

Approved on
September 21, 2010

City of Walker
Downtown Development Authority
MINUTES
July 20, 2010
1:00PM – DDA Board Room
Fire Station #2 – 4101 Lake Michigan Drive NW

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by G. Hicks at 1:00PM. Attendance was recorded as follows:

Members Present: T. Bart, C. Vander Meulen, D. Felton, P. Goodale, L. Adams, G. Hicks, L. Rios, M. Neal

Members Absent: J. McIsaac, J. Cornell, J. Veldheer

Also Present: Mark Koning – Director of Public Works, Scott Conners – City Engineer, Frank Wash – Planning Director

2. Approval of Minutes – On a motion by C. Vander Meulen, with support by P. Goodale, the May 18, 2010 Minutes were approved as written. Motion Carried.

3. Rapid Transit Plan Update – Planner Wash presented information regarding a recently completed RAPID Transit 20 year Master Plan study for transit program improvements. The plan includes a “Laker Bus Rapids Transit” or BRT, which would connect the GVSU downtown campus and the GVSU Allendale campus. The BRT line has the potential to bring more interest in the DDA area and hopefully add significant traffic for businesses in the DDA District.

4. GVMC Award – The Grand Valley Metro Council has presented the City of Walker the GVMC Blueprint Regional Planning Award for the outstanding work in the DDA district, especially during the past 5 years. City Manager Vander Meulen thanked planning Director Wash for all of his efforts and enthusiasm regarding the DDA district.

5. The City of Walker has partnered with GVSU, The Rapid and additional individuals to apply for a grant to study the BRT process. The grant application has been submitted to the Federal Transportation Authority. The RAPID has provided a local match with no cost to the City of

Walker. The study will analyze transportation needs on Lake Michigan Drive between the two GVSU campuses. The grant is requesting 1.25 million dollars for the study.

6. DDA Parking Lot Update (West of Former Fire Station #2) – DPW Director Koning discussed the condition of the parking lot and the need for repairs. Koning stated that an overlay could be one, but would cost \$12,000 – \$13,000. The parking lot is mainly used by Shots Bar & Restaurant for overflow parking during peak times. Although the DDA is under no obligation to maintain the lot, leasing the former fire station building would require adequate parking spaces. Vander Meulen and Koning will contact the current owner and find out if there is interest in leasing the parking lot.

7. Any Other Business -

- Standale Trail - Engineer Conners provided an update regarding the Standale Trail. The project is halfway finished. There had been some scheduling difficulties during the first portion of the project, but everything is moving along rather quickly now. There are crews working at 5 different locations simultaneously. There are no plans for providing a bridge to cross Lake Michigan Drive at this time. Trail users will need to cross Lake Michigan Drive at Kinney and proceed back to the continuation of the trail.
- Mast Arm Signal – Engineer Conners also stated that the installation of the mast arm signal at the Kinney and Lake Michigan Drive intersection will not move forward until next year. Discussion is ongoing with MDOT regarding the intersection improvements.
- DDA Street Trees – Discussion is ongoing with MDOT regarding the appropriate species of trees that will be used in the DDA District. Lake Michigan Drive Property – City Manager Vander Meulen provided an update on the DDA owned property on Lake Michigan Drive (next to Reliable Sports). Vander Meulen stated that the owner of Reliable Sports has been approached by a potential buyer to purchase the Reliable Sports property, with the caveat that the adjoining property, owned by the DDA is included in the purchase. The DDA property has been on the market since fall 2007 with little activity. The building located on the property is in very rough shape (leaking, roof rot, etc.) and would need to be demolished. Because the building was originally a truck repair garage, soil testing would most likely be required prior to any sale. City Manager Vander Meulen will contact our realtor and advise him that we prefer to work with the potential purchasers directly and not with the owner of Reliable Sports.
- Pat Goodale stated that the former Legend Restaurant on Wilson and Lake Michigan will be removed. No date has been set for demolition.
- Everett's will be weeding several areas in the DDA. Members agreed that the flower beds look very good. The irrigation system is being turned on to find and repair the broken sprinkler heads. Court appointed work crew teens are mowing (supervised) in areas in the DDA district.
- Member Hicks asked Mark Koning about the seasonal flags in the DDA district. All agreed the flags still look good, but that it may be time to replace some of the Christmas decorations. Hicks commented about the holiday lights that are in the City of Rockford. City Manager Vander Meulen will be contacting the Rockford City Manager to find out where the lights may have been purchased. Mark Koning stated that some of the poles need repair before winter. More information will follow when available.

- Members Hicks asked the board for their opinions regarding the placement of a band shell in Community Park. The area could be used for seasonal concerts or other programs. Koning stated that portable stages can be rented if the DDA would rather not build a permanent structure. Members agreed it would be a good community event. City Manager Vander Meulen will contact other communities that have band shells or hold public concerts to find out more information.
- Nationally known walkability expert Dan Burden will be visiting Walker on Friday, August 20 beginning at 8:00AM. Mr. Burden will host a walkability exercise through the DDA District. A short meeting will take place at Fire Station #2 (upper level) prior to the walking audit of the district followed by a design improvement presentation at 11:00AM to 1:00PM. There will also be an ADA accessibility field visit on September 30. Recommendations for usability will be made following the field visits.

8. Adjournment – A motion was made by L. Rios with support by T. Bart to adjourn the meeting at 2:23PM. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted to City Manager Vander Meulen,

Julia Kozminski, Recording Secretary
City of Walker