MINUTES
Downtown Development Authority Summer 2005 Retreat
Wednesday, July 6, 2005

Place: Conor O’Neills, 318 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI. 48104
Time: DDA Chair Ms. Gunn called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Rob Aldrich, Fred Beal, Gary Boren, Ron Dankert, Bob Gillett, Rene Greff, Leah Gunn, Roger Hewitt, John Hieftje, Sandi Smith

Absent: Dave DeVarti

Staff Susan Pollay, Executive Director
Present: Joe Morehouse, Deputy Director
Joan Lyke
Richard Murphy

Audience: Vivienne Armentrout, Ann Arbor Observer
Ray Detter, Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council
Chris Easthope, City Council
Tom Gantert, Ann Arbor News
Leigh Greden, City Council
Mark Hodesh, Downtown Home & Garden
Adrian Iraola, Washtenaw Engineering Co.
Alice Ralph, General Public

2. REPORTS ON 2004/05 COMMITTEE WORK PLANS

Each Committee Chairs presented an overview of their committee efforts over the past year.

Mr. Hewitt said that the Operations Committee had focused much of their efforts on overseeing the DDA budget and finances. Another key work item was ensuring that the DDA parking system was financially secure, well-managed, and providing optimal customer service. Ms. Smith said that the Partnerships Committee had drafted the YMCA RFP and developed the concepts for the redevelopment of the Kline lot and 1st and Washington site. The Committee also met with several developers, rewrote the DDA Partnerships Guidelines, and recommended approval for several historic façade loans. Mr. Boren said that ROC had developed downtown benchmark data that is now available online, and had taken responsibility for DDA grants, including the annual grants to the four downtown associations. ROC had also begun work assessing ways to improve DDA communication. Mr. Beal said that the Capital Improvements Committee had overseen development of design concepts for the proposed First & William replacement structure, ongoing repairs and maintenance at the First & Washington structure, repairs to sidewalks on Chapin near West Park, Ann Street, and the Kerrytown area, including installation of new lights on Ann Street, overseeing an alley repair study and construction on three alleys, and overseeing the design work for Huron, Fifth and Division including the selection of design consultants.

3. REVIEW OF THE CURRENT TEN-YEAR PLAN

Mr. Morehouse presented the current Ten Year Plan. He noted the variables and assumptions that went into the formulation of the plan, and each was discussed, as was the potential for a variety of future projects.
Several DDA members commented that the DDA would not be able to take on too many significant projects at the same time lest it overspend its resources. DDA members expressed strong commitment to various projects and asked that they be included in the Ten Year Plan, including the First & William parking structure, repairs to the Ann Ashley, Liberty Square, Maynard and Fourth & William structures as anticipated by Carl Walker Inc., and the Huron, Division & Fifth bike/pedestrian improvements project.

4. 2005/06 DDA PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES

Three Site Plan: Several DDA members commented on the need for City Council to take action on the Three Site Plan. Over the course of the previous six months there had been several public hearings, a Town Hall meeting, dozens of news articles and community meetings. DDA members said that the proposal needed closure to enable the DDA to budget and fix priorities for the next ten years.

Mr. Easthope said that he had developed a two-site plan that he wanted to present to the DDA for its consideration and/or approval. His plan would utilize the recommendations for the Kline lot and First & Washington as envisioned by the DDA, plus he would propose to build approximately 340 underground parking spaces at the Kline lot. He asked the DDA Board for its support of this concept, saying that the DDA would be able to accomplish all the goals it set forward in its Three Site Plan, but without use of the First and William site. Several Board members said that they felt the Three Site Plan had been researched and tested over two years and there was no research behind the new plan. For instance, it wasn’t clear what the impact would be to the monetary value of the Kline lot and how expensive the underground parking might be. Mr. Dankert expressed concern that the proposed change might compromise the viability of the projects that would be developed on these sites. Mr. Easthope and Mr. Greden said that a compromise was needed and that they felt strongly that the new plan would be a win for all. They indicated that the downtown would not lose any public parking spaces in this proposal and residents in the Old West Side would be satisfied that the 1st & William lot would not become a parking structure.

Ms. Greff, Mr. Beal and Mr. Aldrich asked that City Council take action on the Three Site Plan before moving to this new concept to give the topic closure and that they would respect a vote up or down on the Three Site Plan. Mr. Greden said that a vote on the Two Site Plan would prevent the Three Site Plan from being defeated. Several DDA members said that they would prefer to see the vote on the Three Site Plan even if that meant it was defeated. Mr. Hieftje was asked his opinion and he said that he had never supported the construction of a parking structure at First & William. DDA members asked that Mr. Easthope provide the DDA with sixty days to study the Two Site Plan proposal before its presentation to Council. Mr. Easthope said that he planned to present the Two Site Plan to the City Council shortly.

