

**ADA TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 6, 2011 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairperson Bob Kullgren.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Bowersox, George Haga, Jim Ippel, Tom Korth, Bob Kullgren, Devin Norman, Walt VanderWulp, Ted Wright

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ratzsch

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director

PUBLIC PRESENT: Steve Groenenboom, P.E., Moore & Bruggink, Township engineering consultant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 1, 2011 MEETING

It was moved by Bowersox, seconded by Korth, to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2011 meeting as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

STATUS OF PROJECTS:

Sewer Force Main/Ada Drive Repaving Project:

Groenenboom stated there is about 2,000 linear feet of force main sewer remaining to be installed. He stated that work on the Bronson St. project will start this week, beginning with tree removal.

Korth asked how many trees are being removed, and Groenenboom responded about 5. Korth stated he had thought that the tree at the corner of Bronson and Teeple was the only one being removed. Groenenboom noted we are still waiting for the signed permit and license agreement from the railroad for the added parking spaces and the water main in the railroad right-of-way. Groenenboom also noted that the scheduled completion date for the project is November 15.

(Note: Board member Devin Norman arrived at 8:40 a.m.)

VanderWulp commented that it appears that about 4 parking spaces were lost in the re-striping, and that this should be looked at. Haga stated we would contact the Road Commission about this.

Haga mentioned that Tom Korth had suggested that the Township consider adding milling and re-paving of Teeple St. to the scope of the Bronson St. project, as it is also in poor condition. Haga noted that this street is about 350 feet long, and the cost of repaving would be about \$40/linear foot, for a total cost of about \$14,000, and a Township share of \$7,700.

Discussion ensued regarding whether it made sense to complete Teeple as part of the Bronson St. project, or consider it in the future as a separate project.

Following discussion, it was moved by Korth, seconded by Bowersox, to recommend that all avenues of funding be pursued to complete the re-paving of Teeple Ave. as part of the Bronson St. project.

Motion passed unanimously.

Village Streetscape Furnishings:

Ferro reported no progress has been made since last month. A person to lead a donation recruitment effort is still needed. Printed materials for a fund-raising effort are also still needed. Ferro stated that several locations for streetscape furnishings installation have been identified.

Proposal for Memorial Bike Rack at Bronson St./Ada Drive:

Ferro stated that Board member Ippel had proposed installing a custom-designed bike rack at the corner of Ada Drive and Bronson St. as a donation-funded memorial project. The bike rack design was produced by Design Plus, a Grand Rapids architectural firm. Several of them have been installed at the GVSU campuses in Allendale and Downtown Grand Rapids.

Ippel stated that his original idea of completing this installation as a memorial project was no longer feasible.

Ferro stated that the cost of the bike rack is about \$3,000. Ferro distributed a revised sidewalk/landscape layout for the Bronson St/Ada Drive intersection adjacent to the Ada Bike Shop, to incorporate the custom bike rack. Also handed out was a cost estimate sheet prepared by Moore & Bruggink identifying cost savings of \$1,871 resulting from the revisions, much of which comes from reduction in length of raised concrete curb. This also excludes the cost of the bike rack, and benches.

Ippel stated he would be willing to pay the difference between the cost of the custom bike rack and our net savings from the layout changes, which is approximately \$1,100.

The Board discussed whether use of a custom-designed bike rack should be adopted as the standard for the Village. Ferro stated that the high cost of this fixture would make it expensive to use throughout the Village, and that he viewed it a more of a one-of-a-kind installation. He stated it is in effect both a functional bike rack and an art piece.

Following discussion, it was moved by Korth, seconded by VanderWulp, to approve use of the custom-designed bike rack at the Bronson St./Ada Drive intersection, with the understanding that the difference between the Township's cost-savings from the revised layout plan and the cost of the bike rack will be donated by Jim Ippel.

Motion passed by 7-1 vote, with Norman voting no.

COMMERCIAL SPACE INVENTORY:

Ferro presented summary data from the commercial/industrial space inventory that has been completed by the Planning Department. Ferro noted that the summary for the Village area includes a comparison of the data collected in 2006 by the Charrette consultant, to the 2011 data collected in-house. Ferro stated that there was a lot of effort involved in this project, in reviewing and correcting the 2006 data, and in obtaining individual tenant space data for buildings with multiple occupants.

Ferro noted pointed out that the Village data shows that there has been growth of about 20,000 square feet of floor space in the Village, with most of that being in the Norman Dental Office building and the new Big Steps/Little Feet day care center. Ferro also noted that the amount of vacant space has decreased by about 6,000 square feet, with most of that attributable to Amway converting the former company store building from storage space to office space. Ferro also noted the decrease in restaurant square footage, and the slight decrease in total retail space.

With respect to the inventory for the entire DDA, Ferro noted we have no comparison data for prior years. He pointed out that the Amway Distribution Center and the office space at that location represent a large

percentage of the total floor space in the DDA.

The Board discussed various ways for this data to be used. The consensus of the Board was that the DDA would be providing a value-added service by making information on available properties and space available online. Possible sources of expertise in implementing an online system were discussed. Haga suggested the Right Place program, of which we are members, as a possible resource. Korth suggested talking to the commercial realtors association. Norman stated that a data updating system that relies on property owners submitting data to the DDA is needed. Wright suggested that the available space data be tied to a mapping system so that available space can be highlighted on a map.

DDA FINANCIAL REPORT: A financial report was not available to be presented.

FARMERS' MARKET UPDATE:

Kullgren reported that he will soon be surveying vendors for feedback on this year's market, including their views on possible changes in market hours. He stated that customer counts have indicated that the 5-6 p.m. hour is very slow for business, and that the busiest time period is from noon to 2:00 p.m. Kullgren stated he would have a formal report on the market for the Board at the November meeting.

POTENTIAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION AT 7257 BRONSON ST.:

Ferro presented a proposal for possible acquisition of the single family residential property at 7257 Bronson St. as a possible capital improvement project. Ferro stated that the objective would be to acquire the property, demolish the existing home, and re-sell the property for development of a new single family home on the property. Ferro stated he was seeking input from the DDA Board as to whether they felt this was a project that merited consideration, for inclusion in the Capital Improvements Plan. He stated that the property has had tenant problems in the past, and is in poor condition.

Wright stated he believed that this would be viewed as heavy-handed by the public. He suggested we encourage the owner to fix up the property first. Norman and Kullgren expressed agreement with this comment. Ippel stated he did not believe the owner will be willing to invest in the property. He suggested that the Johnson property next door should also be considered for acquisition.

The consensus of the Board was that the project not be pursued.

MEMBER COMMENT:

Haga informed the Board that MDOT will be milling and re-surfacing the temporary M-21 bridge in October, to correct the rough pavement conditions.

Haga also noted that terms for Board members Norman and Ratzsch expire in early 2012, and that he would be proposing their re-appointment this fall.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Korth, seconded by Norman, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Korth, Secretary