Operations
Committee should review this matter in greater detail and make a recommendation to the DDA.

Ms. Baumkel said that Ann Arbor was starting to become a big city, and starting to get big city problems. If emergency phones were available, people could call if they witnessed suspicious activity. If people knew these phones are there, they will feel safer. Ms. Harshe referred the matter to the Parking Operations Committee, and would later appoint someone to attend Taskforce meetings.

5. **New Business**

None.

6. **Subcommittee Reports**

**Parking Construction Committee**

Mr. Shaffran reported that three firms submitted proposals to design the new structure at Forest, and that the Selection Committee will meet next week to select the firm to do the work.

Mr. Shaffran reported that the DDA has received a conditional assessment of the Forest structure from Carl Walker Inc., which indicates that something needs to be done with the roof level if the structure is to remain open until demolition. In 1995, the DDA oversaw emergency repairs to the structure, and closed the roof at that time. The decision before the DDA now is whether to shore up or remove the roof. If the roof were to be shored, the total project will cost about $60,000, will take approximately two weeks, and will remove 60-80 spaces from use due to the positioning of the new roof supports. Removing the roof will take approximately four to six weeks, and will cost $330,000. A third option to shore the roof with structural steel has been investigated. This option will cost $240,000, and the initial supposition that the parking on the roof level could be regained was proven incorrect. It also appears that steel can not be fabricated until May or June, and a solution needs to be found immediately. Demolition of the entire structure is anticipated for the end of December 1998. The question was asked if the DDA could close off the level below the roof until the structure was demolished and pay for additional insurance coverage. Ms. Pollay was directed to contact City Risk Manager, Dan Cullen, for his input. Mr. Shaffran recommended that the DDA make a decision to shore up or remove the roof, and then if the City Risk Manager and Building Department Director determined that the DDA could get by with closing off the level below the roof, the DDA could fall back to that less-expensive alternative.
Mr. DeVarti said he supporting the shoring, and hopes this will enable the structure to stand until a public/private development can take place at Forest/Washtenaw. Ms. Harshe expressed concern that there are those in the community who have implied the DDA has not been open-minded, but, in fact, the DDA has had to wrestle with tough decisions like this one. Ms. Gunn asked that AATA be contacted to communicate transit options to stakeholders in the South University area. It is her understanding that bus shuttles come down South University every fifteen minutes, and cars could be parked for free at a ride lot on South State. Ms. Pollay was asked how many monthly permits are in the structure, and who is using them. Ms. Pollay reported that 101 permits are assigned to the South University Area Association and they are being used by the merchants and their employees. Ms. Pollay was directed to contact the Association to determine whether customer parking should be reduced with this shoring or if the Association would voluntarily give back their permits and make these spaces available for customers.

Mr. Shaffran made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gunn, that the DDA resolve to shore the roof level of the Forest Structure as it is a cost-effective way to keep the structure in operation until demolition later this year, but that if the City Building and Risk Management Departments approved, the DDA will instead acquire additional insurance and close off the level below the roof to vehicular parking.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Berlin, DeVarti, Fritz, Gates, Gillett, Gunn, Harshe, Relyea, Shaffran, Sipes
NAYS: None
Absent: Pohrt, Ungrodt

The motion carried.

Mr. Shaffran reported that he contacted Jack Stegeman about leasing his land at Forest & Washtenaw to be developed into a temporary public parking lot to service some of the area parking demands during the time the Forest structure will be under repair. Mr. Stegeman has offered only his triangular-shaped lot at the corner. Carl Walker Inc. was asked to determine how many parking spaces could be developed at this site, and they reported that a maximum of 27 metered parking spaces could be situated if no City-required landscaping or setbacks are included. Concern was raised that since the DDA did not collect meter violations, that a metered lot might be profitable only for the City. Mr. Shaffran reported that if the abandoned street and adjacent land could be joined, up to 94 parking spaces could be created, but Mr. Stegeman has not offered use of this property, nor has he demonstrated ownership.

Mr. Shaffran suggested that the DDA not press forward with the triangular lot, but ask the City to go forward with a metered lot. Upon motion by Mr. Shaffran, seconded by Ms. Gunn, the following resolution was put forward:
RESOLUTION REGARDING THE CREATION OF A TEMPORARY PUBLIC PARKING LOT ON THE TRIANGULAR SITE AT THE INTERSECTION OF FOREST AND WASHTENAW

Whereas, The Parking Construction Committee has researched options to provide parking for the South University area, both before and during the construction of the S. Forest Street parking structure;

Whereas, An offer to lease the triangle-shaped site bounded by Washtenaw Avenue, Forest Avenue, and the abandoned City street for a temporary public parking lot has been received by the DDA;

Whereas, Carl Walker, Inc. was asked to investigate the possible costs associated with converting this property into an attended public parking lot and has presented a draft report of its findings;

Whereas, It has been determined that a maximum of 27 metered parking spaces could be created on this site; and

Whereas, The site is too small to justify the tremendous cost associated with development, which include excavation, site grading, paving, landscaping, and lighting;

Resolved, The DDA will encourage the City to consider development of this site as a public metered parking lot, as the project would generate parking violation revenues, in addition to meter revenues for the City;

Resolved, The DDA will concurrently continue its research [and discussion with property owners] to determine if additional adjacent properties could be included in the development of an attended public parking lot at this location.

