

**ADA TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2011 SPECIAL MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.m. by Chairperson Bob Kullgren.

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director, Steve Groenenboom, P.E., Moore & Bruggink.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Jeff Hugger, Bernie Veldkamp

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consent.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF BRONSON ST. PARKING LAYOUT CHANGES

Kullgren thanked Board members for their attendance at the special meeting. He stated he believed that the Board's discussion should focus on two areas: 1) the decision process that was used to make the change in parking layout on the Bronson St. project, and 2) the substance of the decision that was made.

Kullgren stated he has met on several occasions w George, Jim and Steve regarding what transpired, and believes he has a good understanding of this. He stated it appears the decision made to delete 7 parking spaces from the plan was made in good faith, based on a concern over the aesthetic impacts of losing additional trees that were not originally included in the inventory of trees to be removed.

Wright asked Groenenboom why the plans did not correctly reflect the existing trees that would need to be removed for the project. Groenenboom stated he could not explain why this occurred.

Steve Groenenboom was asked whether cost savings occurred as a result of removing the parking spaces, and what the estimated cost of adding these spaces back would be.

Steve stated he estimates that deletion of the spaces will result in cost savings of \$9,546, and that adding back 5 parking spaces next spring would cost about \$17,000.

Kullgren asked for comments from Board members regarding the decision to change the plan, and what action should be taken at this time.

Korth stated he was dissatisfied with many aspects of the management of the project, and cited as an example the placement of topsoil between the sidewalk and road at the far end of Bronson St. instead of gravel as was shown on the construction plans. With regard to the parking changes, he believes that what was done is beautiful, and we should leave it alone for now.

Wright stated he is dissatisfied with the quality of the information provided on the original plans by the engineers, and stated the engineer should bear some responsibility for the added costs to install the parking as shown on the original plans.. He stated he would be satisfied with adding 5 spaces.

Ippel stated he believes the decision made reflects a lack of concern for parking needs, and that all of the 7 deleted spaces should be installed as originally planned.

VanderWulp stated he believes additional parking supply is crucial to the future of the Village, since the Road Commission would like to remove on-street parking from Ada Drive, and he believes the trees need to be sacrificed and the parking spaces as shown on the original plans should be installed.

Bowersox stated since the work cannot be completed until next year, perhaps we should revisit this issue in the spring.

Kullgren stated he believes the decision to change the plans should not have been made without the matter being brought back to the DDA Board, in view of all of the discussions that took place at the Board level in the past regarding the importance of added parking. He further believes that the end product should have 30 parking spaces.

Norman stated the road looks good, but the project should have been built as approved by this Board. He stated he feels that Moore & Bruggink has some responsibility for getting this corrected, because of the errors in the survey information.

Norman also stated that although he was not at the last Board meeting, he was disappointed, based on comments of other Board members, that the minutes from the last meeting didn't reflect what transpired at the meeting.

Kullgren requested that Ferro review the draft minutes to see if there are any revisions in order.

Ratzsch stated that although the decision to change the plans was made in good faith, she fears that there is potential for bad outcomes in the future if decisions are made the same way that this one was. She stated she would rather have 5 spaces added back than to have none.

Haga stated that he takes responsibility for the decision that was made, and he believes that based on the new information that was brought forth at the time regarding additional tree loss needed to install the parking as originally planned, the decision made was a proper one.

Kullgren invited public comment on the issue of the change in the plans.

Bernie Veldkamp stated that the visual character of the Village sets it apart from other commercial areas, and is very important to the ability of our business community to compete and attract people. He believes the Board needs to keep this larger view in mind.

Jeff Hugger stated that on nights when organized bike rides are held based out of the Village, the parking in the Village is full. He stated that we rely on our professional engineers and planners to carry out plans as approved, and that the parking as approved should be installed.

Korth stated that in order to have control over our own streets and parking, we should investigate incorporating the Village, and that would remove any threat of the Road Commission taking parking off Ada Drive.

Following discussion, it was moved by Ippel, seconded by Bowersox, that a written communication from the DDA Board to the Township Board be prepared describing the events that transpired regarding the change in the parking layout, and recommending that the 7 spaces that were removed from the plan be installed in the spring.

In discussion of the motion, Wright suggested that the Board's action should also address a recommendation on how to fund the cost of adding back the 7 spaces.

Following discussion of the motion, it was withdrawn by Ippel, and Bowersox withdrew his second.

(Note: Board member Korth left the meeting at approximately 9:20 p.m.)

Jeff Hugger asked why the removed parking could not be added back within the original project budget.

Groenenboom was asked to provide information regarding the overall status of the project budget. Groenenboom stated that including the contingency funds in the project budget, there is \$11,596 remaining in the project budget. It was noted that if these funds are used toward the \$17,000 estimated

cost of restoring 5 of the 7 spaces, there is only a shortfall of \$5,404.

Groenenboom was asked what the cost of restoring all 7 of the deleted spaces would be. He responded that it would be \$25,000 to \$30,000, given the work involved to restore 2 spaces west of the utility pole.

Norman asked whether the Township was being charged for the engineer's survey work that did not correctly identify existing trees. Groenenboom responded there were no current fees being billed for a survey. He stated the base survey that was used was prepared several years ago, and a new survey was not prepared. He stated that there was field checking of driveway dimensions on the opposite side of the street, but it was assumed there were no changes since the original survey on the railroad side.

Wright stated that old survey information should not have been used for preparing the construction plans.

Norman asked whether a change order had been prepared and approved prior the change in the plan being made. Haga confirmed there was not a change order processed. Norman stated he did not believe this was a proper way to manage the project.

Following discussion, it was moved by Norman, seconded by VanderWulp, that in view of the fact that a substantial change was made to the construction plans for the Bronson St. project without written authorization, the DDA Board recommends that the project be completed to the condition as shown on the original plans that were approved by the DDA Board.

Haga offered an amendment to the motion that the phrase "written authorization" be replace with "a formal change order." The proposed amendment was seconded by VanderWulp.

On a vote for the amendment, the amendment passed by a vote of 8-0.

Kullgren stated that if the motin is adopted, he would prepare a proposed DDA Board resolution and a written communication from the DDA Board to the Township Board, and that he would present these proposals to the DDA Board at its December 5 meeting for Board review and approval.

On a vote for the motion as amended, the motion passed by a vote of 8-0.

Kullgren stated that unless they are not listening, those who were involved in making the decision to change the plans should take from this meeting the fact that the DDA Board takes its role seriously in reviewing and recommending proposed construction projects, and that decisions of this magnitude should be made in consultation with the DDA Board, and not by individuals based on individual judgement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no additional public comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Korth, Secretary