Place: Arbor Brewing, 120 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Time: Planning Committee Chair Rene Greff called the retreat to order at 12:20 p.m.
DDA: Rob Aldrich, Fred Beal, Ron Dankert, Dave DeVarti, David Fritz, Bob Gillett, Rene Greff, John Hieftje, Leah Gunn, Lorri Sipes, Dave Solo
Staff: Adrian Iraola, Joe Morehouse, Susan Pollay
Audience: Ray Detter, Citizens Advisory Council Wendy Rampson, City Planning Department

Welcome and retreat overview
Ms. Greff welcomed everyone and outlined the retreat framework. She asked for a brief conversation about expectations for retreat outcomes. There was general agreement that it would be helpful to talk about the big picture/future direction for the DDA, in addition to a conversation about specific projects.

What are the major threats/key issues facing downtown?
- Allen Creek
- Alternative Transportation, including mass transit, bikes, pedestrian transit
- Traffic Congestion, with the Broadway Bridges repair adding to current congestion
- Replacing housing at the “Y”
- Creating new places for artists
- Retail health downtown (basic services & products are needed: e.g., grocery, hardware)
- High rents – especially retail – is affecting the business mix and viability
- City services, including snow removal, safety (actual and perceived), B.I.D.?
- Cooperative relationship with UM, e.g. the Life Sciences project
- Wayfinding – parking, etc.
- Affordable Housing, e.g. payment in lieu options. Downtown may become only for the rich, the poor, and students
- Regulatory environment in this City, which can encourage/discourage development
- Lack of development over the past couple decades
- Relationship to near downtown neighborhoods
- Lack of a central gathering space
- Downtown Plan may not be up to date
- Lack of parking
- Loss of the ethnic festival, blues and jazz festival
- Public art
- Redo State Theater – to create more of a theater district in the State Street area
- Resolving the conflict between residential vs. commercial interests – e.g., noise

How do we get more people to live, work, come downtown?
- Housing
- Parking
- Retail
- Jobs
- Safety
- Cleanliness
- Public services – Courts and other government services downtown
- Pedestrian friendly
- Events
- Arts and culture
- Maintenance/upkeep
- Affordability
Uniqueness/character
- Infrastructure – e.g., power; telecommunications conduit, etc.
- Daycare
- Schools (need to keep them here)
- Bus transportation / bikes / rail / connectivity
- Residential handbook

**Establishing priorities for future projects**
- TIF generation as a goal?
- Do we want to continually subsidize a project? (i.e. “seed” dollars vs. “feed” dollars?)
- Is a project realistic and can it be achieved (we have limited time/money)?
- DDA projects should be held to a higher standard, e.g. green roof, underground parking, second flush storm water retention
- Access – e.g. is there enough parking and is it in the right place? Is it reasonable to get there as a pedestrian? Wayfinding
- Mixed use projects – Is it a good idea to put several uses on one site? Yes and no

**Strategies**
- Business Improvement District
- DDA assumes responsibilities for any / all needed services?
- Project facilitation and partnerships
- Providing low cost space for artists (e.g. the retail space at Ann/Ashley)
- Use parking structure roofs to create more parking without taking up more land
- Downtown lofts
- Partner with Ypsilanti, e.g. SmartZone, supporting the arts
- Bike support
- Go Pass for DDA District residents, in addition to downtown employees
- Long term parking offered on the outskirts for residents who want to store their vehicle
- Additional park/ride lots for commuters as they exit the highway, before coming downtown
- More frequent bus service, as well as extended evening service, services to Ypsi, etc.
- Facilitate code waivers for downtown development. Utilize the “Redevelopment Code” which is an approved State code that is separate from the standard code book
- Use sidewalk vault space for artist studios? Transit? Storage?
- Take a position on regulations
- Create an incubator for new small businesses/create a "I Shop Downtown" pride program

**Potential future DDA projects**
- Participate in the “Y” redevelopment – safeguard the availability of very low income housing
- Drive/fund a portion of an Allen Creek Study under the auspices of the County Drain Commissioner & City. E.g., flood mediation upstream to help downstream, improve water quality, participate in/facilitate the political process. Much technical information is already known, how do we communicate this
- Replace Tech Center artist studios, in cooperation with the Chamber’s Arts Alliance and City
- Foster the creation of more parking – as part of:
  - Farmers Market redevelopment
  - Community High School lot underground parking development
  - Fourth/Catherine Lots (either? both?)
  - On top of existing decks
- Alley repairs – address problems of poor drainage, garbage control - can’t keep clean
- Create a plan for each area of downtown
- Access. Improvements to sidewalks/transportation along the north/south streets (First, Ashley, Fifth, Division) and Huron Street. Study the pedestrian/vehicular, needs, capacity, opportunities, etc.
DDA Project Opportunity Areas/Corridors

(1) “William Street Corridor”
- Library lot, YMCA, Fourth/William roof, Blake Transit Center, Palio Lot, DTE Lot, Kline lot, First/William

(2) “West of Main Street Corridor”
- Brown Block, Kleinschmidt property, Gulverson property, Greyhound bus station, Ann/Ashley deck (retail space and roof), former emergency shelter site on W. Huron, Say Cheese/Fireside property, City yard at 415 W. Washington St.

(3) “Center City Corridor”
- Ann Arbor News, Ann Arbor News Lot, Fifth/Huron lot, Firestone Tire, City Hall

(4) “South University Area Corridor”
- Stegeman property, both inside and outside the DDA District

(5) “Kerrytown Area Corridor”
- Farmers Market, Community High School lot, 4\textsuperscript{th} & Catherine lots (County & City)

What other projects should we look at – if money were no object
- Access – North/south streets improvements and study (1\textsuperscript{st}/Ashley, 5\textsuperscript{th}/Division) in terms of pedestrians & vehicles. Huron Street
- South University study – we must pay attention to what’s happening in this neighborhood
- Partnering with AATA – many more opportunities
- Constructing parking structures on the outskirts. To make this work it would need more frequent bus service, free/cheap parking, perhaps could provide parking for downtown residents, perhaps we can use additional space at Pioneer/UM property/ N. Main, perhaps DDA could develop its own jitney service, discontinue monthly parking permits?
- Creating a system of underground tunnels for bicycles to protect cyclists from cars
- Electronic kiosks, so there would no longer be a need for handbills – events information would regularly scroll across the screen. Many screens located throughout the downtown

Retreat Outcome – What Do We Want To Do Next?

1. **Replace Artists Studios (Dave DeVarti, Chair)**
   - Committee: Rene Greff, Ray Detter, Lorri Sipes
   - Work with the City, Arts Alliance. Probably looking to find / develop 100,000 sq. ft.

2. **Outskirt Parking/AATA (Fred Beal, Chair)**
   - Capital Improvements Committee (Ron Dankert, David Fritz, Dave Solo) plus Lorri Sipes
   - Probably partnering with UM, AATA, etc.

3. **Access: North/South Streets, Huron Street (Fred Beal, Chair)**
   - Capital Improvements Committee

Upon a motion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director