MINUTES  
Downtown Development Authority Meeting  
Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Place: Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI  48104  
Time: DDA Chair Rene Greff called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

1.  ROLL CALL

Present: Fred Beal, Gary Boren, Dave DeVarti, David Fritz, Rene Greff, Leah Gunn, John Hieftje, Dave Solo  
Absent: Rob Aldrich, Ron Dankert, Bob Gillett, Lorri Sipes

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

Audience: Erica Briggs, Get Downtown program  
Jim Corbett, Republic Parking  
Bob Dascola, State Street Area Association  
Ray Detter, Citizens Advisory Council  
Donna Johnson, City Planning Department  
Jim Mogensen, Citizen  
Eleanor Pollack, Pollack Design

2.  APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Gunn moved and Mr. Hieftje seconded approval of the April 7, 2004 minutes.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES:  Beal, Boren, DeVarti, Fritz, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo

NAYS:  None

Absent:  Aldrich, Dankert, Gillett, Sipes

The motion carried.

3.  AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

4.  CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Detter reported:

The CAC wishes to invite members and representatives of the DDA to the annual downtown potluck party on Thursday, June 10th at 6:30 p.m. at my house, 120 N. Division. This party is given jointly each year by the CAC, the OFW and the North Central Property Owners Association for people who are actively involved in the downtown—as resident and business neighbors and associations, government representatives and friends. Family and children are included. Beer, wine, and music provided.

At last night’s CAC meeting members asked me to comment on three areas of concern among many developments in a very exciting time for the downtown.

Transportation. It has long been the position of the CAC that “It should only be a brief walk from anywhere in the downtown to the rail line, a bus terminal or an airport shuttle that will connect visitor and resident alike to any destination in the world.” Recent discussions regarding increasing the downtown residential population emphasize even more the importance of having the center of public transit in our downtown. We urge the DDA to strongly stress the fact that our downtown won’t be successful unless it is
the center of transportation in our community. We believe that we all need to emphasize this even while we seek to develop, with the AATA, possibilities for inter modal connections over a regional area. In relation to this position, we want to state now our support for expanding the existing bus terminal on the Fourth Street site as needed. But, we reject the idea of closing off Fourth Avenue to do this. We recognize and value the historical importance of the downtown traffic grid to business and residential life in the area and, just as we reject turning areas of the downtown into pedestrian malls, we reject turning our streets into traffic malls for any purpose.

Downtown Residential Taskforce. CAC members joined 70 others last week to hear a preliminary report of the Downtown Residential Taskforce. Members have asked me to give a “preliminary” reaction. The CAC has always been an advocate for increasing downtown density and we support increased height in areas of the downtown “where it is appropriate.” In general, we strongly support the work of the task force in its identification of the significant economic, policy, and zoning barriers that limit possibilities for increasing the quantity of downtown housing. We generally support the direction of many of the strategies they have suggested to address these barriers. We intend to support specific recommendations as they are further developed and agreed upon by the Task Force. We realize that last week’s presentation of computer models that provided views of Downtown Ann Arbor following various zoning scenarios was only suggestive. But the passionate response of the audience during the question and answer period should be helpful to us in developing a more careful plan for the future. “What about protecting neighborhood edges?” “What about parking?” “Traffic, walkability, sun and shadow?” “Where is the green space?” While many attendees approved of the concept of increased downtown density, environmentalists objected to the lack of consideration of available infrastructure. Others wanted to know about the social and cultural impact of a large increase in density.

The meeting succeeded in raising the issues. It’s obvious that a lot of discussion is needed. The Taskforce’s job is still a work in progress. The CAC intends to continue to provide a positive voice in future discussions to make sure that whatever is proposed is good for the downtown as well as the entire community.

Government Reorganization. The success of whatever we do in the downtown is dependent upon a strong Planning Department to help us implement our view of the future. In a recent letter to the Mayor, City Administrator, and City Council, the CAC expressed its concern that there was no clear model for proposed changes in the Planning Department structure within the new reorganization plan for city government. We believe that Planning is one of the best departments in City Hall, staffed with capable, conscientious people and we fear the dangerous experiment of making major cuts and changes that might put Planning in the hands of the Building Department. We also expressed our concern that there might be more dependence upon administrative decisions and a reduction of public involvement in the process. A copy of this letter will be provided in the next DDA packet.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gillett enters.