A vote on the amended motion showed:

AYES: Berlin, DeVarti, Fritz, Gates, Gillett, Gunn, Harshe, Relyea, Shaffran, Sipes
NAYS: None
Absent: Pohrt, Ungrodt

The motion carried.

Mr. Shaffran reported that preliminary cost estimates for Fourth & Washington are far greater than had been first anticipated. Increased costs are due to adding spaces, problems with working on a small site, as well as inflationary increases in the year since replacement estimates had been received. Initial construction costs for Forest are also escalating, and can easily surpass the amount allocated for that project, as well. He suggested that when more substantial information is in place the DDA should go before Council at a Work
Session to outline options. He did not want to be an alarmist, but neither does he want the DDA to be accused of wasting public money. He does not have a clear resolve at this time, but will keep DDA members informed. Mr. Gates asked the DDA to discuss at a later meeting whether the structure should be self-supporting financially. Ms. Sipes said that she had always thought that the system needed to support itself, not individual facilities. Mr. Berlin said that we need to know where this will take us. Mr. Gates said that the structure could be self-supporting after 20 years when the bond is paid off.

Parking Operations Committee
Ms. Gunn reported that the Committee met on January 5th, and distributed minutes from that meeting. They reported on the recent merger of National Garages with All Right Parking of Houston, TX, and discussed the proposed National Garages budget for 1998/99. The group has formed a subcommittee to investigate residential parking permit allocations, and has begun discussion of a “gold” permit area to replace the metered spaces on the ground floor of Maynard and Fourth & William. The Committee will have a standard meeting time each month, and she asked DDA members to complete a survey indicating the times most convenient to their schedules.

Spaces Between Buildings Committee
Ms. Sipes reported that because of the ambitiousness of the action plan proposed at the retreat, the Committee needs to get a better understanding of where DDA member personal interests lay, so project planning could begin. She passed around a sign-up sheet, and asked all DDA members to respond. Ms. Sipes reported that at the February meeting, the Committee will put forward a recommendation to develop an Urban Design Center to provide a central resource center for ideas on urban design, including a library of information about what other communities have done/are doing to transform their downtowns. It is thought this Center could also function as a place to hold public meetings, and showcase downtown maps, models, and drawings.

Finance Committee Report
Mr. Gates presented information on the DDA’s annual audit, compiled by Coopers and Lybrand L.L.P. as part of the City of Ann Arbor audit. He noted that the fund balances reserved for encumbrances referred to the open purchase order for the Kerrytown lights, as well as the prepayment amount in June for rent for the W. Huron/First lot, and that the Fund 003 fund balance included $373,798 for a Housing Fund. Mr. Gates said that upon review of the document with City Finance Department representatives, it is his opinion that the audit had been properly prepared in accordance with standard accounting principles, and reflected the DDA’s finances at fiscal year end. Ms. Pollay was asked to request that in the future the Housing Fund be shown separately, as well as any interest it might receive.

Ms. Pollay described the proposed 1998/99 DDA budget, showing graphically how costs and revenues have been allocated, and outlining in detail changes since the previous year.
The most significant change is the allocation of her salary back to Fund 003, and the allocation of funds in Fund 063 for up to two new full-time positions. Ms. Pollay reported that insurance cost estimates had just been distributed by the City earlier in the day, and several estimates needed adjustment. When these figures have been corrected, the amount available in object 5190 (construction) will change. Again, Ms. Pollay was asked to have the City show a separate line on the monthly financial statements for the Housing Fund.

Upon motion by Ms. Gunn, with support from Mr. Gates, a resolution to approve the budget as submitted with the understanding that the insurance and construction amount will be altered was put forward.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Berlin, DeVarti, Fritz, Gates, Gillett, Gunn, Harshe, Relyea, Shaffran, Sipes
NAYS: None
Absent: Pohrt, Ungrodt

The motion carried.

Mr. Gates reported a question with the December financial statements, asking Pollay to investigate the National Garages operations expense for December, as the budgeted calculation showed a great variance with what had actually been incurred.

Ms. Sipes and Ms. Relyea leave.

Pedestrian Improvements Committee Report
Mr. Fritz reported that he and Ms. Pollay met with the City Bicycle Coordinator to review preferred locations for placement of some of the bicycle hoops to be installed by the Bicycle Committee. Suggested locations have not been received at this time for Kerrytown and South University areas.

Mr. Gillett leaves.

Executive Director's Report
Ms. Pollay asked DDA members to let her know where they wished to hold their monthly meetings, to which all present requested meetings be held at 301 E. Liberty for the coming year.

7. Other DDA Business Matters

None.
8. Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Pollay, Recording Secretary