

AFFORDABLE HOUSING/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 9, 2021

Place: Virtual Meeting-Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81101930068?pwd=ck5uamN2amdLK3JqT1ZYTmFBMFJlZz09>

by phone 1-877-853-5257 (Meeting ID: 811 0193 0068 Passcode: 822479)

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Committee Present: Jessica A.S. Letaw

Committee Absent: Ji Hye Kim, Tyler Kinley

Partners: Jennifer Hall/AAHC, Shannon Gibb-Randall/CPC, Ali Ramlawi, Linh Song/City Council, Matt Carpenter, Rich Chang/AAATA

Other Attendees: Teresa Gilotti/Washtenaw County, Amanda Carlisle/Washtenaw County, Aubrey Patino/Avalon Housing

Staff: Maura Thomson, Kelley Graves

Public: None

NOTE: As required by the amended OMA, all attending members stated they were attending remotely and were doing so from Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Virtual Guidelines: Ms. Letaw read the guidelines for holding electronic meetings.

Affordable Housing Review/Update: Ms. Hall provided a review and update on the city-owned properties being vetted as affordable housing sites. Two locations, 350 S. Fifth Avenue and 415 W. Washington are currently going through the pre-entitlement process with the City. She reviewed the public engagement and design process that began two years ago in collaboration with the DDA and the AAATA. The 350 S. Fifth site will be developed in two phases: one affordable housing and one market-rate with an AAATA transit and active space on the first floor. This site is anticipated to go through another work session with the Planning Commission in October, then to Council in November/December. The RFP would be released next year. The 415 W. Washington site has several significant challenges that excluded it from being an affordable housing development. These challenges include brownfield issues, floodplain location, protected chimney swift on-site, and being part of the historic district. The City was originally set to be the petitioner; however, it was decided that the AAHC would be the petitioner through the City's Planning Commission pre-entitlement phase. The RFQ will be released in late first-quarter 2022.

Two other sites, 121 E. Catherine and 353 S. Main have been through public engagement and will be developed as all affordable housing locations with tax credits and financing. The RFQ is slated to be released by the end of this month. The developer will be hired on a fee-for-services basis. The AAHC is working in conjunction with the DDA on vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic patterns.

The 721 N. Main site is in the floodplain. Small projects planned on this site. The 309 S. Ashley site will undergo a parking study first before moving forward with development plans. And, the 404-406 N. Ashley site is slated for development in 2024.

The AAHC is in the process of adding a project manager and a real estate developer to its staff. Ms. Hall, Ms. Gilotti, Ms. Carlisle, and Ms. Patino answered questions.

Partner Updates:

AAATA: Mr. Carpenter said the AAATA returned to full-service two weeks ago. New buses with padded seats and USB ports have been added to the fleet. No decisions yet from RTA on a mileage proposal. CM Song commended the AAATA on its efforts to assist parents researching options for transporting children to/from school after the AAPS system's decision to eliminate before and after school childcare. Questions were asked and answered on bus routes and the bike share program.

DDA: Ms. Thomson said two-way traffic on First Street and Ashley Street has been restored. CM Ramlawi said the two-way streets look fantastic. The two-way protected bikeway on First is ~~near~~ complete, remaining project work and punch list items will be completed over the next few weeks. These items include Concrete at the corner of First and Huron, which will be poured once AT&T completes its underground utility work and repaving of the First and William lot. CM Ramlawi asked about whether the materials being used for the lot are porous. Ms. Gibbs-Randall noted that due to ROW restrictions in this area, it is likely the porous paving materials were not an option.

The delineators on the William Street bikeway are being replaced with curbed buffer zone to make sweeping and snow removal easier for Public Works. Removable curb buffers are being added on William east of Thomson to allow flexibility during Art Fair. Additional enhancements at 5th & William including an island adjustment and more prominent pavement markers for the vehicle stop bar area are being installed. CM Ramlawi asked about the extended closure of the bike lane between First and Ashley near the railroad tracks. Ms. Thomson stated that the closure was due to a ~~six-week~~ City storm sewer lining project and an issue with the railroad requiring a signage change which then delayed the DDA being able to complete its project work in the area. The Division Street two-way protected bikeway installation will be underway in October. Raised bus stops will be installed on both William and Division. All of this work will be completed by the end of this year/early January ahead of the 2/6/2022 bond deadline.

The 5th & William lot is being operated as a metered lot as of September 1, with mostly 4-hour time limits and a few 10-hour spaces. The RFP for a new parking operator has been released. Ms. Thomson said Ms. Hahlbrock, Manager of Parking Services has spent several months working on the RFP. The 5th & Detroit project received a merit award from the Michigan Association of Landscape Architects. Ms. Thomson gave kudos to Capital Projects Manager, Amber Miller, and the design team for their work on this transformative project.

The DDA Executive Director search was extended with an application deadline for today (9/9). The search committee will meet on October 8th to select candidates for first round interviews. Second round interviews with the full DDA board will take place in November with the plan to forward a candidate to hire to Council on 12/6.

Planning Commission: Ms. Gibbs-Randall said the new proposed reduced site plan process will be forwarded to Council soon. She commended Brett Lenart for his extra efforts in meeting with numerous developers to gather information to help inform the process. The term 'master plan' has been changed to 'comprehensive plan.' The proposal for a new hotel at First & Huron will go to Council soon. A single level development with some retail is being proposed in the Depot area.

City Council: CM Ramlawi said the updated lighting/dark skies ordinance and the resolution to establish a Social District were passed by Council. Due to the new railroad development budget increase from the original \$30M to \$171M, the state has declined to provide financial assistance. CM Ramlawi said the City will be looking at renovation options for the existing train station. The search for a new city attorney will be completed soon. The search for an interim city administrator is underway. CM Song has been working as the City liaison on the AAPS/City School Committee since the school system decided to eliminate before and after school childcare in May. The state approved \$2M to assist families with their childcare needs. There is still \$500M in federal rental relief funds that were awarded to local municipalities that needs to be committed for disbursement by the end of the month. Individuals may apply for both the childcare and rental relief funds. A DEI manager position and a community engagement position were approved by Council.

Public Comment: None.

The next Affordable Housing/Economic Development Committee meeting (DDA only) is scheduled for October 13 at 9 am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Maura Thomson, Interim Executive Director