Executive Committee Report. Ms. Greff reported that the Committee had met to discuss possible land acquisitions necessitated under a scenario preferred by the First and William parking structure project design team. Mr. Beal reported that a variety of possible footprints were developed, and the scenario favored by the design team would push the deck away from the railroad tracks and toward the slope. This would accomplish the goal of making the Allen Creek drain accessible for maintenance and would make the deck appear less massive to the nearby neighbors. The site on the corner of Liberty/First is being sold, and the Committee met to discuss its potential importance to this project. It was ultimately resolved not to pursue purchase of this parcel, but the Committee did resolve to hire a real estate broker to explore the purchase of options on other nearby property.
7. **OLD BUSINESS**

   None.

8. **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

   **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

   In Mr. Dankert’s absence, Ms. Gunn gave the Committee report. Highlights from the March 2004 financial statements showed very small changes in the Housing Fund. December tax revenues have not been received from the City. Expenses are lower than budget. Parking revenues are back on budget, and expenses are higher due to increased facility maintenance costs and parking contractor expenses directed to keeping the facilities in excellent condition. Ms. Gunn moved and Mr. Solo seconded that the March 2004 financial report be accepted.

   A vote on the motion showed:

   **AYES:** Beal, Boren, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
   **NAYS:** None
   **Absent:** Aldrich, Dankert, Sipes

   The motion carried.

   Ms. Gunn reported that DDA staff, Republic Parking and others conducted a two-day maintenance review of the parking facilities, and their report was provided to the Board in the packet. The list this year is shorter than in previous years, with the majority of items located at Ann/Ashley, Liberty Square, and Maynard. The work will be performed over the coming weeks.

   Ms. Gunn reported that Bank of Ann Arbor representatives met with the Committee and discussed the DDA’s current investments. We’ve received a 3.33% annual return on our investments.

   Ms. Gunn said that the Committee recommended approval of an Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues request to install TDD/TTY equipment. Funds would be provided to the Commission to select the optimal locations and equipment. Ms. Gunn moved and Mr. Solo seconded the following resolution:

   **RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE A GRANT TO THE ANN ARBOR COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES FOR TDD/TTY EQUIPMENT PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION ($5,000)**

   Whereas, The DDA works to improve accessibility in the downtown;

   Whereas, The Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues adopted a resolution in 2001, requesting that the City look into installing TDD/TTY equipment in the downtown;

   Whereas, This request was referred to the DDA in late 2003;

   Whereas, The Operations Manager for SBC Midwest Public Communications met with the Commission Chair and DDA Executive Director to discuss this request in early 2004;

   Whereas, At this meeting the Commission Chair made clear the Commission’s interest in installing TDD/TTY equipment on payphones located on high pedestrian sidewalks, such as S. Main Street, or in parking structures as they would be readily accessible for members of the deaf community;

   Whereas, It was determined that TDD/TTY equipment was designed for indoor installation and is highly susceptible to damage due to damp conditions and extreme cold, making outdoor application impossible;

   Whereas, The DDA received a resolution by the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues requesting assistance installing TDD/TTY equipment in downtown locations, such as in the City Hall foyer, on March 17, 2004;

   Ms. Gunn moved and Mr. Solo seconded:
Whereas, SBC has indicated that the approximate cost to purchase and install each TDD/TTY unit would be $1,000, which does not include electrical costs or monthly phone charges;

Whereas, Other than the City Hall foyer, no other locations have been specified yet by the Commission;

Whereas, The DDA is very supportive of the efforts of the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues, and encourages their work making this community accessible for all;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves a $5,000 grant to the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues to be used for TDD/TTY equipment installations in the downtown.

A vote on the motion showed:
AYES: Beal, Boren, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: None
Absent: Aldrich, Dankert, Sipes

The motion carried.

Ms. Gunn said that the Committee has also discussed a potential request to the City to explore increases to the expired meter fines, but resolved not to pursue this.

PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE
YMCA Action Plan-Status. Mr. Solo reported that the Committee reviewed recent RFP’s and language that might be used to develop the affordable housing RFP.

