

ANN ARBOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 7, 2012
DDA Office, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Place: DDA Office, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Suite 301, Ann Arbor, 48104
Time: Ms. Gunn called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Russ Collins Robert Guenzel, Leah Gunn, Roger Hewitt, John Hieftje, Joan Lowenstein, John Mouat, Nader Nassif, Keith Orr, John Splitt

Absent: Newcombe Clark, Sandi Smith

Staff Susan Pollay, Executive Director

Present: Joe Morehouse, Deputy Director
Amber Miller, Planning & Research Specialist
Jada Hahlbrock, Management Assistant

Audience: Dave Askins, Ann Arbor Chronicle
Art Low, Republic Parking System
Ray Detter, Downtown Area CAC
Muriel Kelley
Elmer White
Will Hassett
Nancy Shore, getDowntown

2. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Elmer White said that he had a topic he hoped the DDA would put on its retreat agenda: creating a downtown culinary institute. He said that although WCC and Schoolcraft have culinary training programs he did not believe they were preparing students for a career in top restaurants. Moreover, the combination of talented area chefs and free meal programs (e.g. at the Delonis Center, St. Andrews and Food Gatherers) could become ancillary parts of a "Culinary Institute of Ann Arbor", which could be known as CIA.

3. REPORTS FROM CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council. Mr. Detter said that their meeting was devoted almost entirely to a discussion of the merits and problems of the 624 Church Street and 401-413 East Huron Street development proposals. He said that the Design Review Board and public had viewed the 624 Church development kindly, and supported the DDA's willingness to provide a "contribution in lieu" parking arrangement. The major criticism of the project was its design looked too similar to other recent projects. Mr. Detter said that the public response to the Huron Street project wasn't positive, saying that it needed to further redesign, because the building's presence on Huron and Division encroach on the street view corridor, and the massing needs to be

reduced and redistributed. He said that the developers were also encouraged to move their elevator, lobby and height to the prominent southwest corner of the building.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM DDA MEMBERS

None.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Mouat moved and Mr. Guenzel seconded approval of the October 3, 2012 monthly meeting minutes.

A vote on the motion showed:

AYES: Collins, Guenzel, Gunn, Hewitt, Hieftje, Lowenstein, Mouat, Nassif, Orr, Split

NAYS: none

ABSTAIN: none

Absent: Clark, Smith

The motion carried.

6. A. PARTNERSHIPS/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Connecting William Street. Ms. Lowenstein said that 20 public input sessions were held, August through early October, including traditional public meetings, webinars and small group meetings. In all, over 170 people participated. Ms. Lowenstein said that at each meeting, some history and context was provided, draft scenarios were presented and feedback received on various potential components. Ms. Lowenstein said that in October the LOC met to begin the process of synthesizing the great volume of feedback into a draft strategy plan with specific recommendations for each site. The LOC will meet again on November 12th to continue this work.

The next Partnerships/Economic Development Committee meeting will take place November 14th at 9am.

6. B. OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Financial Statements. Mr. Hewitt said that after the first quarter of the fiscal year, revenues and expenditures are very close to what was budgeted. Mr. Hewitt reviewed the DDA's fund balances.

Parking Report. Mr. Hewitt reported that September revenue was up 3% and patron numbers were down 11% versus last year at this time. The decrease in patron numbers was attributed to fewer home football games and one fewer business day.

Bicycles on sidewalks. Mr. Mouat said that he met with DDA staff to consider the issue, and they looked at how other communities deal with this question, including educating the public, and enforcement. Mr. Mouat said that at this point there is difficulty defining the problem, as the police have not had many complaints about this issue. The discussion will continue.

Bike Cage. Mr. Mouat said that design work is continuing, and details will be available at the November Operations Committee meeting.

The next Operations Committee meeting will be November 28th at 11:00am.

7. OTHER DDA BUSINESS

The DDA has scheduled a retreat for November 16th, 10:30am-3:30pm, and it will be held at the Zingerman's on Fourth Avenue space in Kerrytown.

Mr. Hewitt reported that the Connector Study group will be hosting public meetings and open houses at various locations in the hopes of gathering input from the community. People will be asked questions such as "Where do you go? and Where would you like to see more transit?" Mr. Hewitt said that he will keep the board up to date as Phase II of the study progresses.

8. OTHER AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Nancy Shore of the getDowntown program invited the DDA to attend AATA's ground breaking event at the Blake Transit Center, on November 19th at 11:00am.

Mr. Detter said that at the CAC meeting they expressed dismay that the City plans to demolish eight houses along N. Main Street. The CAC feels it would be more appropriate to save the four homes that are not in the flood plain and rehabilitate them to serve as affordable housing. The CAC is hoping that the DDA would be willing to help monetarily to save the homes.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Mr. Hewitt moved and Mr. Guenzel seconded a motion to adjourn. Ms. Gunn declared the meeting adjourned at 12:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director