The discussion continued for several more minutes. The DDA asked Ms. Pollay to prepare a resolution asking for City Council action regarding the Three Site Plan. Mr. Gillett asked staff to do an analysis of the Two Site Plan as presented by Mr. Easthope.

City Hall Annex: Ms. Pollay presented an email from the City Administrator to the DDA responding to the DDA’s request for a written City proposal for the proposed police/court addition to City Hall. After the report, DDA members commented that the project scope appeared to have changed dramatically since the meeting with the City Administrator in July 2004, from a structure for public parking costing $10 million to a structure for city vehicles.
costing $15 million. Mr. Aldrich brought the Board’s attention back to the Ten Year Plan and the lack of adequate funding to complete all the projects listed. Mr. Easthope suggested that the Huron Division and Fifth project could be deleted to free up funds for the City Hall annex. Ms. Smith said that she felt the Huron, Division, and Fifth improvements project would more closely meet the DDA mission to spend TIF to encourage private reinvestment in the downtown. The Huron, Division and Fifth project also supports the DDA goal to improve alternative transportation conditions in the downtown to encourage more people to walk and bicycle rather than drive downtown. Ms. Pollay asked the Board for direction with regards to the City Administrator’s request for assistance with property acquisition and project management, as well as for financial backing. Board members asked for additional time to consider the City’s request before taking action of any kind.

As he departed, Mr. Easthope thanked the DDA for allowing him to participate in the afternoon meetings. DDA members extended their thanks to Mr. Easthope, as well.

**Calthorpe Study:** Mr. Hewitt provided an update on the Calthorpe study meeting schedule and reported that informational flyers had been mailed in the summer tax bills. All were invited participate in the first workshop on July 29th.

**Huron/Division/Fifth Improvements:** Mr. Beal explained that once the Design Committee has completed its work the DDA Board will have the opportunity to resolve whether to move forward with some improvements or whether to hold back for action at a later date.

**YMCA Redevelopment:** Ms. Pollay indicated that at this time the DDA had not been formally contacted with a request, but that it was anticipated the DDA would be asked to assist with parking and to assist AATA operations during the construction period.

**Greenway:** Ms. Smith said that she would be interested in the DDA considering the feasibility of a “greenpath” that would run along Ashley/Mosley to Summit Street. Her initial thought was to use a lane of traffic and the City sidewalk extension to create a non-motorized path that would connect the downtown to the Huron River. This could be undertaken completely with city-owned property, thus the cost would be significantly reduced and wouldn’t require coordination with the railroad. Several DDA members expressed support for this idea.

## 5. 2005/06 DDA COMMITTEE WORK PLANS

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2005/06.** Mr. Hewitt provided an overview as follows:

1. Budget/finance oversight, including verifying the tax increment revenues credited to the DDA and reviewing the current bond obligations for possible refinancing
2. Ongoing on street and off street parking operations management
3. Make parking operation changes as necessary, including new hourly and permit rate adjustments,
4. changes in hours of operation for on-street and off-street parking, and implementation of new policies for such issues as the monthly permit wait list, meter bags, and meter bag fee waivers
5. Creation of new reports (e.g. analysis by structure, etc.) as needed
6. Oversee equipment upgrades
7. Encourage creative customer service programs
8. Ensure maintenance allocations are adequate over ten-year plan, (parking & non-parking)
9. Conduct studies to assess parking usage patterns and locations requiring additional parking.
10. Locate additional sources of revenues (e.g. ATM machines, cell phone antenna, advertising, etc.)
11. Study ways to find greater efficiencies in the parking system to optimize income, such as the installation of new signage to direct patrons away from full facilities to open spaces
12. Interrelate with other DDA Committees to help facilitate their work plans

PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2005/06-Ms. Smith provided an overview as follows:
1. Participate with the redevelopment of the YMCA site
2. Oversee redevelopment of the First & Washington site.
3. Oversee redevelopment of the S. Ashley (Kline) lot.
4. Participate in planning for the reuse of the 415 W. Washington site
5. Participate in planning for the Allen Creek greenway as envisioned by the Ann Arbor Downtown Plan.
6. Work with the City to discuss planning for the eventual development of the Library Lot
7. Work with those planning new developments to assure that downtown planning goals, including the Downtown Plan goal that parking be included with new developments whenever feasible, are met.
8. Work with developers of new residential projects in the DDA area to ensure that these developments meet DDA’s goals as set out in the DDA Housing Policy if DDA Housing Funds are requested.
9. Work with others to develop public policies regarding downtown development, especially residential development. Pursue the recommendations set forward by the Downtown Residential Taskforce. Participate in the Calthorpe study regarding downtown zoning changes.
10. Review and possibly rewrite the DDA Partnership Guidelines
11. Review the DDA’s historic façade loan program policies. Make recommendations on loan requests
12. Assist the City in its efforts to expand City Hall with police/court facilities.