Kingsley Lane Request-Status. Mr. Solo said that the Committee created a matrix of values to better understand its position regarding this and future funding requests. Ultimately, the Committee resolved to support the developer’s request for 20% of the actual TIF, rather than of the anticipated TIF based on the City Assessor’s estimate. Mr. Solo moved and Ms. Gunn seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR KINGSLEY LANE

Whereas, On December 21, 1999 the DDA approved guidelines to enable its Partnerships Committee to consider ways that the Authority could work with private developers to encourage new development in the downtown area, particularly those that would further specific City and DDA goals;

Whereas, These guidelines were extended by the DDA until December 31, 2004;

Whereas, On December 15, 2003 the DDA received a request from the developers of Kingsley Lane, a development to be constructed at the corner of Kingsley and N. Ashley Streets, for funding assistance;

Whereas, The DDA Partnerships Committee met with Kingsley Lane representatives to learn more about the project, and then discussed the project at several subsequent Committee meetings;

Whereas, DDA Partnerships Guidelines require that the DDA should only provide assistance to a development if the development is consistent with the Downtown Plan and furthers identified DDA goals;

Whereas The DDA Partnerships Committee determined that the project will provide for a number of important Downtown Plan and DDA goals, including
• Historic preservation
• Construction of 26 residential units, including a mix of affordable and market rate units
• Pedestrian improvements, including alley and sidewalk enhancements, as well as an attractive, pedestrian-friendly design
• Parking for the project is completely on site, and most of these spaces are situated below grade
Whereas, The DDA Partnerships Guidelines require that if DDA support is authorized, that payments to the developer should be timed so that the development is never in a "negative TIF" situation;

Whereas, By majority vote the DDA Partnerships Committee has recommended that the DDA provide assistance to the project in the amount of 20% of the DDA’s TIF generated by the initial assessment for Kingsley Lane over ten years, which is an amount permissible under the DDA Partnerships Guidelines;

RESOLVED, The DDA shall provide assistance to Kingsley Lane in the amount of 20% of the DDA’s TIF generated by the initial assessment for Kingsley Lane over ten years;

RESOLVED, The DDA grant to Kingsley Lane is contingent on City Council approval of an affordable housing agreement with Kingsley Lane;

RESOLVED, DDA payments to the developer will be timed so that the development is never in a "negative TIF" situation;

RESOLVED, The DDA Partnerships Committee Chair and Executive Director are authorized to work with the DDA Attorney to formulate an agreement between the DDA and Kingsley Lane, and then bring back the agreement to the Partnerships Committee for approval.

Mr. Beal reported that he had a conflict of interest on this issue and would abstain from participation and voting.

Mr. Gillett proposed a friendly amendment to delete in the sixth whereas, “…including a mix of affordable and market rate units” and just say “Construction of 26 residential units”. Mr. Solo and Ms. Gunn accepted this amendment as friendly. Mr. Hieftje said that if a payment-in-lieu arrangement were permitted, more housing could be constructed at another site than might be possible on this site. Ms. Gunn agreed, saying that it could also be used to buy down the cost of units.

Mr. Boren asked how the DDA grant would be provided. Mr. Gillett said that the Assessor would determine the DDA’s TIF, which is the incremental increase over existing taxes. The DDA would provide a grant in the amount equal to 20% of this TIF over ten years. As the project paid its taxes, the DDA would release portions of its grant in an amount less than the total amount it had received. It might take two to three years for the project to receive its full allotment.

A vote on the amended motion showed:
AYES: Boren, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: None
Abstain: Beal
Absent: Aldrich, Dankert, Sipes
The motion carried as amended.

Mr. Solo moved and Ms. Gunn seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF BANNER BRACKETS
FOR DOWNTOWN LIGHT POLES ($5,000)

Whereas, The DDA Renewal Plan sets forward that the DDA will work to enhance downtown as a pedestrian environment, by encouraging “programs to create and maintain art in public places in the downtown area;”

Whereas, The Director of the Ann Arbor Art Center approached the DDA at their April 2004 meeting, asking support for their “Off the Wall Gallery” project which will be undertaken in conjunction with the Main
Street Area Association, and which will lead to the creation of original works of art as banners by teenagers-at-risk that will be displayed throughout the Main Street area;

Whereas, The DDA was asked to provide $5,000 to purchase banner brackets;

Whereas, The request was considered by the Partnerships Committee, who recommended that the DDA purchase the brackets on behalf of the City, which would enable the equipment to be deemed public property;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves a grant of $5,000 to purchase banner brackets that will affix to downtown light poles as requested.

Ms. Gunn said that DDA brackets would be available for other groups, in addition to the Art Center.

A vote on the motion showed:
AYES: Beal, Boren, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: None
Absent: Aldrich, Dankert, Sipes
The motion carried.

