

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD MARCH 16, 2017

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a meeting on Thursday, March 16, 2017. The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members present: Grant Taylor, Chair, Jay Brown, Theme Corakis, Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Rich MacDonald, Jack Siegel, Ethan Sivewright and Dick Skalski.

Members absent: Bruce Betzler, Maria Dacoba, Julie Hite, Millard Loy and Mike Lutke.

Also present: Julie Johnston, Oshtemo Township Planning Director and Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist.

Approval of Agenda

Chairperson Taylor asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Skalski moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Siegel supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Taylor asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes for the meeting of January 19, 2017.

Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Mr. Skalski moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 19, 2017. Mr. Siegel supported the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Reports for January – February, 2017 (unaudited)

Ms. Johnston presented the Treasurer's Report for January - February, 2017, noting two payments of \$50 each were issued to Siegfried Crandall for accounting services. No other expenses were paid during this time period and no new revenues were accrued.

Chairperson Taylor asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's report.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell moved to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. Mr. Skalski supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Streetscape Update

a. Car Wash Property

Ms. Johnston reported that at the January meeting, we learned that the Church was unable to take on additional debt and therefore could not accept the offer of a loan provided by the DDA. They did request the DDA consider a swap of property for the demolition of the car wash and development of a parking lot. At this time, we are waiting on the Church to respond regarding the amount of property they are considering in this transaction.

She said acquiring property from the Church would require the DDA and Township to jump through some purchasing hurdles. While not too cumbersome, there might be a different approach for the DDA to consider that would not require property acquisition. To effectively develop the Stadium/9th Street corner lot, the DDA needs access to the parking lot planned by the Church. Ultimately, it is the parking that is needed, not necessarily the land the parking is on. With this in mind, she suggested it might be an easier approach to enter into an access easement agreement with the Church for a certain number of parking spaces provided in perpetuity to the DDA.

According to the Village Core Plan, approximately eight parking spaces can be developed immediately adjacent to the DDA's property. An agreement could be reached that regardless of possible Church expansion, these spaces would be available for DDA use plus perhaps five from the second tier of parking for a total of 13.

This provides the DDA with a long-term commitment of access while still allowing the Church space to expand at some future date. It would also simplify the transaction between the DDA and the Church while not setting a precedent of the DDA providing funds for no return.

Mr. MacDonald felt they were being caught up in the process; that the "why" for the project from the DDA's perspective is to eliminate the blight of the gas station. He felt updating the Theme and working to create more parking for the Township is a worthy goal, but premature at this time. He suggested the DDA could pay to have the gas station removed if the Church would agree to a lien on the property which could be paid off in the future. They would need to pay off the lien prior to developing the

property. Although the corner lot development is a result of the Streetscape project, the DDA cannot afford to pursue that now, nor is there an order to follow for implementation. It might be wise to wait for the Master Plan to see what is feasible.

Chairperson Grant said the immediate concern is the blight problem; the gas station needs to be removed. Current options proposed have not worked with the Church. He wants to see a compromise worked out and to move forward to get the physical work done.

Ms. Johnston said the estimate provided said it would take about \$8000 to remove the gas station, but budgeting \$10,000 - \$15,000 would provide a cushion.

Mr. MacDonald proposed a promissory note that could act like a lien on the property. The Church would pay back the amount spent on the demolition in the future. He did not think they would object to such an arrangement.

Mr. Corakis noted the DDA approached the Church originally and want to be friendly neighbors. Give and take is needed; at some point the DDA will need parking.

Mr. MacDonald said the Church could pay off a lien early if desired, or make payments. He reiterated the biggest “why” now is to remove the blight. A promissory note acting as a lien would preserve the opportunity to be a good steward.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell commented a promissory note could be a good tool in future development of the corner to trigger paying off the lien through negotiation.

Ms. Johnston asked whether the Board wished her to put a promissory note together with a lien and take it to the Church at this point to get the station torn down, with renegotiation to take place with the Church when the DDA is ready to move forward with the rest of the corner project.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell made a motion to authorize Ms. Johnston to talk with the Church, and to work with the Township Attorney to develop a promissory note including a lien provision as discussed. Mr. Skalski supported the motion. The motion carried 7-1 with one abstention. (Mr. Brown)

b. 9th Street Safe Routes to School Proposal

Ms. Johnston reported Staff and the DDA chair met with a representative from Prein and Newhoff to review the scope of work. They are willing to do more work to lessen the grant administrative burden on the elementary school. She said at this point, they are trying to secure a meeting with the school principal to discuss ideas and

hopefully, get buy-in. Prein and Newhoff will assist the DDA by meeting with the principal to better explain the program and the amount of effort required by school staff.

