

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 17, 2011

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2011, commencing at approximately 12:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center at 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members of the Board of Directors present: Bruce Betzler, Jay Brown, Terry Schley, Chip Everett, Ron Zuiderveen, Tom Brodasky, Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Michael Lutke, and Dana Slocum.

Members of the Board of Directors absent: Stephen Dallas, Jack Siegel, Kathleen Garland-Rike, and Glenn Steeg.

Also present was Jodi Stefforia, Township Planning Director and three other individuals.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. by Chair Bruce Betzler. Terry Schley suggested the addition of an item to the agenda to discuss sidewalks along Stadium Drive. Motion by Tom Brodasky, support by Michael Lutke to adopt the Agenda as amended, the motion carried.

The Chair then called for consideration of the minutes of September 22, 2011. Motion by Tom Brodasky, support by Terry Schley to approve the Minutes as presented, the motion carried.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Jay Brown. Motion by Dana Slocum, support by Tom Brodasky to accept the report. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was to formally adopt the 2012 budget. Ms. Stefforia reported that the DDA had recommended that the budget be adopted by the Township Board in July. Now that the Township's overall budget has been adopted by the Township Board and includes the DDA budget, the DDA may formally adopt the 2012 budget. Motion by Tom Brodasky, support by Dana Slocum to adopt the 2012 DDA Budget, motion passed.

The Chair then moved to the next agenda item being an update on the Citgo property. The Chair reported that he is waiting for Attorney Jim Porter's response as he is looking through the environmental records for the property. The seller will have to sign a disclosure of environmental history before a purchase agreement is finalized. He added that Attorney Porter is doing a cursory review of the environmental records, not an exhaustive one. More information will be available at the January meeting.

The Chair then moved to an update of the ITC project. Libby Heiny-Cogswell reported that last night the Township Board conducted first reading of an amendment to the utility ordinance to require Township Board approval of new utility lines and also regarding placing utilities underground as cross public streets and 250 feet either side of the street right-of-way and throughout the village commercial district per existing zoning ordinance provisions. The Ordinance also affirms the planning efforts in the village area and the master plan efforts. In response to a question, Libby Heiny-Cogswell indicated that the Township and its attorney did not feel it would be reasonable to require the lines underground throughout the Township and that such an ordinance would not be upheld by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Terry Schley added that the vision of the DDA and the Form Based Code requires new lines to be underground. The ITC project undermines the efforts of the DDA.

Terry Schley noted that the easements have been staked in the village area and demonstrate the significant loss of trees that will occur with this project. He added that ITC has reasons other than cost for not wanting to place lines underground such as servicing the lines, finding faults, etc. He added that the November 7 forum held by ITC with property owners did not reveal any new information.

Terry Schley noted that the Township Board has not adopted a resolution similar to that of the DDA which had called for keeping the lines together in the 9th Street area south of the village core and park.

The Chair then turned to the next agenda item being discussion of the 9th Street rear access issue. Terry Schley reported that the subcommittee (himself, Jay Brown and Mike Lutke) met with representatives of the Township (Supervisor and Clerk) in October to generally discuss the possibility of rear access to properties abutting 9th Street through Township-owned property.

Terry Schley noted that the group identified the immediate need is not parking and there is not a strong need to be able to head north to Parkview from the 9th Street properties. The immediate need is access to Atlantic Avenue. He added that there was concurrence in the group that the Township Board would ask the DDA to define what they would like so that it can be presented and discussed at a Township Board work session.

The DDA members then discussed the economic point of view of the concept identifying the 'why' they are asking for the rear access – to help the businesses along 9th Street and to improve access management for safety reasons; 'want' is a paved alley or drive; additional 'whys' – there's a lot happening on 9th Street – I-94 traffic, KVCC traffic, USPS and UPS facilities, the park, and 9th Street is a major north-south corridor on the west side of town.

Mike Lutke added that if the form based code and township want parking in the rear, the rear access would enhance those goals. He added that traffic accidents, which occur regularly on 9th Street, can block access into and out of 9th Street properties; another way out is needed.

The subcommittee's next step is to work on further defining what is desired and report back to the full DDA in January.

Next agenda item was to approve the 2012 meeting dates. Motion by Jay Brown, support by Terry Schley to accept the 2012 meeting dates as presented; motion passed.

Under Any Other Business, Jodi Stefforia noted that USPS is undertaking a study to determine what processing center needs are and it will likely involve USPS considering if the 9th Street facility should stay open or close. She added that the USPS is a large property owner in the DDA district.

The Chair suggested that he send a letter on behalf of the DDA stating that at a minimum, a local post office must be maintained. The letter should also indicate that the DDA is fostering mixed uses in the village and it's critical that the businesses and residents have access to post office boxes. The post office is a necessary component of the planning efforts in the village. It was also discussed that the letter should note that the jobs provided at the existing processing facility are important to the community. Jodi Stefforia will assist the Chair in authoring the letter.

The discussion then turned to sidewalks along Stadium Drive. Terry Schley stated that in the 9th Street

rear access meeting with Township Officials, it was stated that the Township has an interest in sidewalks in the DDA area, particularly along the north side of Stadium between 8th and 9th Streets. The Township has asked the DDA to help with this issue separate from the streetscape planning efforts. It was noted that the next step in further considering this would be to look at the streetscape plan prepared by MC Smith Associates and determine if there's a cost estimate to build just that section of sidewalk. It was stated that perhaps MC Smith could be hired to look at constructing this segment of sidewalk without interfering with the long-term streetscape goals. Terry Schley said their fee should be discussed up-front and be lower than that originally suggested by MC Smith in the overall streetscape estimates.

Jodi Stefforia offered to put together some discussion points on this topic for discussion at the January meeting. Points to discuss will be should it be studied, who would pay for construction drawings, who would administer construction, who would pay for actual construction?

Jodi Stefforia then noted that she would be meeting with Jon Start of KATS this afternoon and discussing the circulation study.

Under Announcements, Libby Heiny-Cogswell noted that there are 3 spots opening up on the DDA due to staggered terms. Tom Brodasky and Dana Slocum will not be returning to serve another term and will be missed. Ron Zuiderveen has agreed to serve another term. Andy Wenzel of the Hinman Company has agreed to be appointed to the DDA Board. The third appointee has yet to be determined but will be selected from a pool of candidates whom have expressed interest.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm.

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: November 21, 2011
Minutes Approved: _____, 2012