Mr. Solo moved and Ms. Greff seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN ANNUAL DDA GRANT TO THE DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATIONS FOR HOLIDAY LIGHTS ($80,000)

Whereas, The City of Ann Arbor provided free holiday parking at the street meters in November and December weekends in 2001;

Whereas, The DDA assumed responsibility for the on street parking system in May 2002;

Whereas, At the urging of the downtown associations, in late 2002 the DDA resolved to provide free holiday parking as the City had, but in the parking structures and not at the street meters;

Whereas, The DDA continued this practice in 2003, as well;

Whereas, Representatives of the four downtown area associations approached the DDA at its February 2004 meeting requesting that the DDA shift its investment in providing free holiday parking to an investment in downtown holiday lighting;

Whereas, It is believed that installation of holiday lighting throughout downtown would provide greater support for businesses than the provision of free holiday parking, as it would attract people to downtown and would allow them to feel more safe;

Whereas, The estimated cost for providing free parking in the structures on the four Saturdays between Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as the Friday after Thanksgiving was estimated to be $70,000, in addition to the $10,000 DDA cost for cooperating advertising assistance in support of this project;

Whereas, Representatives of the downtown Associations met with the DDA Partnerships Committee at its April meeting, and asked that the DDA:

· Create an $80,000 annual sinking fund for holiday lighting. Unused funds would be rolled over from one year to the next.
Allow the Associations to use Liberty Plaza Park as the site for an annual Grand Lighting Event that they would use to kick off the beginning of the winter light season. The Associations would take responsibility for this event.

Add new holiday lights in locations that don’t currently have them, including Liberty Street, Fourth, Catherine, Detroit, Ann, Main (from Packard to Catherine), Washington, Church, E. University, N. University, Maynard and State. Additional streets will be added, as they become GFI equipped in DDA renovation projects.

Whereas, The Associations will take responsibility for all costs associated with electricity for these holiday lights, as well as for the installation and ongoing maintenance of the lights;

Whereas, The Partnerships Committee recommended approval of this request;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves an annual grant to the Downtown Associations in the amount of $80,000 for holiday lights.

Mr. Solo explained that for two years the DDA had provided free parking between Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as matching funds for advertising that promoted this free parking. The four associations determined that support for lighting would be more beneficial, as many campus-area business close after UM commencement in early December.

Mr. Dankert enters.

Mr. DeVarti said that he was troubled that the annual grant program to the Associations developed following a 1995 DDA grant for holiday lights. Rather than continue funding for holiday lights, the DDA determined that it would provide grants to each Association to do with as it felt best for its district. While he would like to support the Associations, he found it difficult to fund holiday lights. Mr. Beal asked how the grant would work. Mr. Solo said that it would be a sinking fund, as costs for lighting were cyclical and some years costs were much higher than others. Mr. Gillett asked if receipts would be required. Mr. Solo said that this would be appropriate, as the DDA would reimburse actual expenses. Ms. Gunn said that the program would replace the costs associated with free parking, and she supported any effort that brought the four groups together.

Mr. Beal offered a friendly amendment that this policy will be reviewed in three years and that this funding be used for any future GFCI installations. Mr. Solo seconded the motion.

A vote on the amended resolution shows:
AYES: Beal, Boren, Dankert, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: DeVarti
Absent: Aldrich, Sipes
The amended motion carried.

Mr. Solo announced that a “Development 101” session would be held, similar in format to the “Planning 101” presentation earlier this year. Mr. Beal and Mr. Aldrich have generously agreed to lead this session. Details on the date/time will be forthcoming.

Mr. Hieftje said that he has been speaking with several people, including Council members and Ms. Pollay, about the transportation element that needs to be planned as a part of the Y site redevelopment. The idea that is emerging would be to have a committee including DDA and Council members, and someone from AATA and City transportation staff, develop a variety of scenarios. This would allow community members to provide input into what may eventually be placed on this site, as the City purchase of the Y site is an opportunity to discuss community and downtown transit. He said that he would bring a formal recommendation to next month’s meeting.
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
First/Washington Status. Mr. Beal moved and Mr. Fritz seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE MONTHLY INSPECTIONS OF THE FIRST & WASHINGTON PARKING STRUCTURE AND ADDRESS CONDITIONS AS NECESSARY ($100,000) IN FY 2004/05

Whereas, The First & Washington Parking Structure Condition Appraisal Update Report, completed by the Carl Walker, Inc. (CWI) in December 18, 2002 reported that the structure had experienced some structural deterioration;

