

**ADA TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 7, 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, Betsy Ratzsch, Walt VanderWulp, Ted Wright

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Devin Norman

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 3, 2011 MEETING

It was moved by Korth, seconded by Bowersox, to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2011 meeting as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH AMWAY CORP. FOR USE OF PARKING AREA AT 7215 HEADLEY ST. FOR 2012 FARMERS' MARKET SEASON.

Note: VanderWulp arrived at 8:37 a.m.

The Board reviewed a proposed revised license agreement with Amway for use of a portion of the parking lot at 7215 Headley St. for vendor parking during the 2012 Farmers' Market season. Kullgren highlighted changes from the prior agreement. Kullgren noted that the new agreement has provisions permitting Amway to terminate the license with 30 days notice or immediately if the licensee violates any of the agreement provisions. Ferro noted that the new agreement revises language pertaining to access to the lot. He pointed out that Par. 1 now specifically references accessing the parking area from the Fulton St. access point. Ferro also stated that language pertaining to access to the lot from Fulton St. was removed from Par. 4.

Ferro was asked what area is described by the legal description in Exhibit A. Ferro stated he believed it was the entire parcel, and he pointed out that there has been no change in the legal description from the prior agreement. Ferro was asked to verify the land area that is encompassed within the legal description contained in Exhibit A.

No action was taken on the proposed agreement.

STATUS OF PROJECTS:

Bronson St. Project:

Haga and Ferro updated the Board on the status of the Bronson St. project. It was noted that street and parking area paving is being completed today. Ferro stated that the "Bike Petal" bike rack will not be completed until late January, due to a several week plant shutdown for equipment upgrades at the manufacturer. He stated we also do not have a schedule yet for delivery of the street lights.

VanderWulp stated he is concerned with the decision that was made to reduce the number of parking spaces on Bronson St., without the DDA Board's involvement in the decision. He asked for more information on why this decision was made.

Haga stated that the decision was made in the field as grading for the parking spaces was being done, based on location of utility poles and the desire to avoid tree removal that was not initially identified on the plans. Ferro stated the change resulted in the loss of 5 or 6 spaces.

Ippel also expressed concern with this change, and emphasized how important the matter of parking supply is viewed by him, his tenants and potential tenants. He stated he also believes residents on Bronson may not appreciate losing the parking spaces.

Wright stated he is also concerned with the lack of communication on this matter. He stated the minutes should reflect that is the first time that this change has been brought to the attention of the Board.

The timing of the decision was discussed, and Ferro stated he was not sure whether the change had been made before or after the October DDA Board meeting.

Korth commented that while he is concerned with the potential for having parking dominating the Village, he agrees that the DDA Board should have been consulted on the decision.

Kullgren stated he agrees that we have a parking challenge in the core of the Village, and that the Board should have been involved in the decision to reduce the number of spaces in the plan.

Ippel stated he hopes we learn from this how project changes of this magnitude should be handled in the future. He asked whether anything could be done to add back the lost spaces.

Ferro stated we could look at whether adjustment of parking stall dimensions would permit us to gain back some of the lost spaces.

Ippel stated that on the positive side, the project looks fabulous. He stated that he did have a concern that the asphalt on his driveway off Bronson St. was damaged by trucks using the driveway to turn around. Haga stated he would have the driveway examined.

Ratzsch encouraged looking at creative approaches to providing parking in out-of-the-way areas, as is done in many small villages in England.

Korth stated we need to be willing to relax design standards for parking to utilize space more efficiently.

Ratzsch also suggested that we need better signage to identify public parking.

Ippel brought up the loss of striped parking spaces on Ada Drive, and that there still are 2 fewer spaces than we had before. He stated his understanding was that Township staff were going to follow up on this with the Road Commission.

Ferro stated that we did provide documentation to the Road Commission showing that there were 4 spaces lost as a result of the paving project. The Road Commission had responded they would get this corrected, but only re-striped two of the spaces.

It was suggested that having all of the lost spaces restored be pursued with the Road Commission.