Chairperson Grant said he found a teacher at Prairie Ridge who is willing to help with distribution and collection of surveys, but needs to talk with the Principal.

Ms. Johnston said the consultants say the area proposed is an excellent spot and that 100% of construction costs might be realistic to expect from the grant. If we can get the school on board, the development of the grant application will begin this summer.

Village Theme Development Plan/Form-Based Codes

Steering Committee Update

Ms. Johnston said Steering Committee members Chairperson Taylor and Mr. MacDonald and members from the Planning Commission met with the Wade Trim consultant team to kick-off the critical review of the Village Theme Development Plan. The following were outcomes from that meeting:

1. Wade Trim will begin an assessment of the changing conditions within the Township which may affect the Village area.
2. An update to the existing transportation conditions, traffic conditions, and circulation opportunities. This will consist of a general update to the existing Chapter 6 of the Plan (Circulation). This report will include a look at traffic counts/volume, crash data, available pedestrian traffic counts as well as the Kalamazoo County Road Commission and local street design standards. This evaluation will examine the circulation recommendations in the Village Theme Development Plan and offer revisions to account for current best practices, while remaining consistent with community goals. Revisions to the existing future circulation plan map, street cross sections by type, and other existing plan elements will be incorporated, as appropriate.
3. Information from the Township related to the adoption of the Plan (Planning Commission minutes), site plans approved under the Form-Based Codes, and any information of projects detailed in the Village Theme Plan that have been completed.

Finally, she said, the consultant team would like to begin Stakeholder Interviews. They need our assistance in determining who within the Village should be interviewed.

Mr. MacDonald said the interviews would lead to a recommendation or outcome.

Ms. Johnston listed those who have been suggested to be interviewed and the group suggested others to be included. She felt they have a good list and that the consultants would begin contacting people soon.

Music in the Park Funding Request

Ms. Johnston noted the DDA has donated at the highest level in the past, \$750, to support the Music in the Park program.

It was moved by Mr. MacDonald and supported by Chairperson Taylor to fund the request from Music in the Park for 2017 in the amount of \$750. The motion carried unanimously.

Any Other Business

a. S & T Proposal

Ms. Johnston said at the request of Mr. MacDonald, an RFP was issued to S & T for lawn maintenance at the Community Center.

Chairperson Taylor noted the proposal for the season from S & T was in the same amount as previous years, \$260 per month from April 1 – November 30, 2017. Since S & T's work is very good, he suggested the proposal be accepted.

Mr. Skalski made a motion to accept the proposal from S & T for the 2017 season. Mr. Corakis supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell reminded the Board the community access drive vision is to not stop with the completion of the drive. There is additional property there that could be sold. The DDA has talked about development of the property; she does not think the Township wants to sit on that land.

Ms. Johnston said discussion to incentivize new development should be part of the Village Theme Redevelopment.

Mr. MacDonald noted the next step in the Village Theme process is an RFP to the community to see if they are willing to develop in line with the Master Plan by providing incentives and support. There may be an opportunity to pick and choose from options.

b. SignArt Banner Swap Proposal

Ms. Johnston reported that to date no proposal has been received, although she expects it will be the same as last year. This item was tabled to the next DDA meeting.

a. **Kalamazoo Banner Works – 2017 Catalog**

Ms. Johnston said KBW believes the banners are still in good shape. They will be reviewed before a proposal is submitted. She distributed copies of their current catalog.

Announcements and Adjournment

Chairperson Taylor noted the next meeting is in May and that by then the banners will be up. He asked that the executive committee be authorized to approve a proposal.

Mr. MacDonald made a motion to authorize the executive committee to approve a proposal from Kalamazoo Banner Works unless the proposal exceeds 5% more than last year's proposal, in which case the proposal would need to be approved by the Board. Mr. Corakis supported the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Taylor announced Ms. Corakis resigned from the DDA Board. Mr. Theme Corakis replaced her and has also agreed to be the Treasurer.

Mr. Siegel asked about any progress on the sign needed for the access road.

Ms. Johnston said she will ask Mr. Ben Clark, Zoning Administrator, to take on that project.

There being no further business, Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:49 p.m.

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: March 20, 2017
Minutes Approved: May 18, 2017