Whereas, CWI has provided recommendations for regular inspections and repairs that would allow continuing public use of the parking structure;

Whereas, These recommendations were acceptable to the City Building Department Director, and the DDA has regularly conducted these repairs and inspections as advised;

Whereas, In June 2003 the DDA authorized spending up to $105,000 for repairs and inspections in the First & Washington structure for the 2003/2004 fiscal year; and

Whereas, The Capital Improvements Committee has recommended providing for up to $100,000 for inspections and repairs to the First and Washington structure as necessary in 2004/2005;

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to spend up to $100,000 for monthly inspections and minor repairs as needed in the First & Washington structure in FY 2004/2005.

Mr. Beal said that approval of this resolution would enable the structure to remain open as the DDA continues to work to shape recommendations for First & William, Kline lot and First & Washington. Many residents and businesses rely on this structure, and approval of this resolution would allow it to remain open as long as possible, until the Building Department determined that it should close.

A vote on the resolution shows:
AYES: Beal, Boren, Dankert, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: None
Absent: Aldrich, Sipes
The motion carried.

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE TO FRAME A DOWNTOWN ALLEY REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN ($100,000)

Whereas, At its 2002 and 2003 retreats the DDA spent time discussing the DDA’s role providing for downtown vitality, and as part of these discussions, shaped possible project lists which included alley repairs;

Whereas, An important strategy in the DDA’s 2003 Renewal Plan is a commitment to reinvesting in existing and new infrastructure as a way to serve the functional needs of residents, businesses, government agencies, and others.
Whereas, Within this strategy, the DDA set forward that alley repairs should be undertaken “to facilitate deliveries, solid waste and recycling collection, improve alley cleanliness and attractiveness, assist pedestrian use, and discourage graffiti;”

Whereas, Their repairs would also address other important needs, such as preventing water seepage into adjacent historic buildings or repairing damaged storm drains;

Whereas, The DDA Capital Improvements Committee has recommended that the project begin with an assessment of all publicly owned downtown alleys in the DDA District to determine their condition and estimated costs for repairs;

Whereas, This assessment would enable the Committee to set forward a recommended plan and schedule for repairs;

Whereas, It is hoped that this study can be commissioned as soon as possible, with a repair plan brought before the DDA for approval shortly thereafter; and

Whereas, This repair plan would be undertaken in coordination with the City:

RESOLVED, The DDA authorizes the DDA Capital Improvements Committee to shape a repair plan for downtown alleys which will be brought back to the DDA for approval; and

RESOLVED, The Committee is also authorized to spend up to $100,000 on an alley assessment, which will be used as the basis for this repair plan.

Mr. Beal said that the issue has been kicking around for awhile, as there had been reticence about the DDA assuming City responsibilities. But it is clear that improvements are needed. Mr. Beal said that the DDA would hire a firm or individual who would evaluate all downtown alleys and provide the DDA with a conditional assessment and a recommended repair plan. It is not intended that the DDA would modify alley use, for instance, redesign them as pedestrian thoroughfares. Mr. Gillett asked the estimated cost to repair an alley; Mr. Iraola said that a worst case scenario estimate might be as much as $300,000 to $500,000 an alley, which would include repairing storm drains and resurfacing with concrete rather than asphalt. Mr. Beal said that it was possible that the Utility Department might assume some of the cost of storm drain repair. Mr. Hieftje said that the City street repair program was conducted in much the same way, with an assessment followed by a recommendation for which streets were a priority.

A vote on the resolution shows:
AYES: Beal, Boren, Dankert, DeVarti, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje, Solo
NAYS: None
Absent: Aldrich, Sipes
The motion carried.

Huron/Division/5th Study. Mr. Beal reported that the second public presentation would be on May 6th at the District Library beginning at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

First/William Parking Structure Design. Mr. Beal said that project design would be on hold until it could be determined that adjacent property might be acquired. If property is not available, the design team will consider other design options.

2004 Maintenance Walk Around. Mr. Beal said that staff would assess downtown conditions on Friday, May 14th from 8am to noon. All were welcome to participate.
State Street Phase III. Sidewalk repairs are underway on Thompson. Work will begin on William next week.

Forest Pedestrian Access. Mr. Beal reported that work would start next week.