RESEARCH & OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE 2005/06-Mr. Boren provided an overview as follows:
1. Marketing/communication. Work to build awareness and understanding of the DDA and its activities/achievements. As part of this, explore the redesign of the DDA website and the possible development of a DDA logo and annual report.
2. Determine if the DDA sponsorship of the Downtownannbor.org website should be continued.
3. Review and approve the merchant association grant submittals
4. Review and recommend approvals for grant requests using the DDA Grant Guidelines as an assessment tool
5. Gather and analyze parking data to learn more about usage.
6. Continue to oversee the DDA benchmark data capture and assess on a monthly basis. Publish a report biannually at the beginning and middle of the calendar year.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS WORK PLAN 2005/06- Mr. Beal provided an overview as follows:
1. Manage projects in process, from design through implementation
   1. 1st and Washington structure
      - Oversee repairs/inspections to keep the deck open until such time as any replacement project is completed or the deck must be closed for safety reasons.
      - Recommend closure and demolition as required
      - Work with the Partnership Committee to oversee replacement of the structure with a future parking or mixed use project
   2. Oversee sidewalk repairs using the TIF maintenance reserve fund. Determine repairs based on an annual spring walk-around
   3. 1st and William Parking Structure: Upon authorization by Council, work with DDA consultants to pursue site plan approval, and if successful, select consultants to initiate construction drawings in 2005/06.
2. Maintenance of existing assets (parking structures and lots). Shift primary responsibility/ focus for maintenance efforts to the Operations Committee and Republic Parking.
   - Review the structures on a routine basis, in line with the 2003 Carl Walker Inc. report and initiate maintenance and improvement projects as required
   - Complete assembly of comprehensive files on each facility, including warranty and maintenance records, and contact lists
   - Work to be sure that warranty work is completed in decks as necessary before warranty expiration
   - Assist Operations Committee/Republic as needed with parking facility improvements/repairs

3. Maintenance of existing assets (Pedestrian and misc. improvements). Work to develop a list of needed repairs and a comprehensive maintenance plan. Implement repairs upon DDA approval.
   - Provide 1,5,10 year requirement updates to Operations Committee for inclusion in the 10 Year Plan.
   - Develop policies and procedures to monitor and correct damage to completed projects caused by the work of utility companies, city crews, and contractors.
   - Prioritize areas for repair and implement same.

4. Future Projects (Parking Structures and Lots). Upon the determination that additional parking is warranted, manage the process of design and construction of any additional parking structures (or additions to existing ones) as agreed to by the DDA board
   - Manage site analysis, design development, and construction of a new structure at 1st and William (construction possible in late 2006 or early 2007)
   - Manage site analysis, design development, and construction of additional parking at one or more locations as approved by the DDA board

5. Future Projects (Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements). In alignment with the DDA goal to improve downtown access, identify areas where significant improvements are necessary due to existing conditions and/or to foster DDA goals, and develop priorities for new projects
   - Work to implement the Huron, Division, Fifth designs, both short term and long term. Gain design approvals in 2005/06, with the goal of some construction in 2006/07.
   - Continue with the alley repair program, selecting another five alleys for repairs
   - Review, plan, and oversee other pedestrian improvement projects as approved by the DDA board.
   - Develop policy, and work with the City to implement a plan to have downtown vaults filled in or repaired over time, especially as required to allow for the full implementation of proposed pedestrian improvement projects.

6. Future Projects (Other). Work with the DDA Board and other committees to evaluate possible participation in other types of projects brought to the DDA by the City and/or community groups.
   - Participate in strategic planning discussions to better define the core goals and responsibilities of the DDA, especially with regard to possibly taking on any additional responsibilities previously held as City functions.
   - Projects that have already been brought to our attention that will (or may) require decisions in the coming year include: the City Hall Addition / Parking Garage, improvements to the 415 W. Washington service building for reuse as a nonprofit facility, and enhanced pedestrian crossing signals.

6. ADJOURNMENT

All were thanked for their hard work and good efforts. As there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director