Kullgren suggested that we may wish to undertake a parking study in the Village in the future.

Streetscape Furnishings Plan:

Ferro presented layout plans for streetscape furnishing installations at two possible locations – in the lawn area along Bronson St. in front of the Ada Gallery, and in the lawn area along Ada Drive on the AT&T switching station property at the corner of Ada Drive and Thornapple River Dr. Ferro stated that the

installation on the AT&T property would require an easement or license agreement with AT&T, while the installation on Bronson St. is in the public right-of-way.

The Board discussed the merits of these locations versus other alternatives in the Village. Haga stated he was concerned that the plans were too concentrated in one area, and that we should consider locations closer to the Ada Dr./M-21 intersection.

Korth stated he believed that other locations could be found in the Village that would also work.

Ferro pointed out that these installations were originally intended to be demonstrations, paid for with donations, and that he felt it made sense to place initial highest priority on the areas of the Village with the greatest pedestrian traffic, which is the block between Bronson St. and Thornapple River Dr.

Kullgren suggested that action on the plans be postponed and that the plans be given further consideration. He stated he would meet with Ferro to discuss the plans.

Ada Drive Crosswalks:

Ferro stated that the Road Commission has postponed milling and resurfacing of the Ada Drive//Thornapple River Dr. intersection until next year. As a result, the installation of stamped, painted crosswalks is being postponed as well.

Korth asked whether we were working on installing a crosswalk on Ada Drive at the Headley St. intersection, as he had suggested last month.

Haga stated we would do this.

DDA Commercial Space Inventory:

Ferro distributed copies of the letter sent to commercial/industrial property owners in the DDA soliciting their views on the value of a DDA online inventory of available space for lease or sale in the DDA. He also referenced the mailing list used for this mailing, and confirmed that it included all of the property owners who have space that is leased in the DDA. Ferro stated he has received only one response so far, which was positive, from Walt VanderWulp's sister.

No action was taken by the Board, pending receipt of additional feedback from property owners.

Farmers' Market Update:

Kullgren stated he would have a financial report regarding the Farmers' Market next month. He stated that he is still working with the Township on reconciling credit card transaction records. Kullgren also reported that there will be a "mini-market," with 17 vendors participating, held in the basement of The Community church on the evening of the Tinsel, Treats and Trolleys event.

DISCUSSION OF ABA MARKETING BROCHURE AND POSSIBLE DDA PARTICIPATION

The Board reviewed the business marketing brochure that had been produced within the last two years by the ABA. The Board discussed whether it would be appropriate for the DDA to participate in any future re-publication of the brochure, to expand it to include businesses within the entire DDA boundary.

In discussion, Betsy Ratzsch pointed out that the brochure had been produced by the Retailers' Group, and that it had been paid for by the business that are listed in the directory and map on the brochure. It was also pointed out that the sales of listings had been carried out by Todd Anderson from Advance Newspapers, who had printed the brochure.

No action was taken on possible participation in the brochure.

DDA FINANCIAL REPORT:

Kullgren suggested the financial report be postponed until next month, pending completion of a financial summary of the 2011 Farmers' Market.

MEMBER/STAFF COMMENT:

Kullgren reported he had been contacted by Kristen Wildes from the Ada Historical Society about possible DDA participation in a project to place identification signage at historic building sites in the Village. In discussion, Board members expressed interest in such a project, and commented that a walking tour of historic buildings in the Village would have potential for attracting people to the Village.

It was suggested that additional details regarding the project be developed.

Ippel requested that the Township follow up on having the Road Commission replace all of the parking spaces that were striped on Ada Drive prior to the repaving project.

Ferro stated he wished to schedule discussion at the December Board meeting regarding budget priorities for the next fiscal year. He stated that projects such as the historic building information signage should be included in this discussion. Ferro added he would distribute information to Board members on the priority setting exercise that the Board undertook a year ago, to aid in this discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Ratzsch, seconded by Wright, to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 a.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Korth, Secretary