

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

Members Present: Ray Detter

Visitors Present: Christine Crockett, Jeff Crockett, Gwen Nystuen, Eppie Potts, Peter Honeyman

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

Downtown residents met with a few residential representatives from the near Downtown residential Neighborhoods Tuesday night--the Old Fourth Ward, Burns Park, and the Old West Side. It was the first chance we had to talk since 300 of us (including some of you), gathered in the backyards of 120 and 126 North Division on June 8th for our Annual Downtown Party for all those involved with future plans for the Ann Arbor's Downtown area.

The first item of our discussion was to express our pleasure with what we had read and heard about Howard Lazarus, our new city administrator. We are very impressed by his management credentials and his record of community commitment. Members of Downtown and Near Downtown residential groups are looking forward to working with Administrator Lazarus to preserve and improve the quality of downtown neighborhoods. Representative of the Old Fourth Ward, the Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council, and all the Near Downtown Residential Neighborhood groups are looking forward to meeting with him as soon as we can be fit into his busy schedule.

On other issues: As you know, the Downtown Area CAC is very supportive of the DDA's actions and long range vision for the future of the Downtown. We are pleased to be a part of the planning for pedestrian design and traffic changes in both South University and the Fifth/Detroit Kerrytown area. Last night, we reviewed the Detroit Street Project Public Feedback Summaries. We look forward to further September discussions of changes to the area.

The CAC supports emerging plans for the Connector and Ann Arbor's active participation in the development of the Rapid Transit Plans for southeast Michigan--now led by former AATA head Michael Ford. Last night we also strongly supported the DDA's "Resolution to Segregate Funds to Enable the Future Construction of Additions to the Public Parking system." While continuing its long-standing support for alternative transportation choices to create capacity and extend the impact of future parking system expansions, the DDA resolution recognizes the need to set aside funds for the construction of additional parking to support downtown's growth and vitality.

Those present at last night's CAC meeting also recognized the need for the DDA to carefully monitor any negative impacts of parking or lack of downtown parking upon near downtown residential neighborhoods and the city's residential parking permit system.

Once our meeting turned to discussion of parking, we once again agreed on the necessity to look at planning for the downtown and near downtown areas emphasizing the importance of connective approaches and public/private development. How does our planning for the future of what is built on Library Lane relate to the future of the First Martin properties, the future of nearby historic structures, the continued success of the District Library, the Blake Transit Center as well as Greyhound buses, the Federal Building, possible alternatives for the former YMCA site, and plans for the Allen Creek Greenway and the entire downtown and nearby residential neighborhoods? Connectivity must be a part of all our public and private planning decisions.