

**Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council Meeting Minutes – May 31, 2016**  
**City Council Workroom / City Hall, 301 E. Huron St. 7:00 pm**

Members Present: Ray Detter, Nate Stevens

Visitors Present: Mary Hathaway, Peter Nagourney, Alan Haber, John Nystuen, Steve Kaplan, Thilini Aberatne, Mary Levengood, Juliet Mandell, Nieta Foster, Kevin Wang, Grant Benhoff, Andrew M., Charlie Burnett, Neal Silver, Lucas Holcombe, Nathan Dill

Members Absent: Jim Kern, Sue Kern, Kathleen Nolan, Marsha Chamberlin, John Chamberlin, Joan French, Don Duquette, Hugh Sonk

Last night's meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council was attended by seven CAC members and downtown neighbors--along with 12 students from Huron and Skyline High School, one government student from Eastern Michigan, and one from U of M. They know a lot is going on downtown.

Everyone had a chance to participate in a lively discussion of many of our current downtown development issues. I think we were all impressed with the real interest the students demonstrated. We talked about the background and recent opening of the Foundry Apartments at 413 East Huron. We talked about the recent unanimous approval by the Planning Commission of the housing proposal at 615 South Main and the 5-3 vote to move forward on 221 Felch Street to City Council—both projects winning support because they were willing to provide concessions of pedestrian pathways that might connect to a future Allen Creek Greenway. We all wondered if the proposed housing development behind S. University between E. U. and Church would be as successful when it goes before the Planning Commission on June 7.

We also discussed the DDA's efforts to develop consensus on plans for future pedestrian connections on South University. With Amber Miller, the CAC has been involved, along with other near downtown neighbors and merchants, in three meetings on that issue. We support the DDA's plans and we believe that, in spite of some local merchant resistance, trees, greenspace, and some public benches (even portable ones) should remain a part of plans that we hope will make South U. a destination as well as a passageway for visitors, strollers and nearby residents.

A discussion of why or why not we should have public benches, trees and greenspace on S. U. led us to a discussion of the homeless in Liberty Plaza and pan-handling on State Street, and of course implications for the future of public space on the Library Block. That subject along with parking and residential issues filled most of the time remaining in our meeting. The CORE group is now talking with everyone they can to find out what will be possible to build on the Library Block. Last Wednesday I met in my back yard with Architect John Myefski and Core representatives Harrington and Bonner. Meetings are taking place with City officials. Another public meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, June 2, 6-8:00 pm. in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom of the Library. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

The CAC is looking forward to participating, along with other downtown neighbors, in DDA discussions on the future design of street and pedestrian improvements near North Fifth Avenue and Detroit Street on Monday, June 13.

But we are more immediately looking forward—and we hope you are too-- to our Annual Downtown Potluck Party on June 8. We hope you will join us, starting at 6:30 pm.