

**ADA TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 14, 2015 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M. by Chairman Bob Kullgren at the Ada Township office, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Andro (8:08), Terry Bowersox, George Haga, Bryan Harrison, Bob Kullgren (via video conferencing), Walt VanderWulp, Ted Wright

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Ippel, Devin Norman

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director, Brent Bajdek, Planner

PUBLIC PRESENT: Steve Dertz, Amway Corp., Steve Groenenboom, Moore & Bruggink, Norm Rhoades, Township Treasurer

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Bowersox, seconded by Harrison, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16 MEETING.

It was moved by Bowersox, seconded by VanderWulp, to approve the minutes of the November 16 meeting as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

DDA FINANCIAL REPORT, 11/30/15

Ferro presented the financial report for the DDA and Farmers Market for the period ending 11/30/15.

VanderWulp commented he was concerned that refunding a vendor's registration fees for the Artisan Market was not a good precedent. Harrison stated he did not see this as an issue.

Ferro stated that the refund was given to a vendor who ended up not participating in any of the Artisan Market events.

(Note: Andro arrived at the meeting at this time.)

Ferro noted that normally we have a year-end report from the Farmers' Market Manager at this meeting. He stated the report was not quite ready, and we would have it for the January meeting.

STATUS OF HEADLEY ST. PROJECT

Ferro reported the new street and new traffic signal at the Headley St./Fulton St. intersection is scheduled to be fully operational and open on Friday, December 18. He stated the street lighting was scheduled to also be installed this week.

Ferro reported that the Road Commission is scheduled to finalize the abandonment of the old street right-of-way on Tuesday morning, December 15, and that the abandonment resolution adopted by the Board would be recorded with the Register of Deeds.

Ferro stated we are still discussing with legal counsel whether there are any actions the Township needs

to take to establish ownership of the former right-of-way by the adjacent property owners to the south. He stated we want to ensure that property owners will be able to obtain title insurance for the land in the former right-of-way.

Haga noted the intent is to complete the transfer of land to the adjacent property owners by the end of December.

Kullgren asked if the parking spaces on Headley St. were striped, and if there were accessible spaces. Ferro stated he believed there were on-street barrier-free spaces striped.

UPDATE ON ENVISION ADA IMPLEMENTATION

Parking Study:

Ferro reported that we received a second draft of the parking study final report last week, and that he and Dertz are still reviewing it to ensure the factual information in the report is correct. He stated he anticipated having the report presented to the DDA Board next month, as well as a possible public review meeting for the Village business community.

Kullgren stated he would like the final draft distributed to the DDA Board as soon as possible, so that Board members have sufficient time to review it prior to the January meeting. He stated the study will give us a lot of tools for management of parking in the Village, as well as tools to evaluate the impact of changes in density and land use mix on parking demand.

Headley St. Extension and River St. Plans:

Ferro stated the Headley St. extension project would be completed in the spring, as another Amway contract. He stated that there is now discussion of postponing the first phase of the River St. project until 2017, and moving the Ada Drive reconstruction project forward to 2016. He stated this is due to the relationship between the River St. and the location of a possible parking structure.

Ferro stated that the next agenda item is consideration of an engineering proposal for completing design of the Ada Drive project over the coming winter.

Amenities Planning Study – Plan Alternatives and Public Open House:

Ferro presented the alternative amenities plans for the two major future public open space areas in the Village. He stated the alternatives were developed based on input from a Stakeholder Input group, and that a public open house event for public review and comment is scheduled for this Wednesday, December 16. He stated that after development of a final preferred plan, cost estimates would be prepared that would be used in developing financing plans for a proposed bond issue in 2016. Ferro invited DDA Board members to attend the open house event.

Kullgren asked if the consultant's conclusions would be completed in time for the January DDA Board meeting. Ferro stated that following the open house, the consultant will develop a consensus plan for presentation to the DDA Board and Township Board in January.

Ted Wright asked how the open house event is being promoted.

Ferro stated it is on the events calendar on the Township web site, and has been announced on the Ada Village Facebook page. He stated an announcement has also been emailed to the Township's email distribution list.

Kullgren suggested distributing some event flyers to Village businesses, and asking the ABA to send it to their membership.

Wright stated that only 2 people have committed to attending on the Ada Village Facebook page.

Ferro stated the ABA has been asked to forward the event announcement to their membership list. He noted it has also been sent to the original Envision Ada Steering Committee and to Planning Commission members.

Kullgren asked whether there is master email list of people who participated in Envision Ada events in 2013. Ferro stated he didn't think such a list had ever been compiled. Ferro stated he has all of the sign-in sheets and we can look into compiling an email list.

VanderWulp suggested a good location for the former school house would be at the intersection of the new River St. and Thornapple River Dr. Kullgren suggested that be communicated to the consultants.

Andro stated she believes there is a need for a better communications plan moving forward, as she doesn't believe communications are working well now.

Wright asked if we had established a minimum attendance figure in mind to consider the open house event sufficient to develop a consensus. Ferro stated we will address that after the event.

Ferro stated that the Ada Village Facebook announcement, has been reached by over 400 people, as of late last week. Wright asked how many people have committed to attending. Ferro stated he didn't believe that Facebook RSVP's was a good measure of attendance at the open house, since we didn't request RSVP's.

