

**PARTNERSHIPS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, May 13, 2020**

Place: Virtual Meeting-Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86280755418> or by phone 1-877-853-5257 (Meeting ID: 862 8075 5418 Password: 982968)

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Committee Present: Micah Bartelme, Bob Guenzel, Tyler Kinley

Committee Absent: None

Others: Matt Carpenter/AAATA, Ali Ramlawi/City Council, Jane Lumm/City Council, Josie Parker/AADL, Brandon Tucker/WCC, Jennifer Hall/A2HC

Other DDA Present: Jessica A.S. Letaw, Darren McKinnon, Keith Orr

Absent: Tom Crawford, Alex Dieck, Marie Klopf, Molly McFarland, Rishi Narayan, Phil Weiss

Staff: Susan Pollay, Amber Miller, Maura Thomson, Jada Hahlbrock, Sara McCallum, Kelley Graves

Public: Members of the public were on the Zoom meeting but did not identify themselves.

Partner Updates:

AAATA: Mr. Carpenter reported that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Stay Home, Stay Safe executive order, service routes were reduced 75%, ridership is down 90%, and additional buses are being added to routes to alleviate social distancing issues. The AAATA laid off 15% of its employees. The D2A2 bus service was suspended. A recovery plan will be presented to the AAATA Board this week.

Library: Ms. Parker reported AADL has been providing online services to patrons since closing its buildings in March. Employees are working from home. No curbside service is offered. A successful activity has been the Library's "Bummer Games." Ms. Parker said AADL doesn't plan to reopen until the State reaches Phase 5 of the Governor's Safe Plan (extensive testing and tracing processes are in place).

City Council: CM Lumm reported that a soft reopening plan for City Hall has been developed, including PPE for employees and signage outlining social distancing requirements. She encouraged the Chamber and the DDA to continue promoting participation in Entry Point's COVID-19 business impact survey. CM Ramlawi said recent economic growth helped the City to be in a good financial position going into the COVID-19 crisis but negative impacts to the budget will be felt going into FY22. Council has heard from some patrons upset about paying permit fees. He expressed appreciation for the thoughtful discussion during the April DDA Operations Committee including the DDA's obligation to paying debt service and ensuring equity in its assistance to the community. Mr. Ramlawi stated his continued interest in seeing affordable housing built at 415 W. Washington; Council asked the AAHC to conduct more public engagement which may slow but not deter progress toward the goal.

Mr. Ramlawi was asked about downtown street closures; he said he supported this. Ms. Thomson outlined staff work developing guidelines and programs for use of the downtown right of way to support downtown businesses and access during the period social distancing requirements are in place. Mr.

Bartelme said he supported this work, saying many businesses are clamoring for this. There was a lengthy discussion regarding street closures. Ms. Thomson reported that another meeting was scheduled for later that morning with the four downtown associations to get more input, and final recommendations will be presented to Interim City Administrator Tom Crawford to take forward to Council for approval. Questions were asked and answered.

Washtenaw Community College: Mr. Tucker reported said the College was able to respond quickly to moving the balance of its courses online. Summer enrollment is down. WCC leadership is discussing options for the fall semester, which will likely include a mostly online format, with the exception of some lab classes. The Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Washtenaw County campuses will remain closed for the near-term. All of the trade group events have been cancelled this summer, which Mr. Tucker said would represent a \$13M hit to the local economy. The millage renewal approved in March was appreciated. WCC anticipates a \$3M shortfall going into FY21 and they are working on a recovery plan.

Planning Commission: Ms. Gibbs-Randall said the Commission has been meeting virtually to review proposed development plans and to discuss ordinance changes for electric vehicles, lighting, floodway and solar panels. The solar panel ordinance would be modified to exclude rooftop mechanicals in the building's total height calculation. Questions were asked and answered regarding floodway and flood fringe and the potential impact on the 415 W. Washington lot.

DDA: Ms. Thomson reported that the Huron Street project is anticipated to be complete by the end of May depending on weather conditions. The First Street project is underway with watermain testing being conducted on the east side and concrete work between Jefferson and First.

Affordable Housing Funding Request: Mr. Hall stated that City Council approved a resolution authorizing staff to develop a pre-entitlement plan for the former Y-Lot which would include affordable housing, market rate housing, and AAATA bus use on the first floor. Ms. Hall put forward a request to the DDA for a \$265,000 grant so she could engage SmithGroup to develop and move forward a site plan for the Y-Lot for City Council approval. A draft resolution was shown. Ms. Letaw asked that the resolution be altered to show the DDA's previous \$745,000 commitment of its Housing Funds to this site. Questions were asked and answered regarding the DDA Housing Fund. Following discussion, Mr. Kinley asked DDA Committee members if there was support to move this resolution forward to the DDA; there was consensus support among the Committee members to take this resolution to the DDA.

Public Comment: Ms. Todoro stated State Street District and South University Area Association's support of the downtown street closure planning efforts. She said that both organizations have Art Fair policies and procedures in place that can be utilized as part of a workable street closure plan to assist downtown businesses during the period the State mandates social distancing requirements.

The next Partnerships Committee meeting (DDA only) is scheduled for June 10 at 9 am.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Pollay, Executive Director