RESEARCH AND OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE
In Mr. Aldrich’s absence, Ms. Greff reported that a date was set for the Retreat. It will be July 13th from Noon to 5 p.m. at Arbor Brewing Company on East Washington Street.

Ms. Greff moved and Ms. Gunn seconded the following resolution:

RESOLUTION APPROVING A GRANT TO THE ANN ARBOR AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ARTS ALLIANCE IN SUPPORT OF ITS 2004 ARTS ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY ($5,000)

Whereas, The DDA Renewal Plan sets forward a DDA strategy to enhance downtown Ann Arbor’s identity using such tactics as encouraging “public and private efforts to keep Ann Arbor an “arts friendly” community;”

Whereas, The Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce’s Ann Arbor Area Arts Alliance Interim Director came before the DDA at its March 2004 meeting requesting $5,000 to enable the Chamber to complete a report documenting the economic impact of arts and culture in this area, including the money spent by arts patrons when attending events, and the money spent by cultural organizations on operations and programs;

Whereas, This study included participation by many cultural groups located or presenting in the Ann Arbor DDA area, including the Michigan Theater, Performance Network, and Hands On Museum;

Whereas, Data has been compiled and analysis will be done by Dr. George Fulton, UM Institute for Social Research in the coming weeks;

Whereas, The total cost for this study is $30,500, with the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation providing $20,500 and the Chamber providing $5,000 in in-kind donations;

Whereas, Funds from the DDA will enable analysis to be done and reports printed;

Whereas, The DDA Research and Opportunity Committee recommends approval of this grant request, noting that it would be useful to have solid facts documenting the impact of the arts and culture to the downtown and to the community as a whole;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves a $5,000 grant to the Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce for the Ann Arbor Area Arts Alliance economic impact study of the arts.

Mr. DeVarti asked if approval of this grant would be a “slippery slope” leading to a commitment of DDA funding for the arts; Ms. Greff said no, that the Arts Alliance isn’t an arts organization, rather it is a Chamber of Commerce program, facilitating services and information for area arts groups. The study would provide benchmark data, as well as important insight into the contribution of the arts. Mr. Solo asked if the study would include data on the Art Fairs; Ms. Pollay said no, she didn’t think that it did. Mr. DeVarti said that he wished that the study would have addressed the impact of bar bands, which are invisible to many, unlike the more high-end performing arts associated with the University Musical Society and others. Ms. Pollay said that the Arts Alliance had distributed surveys to participating arts organizations, which she believed were all nonprofits; bar bands were likely to be for-profits. Ms. Greff
asked if there was a wish to table the resolution for more information. Ms. Gunn said that she felt that the data uncovered by the study would be helpful, including how much arts patrons were spending on meals and parking. Mr. Beal asked if there was support for this resolution. Mr. Boren said that he thought it was a small grant, matching $20,000 in other grants, so he felt he could support it.

A vote on the resolution shows:
AYES: Beal, Boren, Fritz, Gillett, Greff, Gunn, Hieftje
NAYS: Dankert, DeVarti, Solo
Absent: Aldrich, Sipes
The motion carried.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Hieftje displayed a copy of the book entitled, “Cities Ranked and Rated”, noting that Ann Arbor was ranked 6th in the nation. He passed around the plaque commemorating this honor and expressed appreciation for everyone’s efforts that made this accomplishment possible.

Downtown Residential Taskforce. Mr. Gillett said that the Taskforce held a public meeting in April to gather feedback on draft recommendations. He said that some speakers expressed concern about increased downtown density, as well as comments on the need to anticipate impact on infrastructure and adjacent neighborhoods. A questionnaire distributed at the meeting came back with generally positive comments supporting increased density and most of the draft recommendations. The meeting helped the Taskforce examine its assumptions, and it is clear that much work remains before the report is complete in early June. Mr. Beal said that good questions were asked and important issues will need to be included in the final report. Mr. Hieftje said that he also attended the meeting and he encouraged the Taskforce to stay on course with their work. He said that he was impressed that the general tone of the meeting was positive, and the negative comments were probably due to a lack of information. This could be addressed in the final report.

10. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Ms. Erica Briggs introduced herself as the new Get!Downtown Program Coordinator. She distributed information on Bike to Work Week, May 17-21, 2004. Mr. Hieftje said that May 21 will be Bike to Work Day, with a community ride beginning at Gallup Park and ending at City Hall. Ms. Gunn proudly pointed out that Erica used to be an intern at County Administration. All welcomed Ms. Briggs to her new job.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director