Harrison volunteered to have email addresses from the Envision Ada event sign-in sheets compiled. Ferro stated he would get the sign-in lists to Harrison.

Kullgren suggested that the open house announcement be shared by the Parks Department with their email distribution list. Haga stated that has been done.

VanderWulp stated that the timing of the event may be bad considering the holiday season.

Ferro stated the Facebook event announcement has now reached 821 people.

Kullgren stated we need to see what the attendance is, and see if it is sufficient to arrive at any meaningful conclusions. If it is not, we will need to step back and re-do it if need be.

Status of New Development Proposals:

Ferro summarized development proposals pending before the Planning Commission, including a new 2-story office building for the Ortez State Farm agency, a new 50-unit residential development on the property behind the former Ada school house, a condominium lot layout for the area west of the Headley St./M-21 intersection, and the 2-story building proposed by Ken Dixon at the Ada Drive/Headley St. intersection.

In discussion of the proposed development behind the former school house, VanderWulp stated this appears to be a good use for the property, considering the severity of the terrain. He also stated that the Rix St./Ada Dr. intersection is a blind one. Ferro commented that the visibility is better on the east side of the intersection than on the west. Wright commented a left turn onto Ada Drive will be difficult. VanderWulp asked whether Ada Drive could be narrowed to slow traffic down. Ferro stated the developer

is proposing to install parallel parking on Ada Drive, which should have a traffic calming effect. Wright asked whether the public will have access to the river front portion of the site. He stated he would like to have it open and accessible. Kullgren stated he believed the Planning Commission had also asked about this.

Ferro stated there is a draft agreement prepared between the Township and the developer that would allow public access on a portion of the sidewalk system through the site, connecting to a potential future public pedestrian walkway under the railroad viaduct, to create a potential future pedestrian through-route in the development. He stated the agreement does not provide public access along the entire riverfront portion of the development, in part because of the severity of the slopes adjacent to the river bank.

Kullgren asked if the residents of the development would have access to the riverfront. Ferro stated there was no improved access to the river bank proposed.

Ferro stated the draft agreement also has a prohibition on the developer or the future condominium association ever installing a vehicular access gate at the entry to the development, although public vehicular access is not provided. Ferro stated that our goal is for the development to feel and function as much as possible as any other neighborhood in the Village.

Wright commented that if we don't provide for it now, we won't ever have the opportunity to make the riverfront up to the dam accessible to the public. VanderWulp stated we should keep the riverfront open so that people can walk back there.

Harrison asked why we aren't making the entire street system in the development public streets, if we want the benefits of public access. Ferro stated the terrain is too severe to construct streets meeting Road Commission standards, including 6% maximum grade and 30 foot width.

Ferro commented that the Township does not have the authority to force public access through any of the development. He stated he has encouraged the developer to voluntarily take measures to allow the public some means of access in the development, and they are doing that.

APPROVAL OF ENGINEERING SERVICES PROPOSAL FOR ADA DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION:

Ferro presented the proposal from Moore & Bruggink for completion of design and construction administration services for the Ada Drive reconstruction project. He stated the proposed \$348,500 in total fees is proposed to be shared between the Township General Fund and the DDA Fund on a 57%-General Fund/43% DDA Fund basis.

Harrison asked how the construction cost would be financed. Ferro stated it was entirely Township funding, and the Road Commission would not be participating in the cost.

Kullgren commented that there may be a need for the DDA Development Plan to be amended in order for project costs to be paid from DDA funds. He also noted that the \$2 million construction cost estimate is based in part on actual construction costs for the Headley St. project, which is consistent with the cost estimates from a couple of years ago.

Haga stated based on our earlier discussions, it was anticipated that the initial costs would be covered by the Township general fund, until the DDA Plan is amended.

(Note: VanderWulp left the meeting at this time.)

Following discussion, it was moved by Haga, seconded by Bowersox, to recommend approval of the

engineering services agreement with Moore & Bruggink, subject to the DDA Plan being amended to incorporate the proposed Ada Drive project.

Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCING OPTIONS FOR VILLAGE SNOW REMOVAL

Ferro reported we have had initial discussion with legal counsel regarding legal options for allocating cost of public snow removal from sidewalks in the Village to property owners. Ferro stated that the general special assessment statute may provide a means of doing this. Ferro noted Ippel had sent email communication suggesting we obtain cost input from contractors to give us an idea of what the cost would be. Ferro stated our goal is to develop a solution and have it in place for the 2016-17 winter season.

Kullgren suggested looking into options for financing a broader range of Village business community functions, beyond just snow removal. He suggested looking at how Downtown Holland finances downtown promotion, in addition to snow removal.

Harrison suggested obtaining cost estimates as a first task, before considering an assessment district on top of what is already contemplated for DDA financing.

Haga commented now is the time to do that, since we are in our budget preparation season.

Kullgren suggested that a couple of Board members visit downtown Holland staff to obtain information on the functions their downtown organization performs and how these are financed. Kullgren also suggested the possibility of the Principal Shopping District statute being amended to allow Townships in Kent County to create a Principal Shopping District.

Harrison suggested that staff be requested to bring cost information and financing options back to the DDA Board within the next 60 days. Board members concurred with this approach.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Bowersox, seconded by Harrison, to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:
