

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD MAY 16, 2013

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2013. The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center at 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members of the Board of Directors present: Chairperson Terry Schley, Kathleen Garland-Rike, Michael Lutke, Fred Gould, Jack Siegel, Andy Wenzel, Maria Dacoba, Chip Everett, Jay Brown, Libby Heiny-Cogswell, and Stephen Dallas.

Members of the Board of Directors absent: Bruce Betzler and Glenn Steeg.

Also present was Gregory Milliken, Planning Director.

Approve Agenda

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. by Chairperson Schley. The Chairperson indicated that he would also provide information regarding conversations with the Church regarding the Car Wash property during the Citgo discussion and that there would be discussion of a Joint Meeting with the Township Board. Dr. Dallas moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Mr. Wenzel seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approve Minutes

Chairperson Schley asked if there were any comments or questions on the minutes of the regular meeting of March 21, 2013. Ms. Garland-Rike moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 21, 2013. Mr. Lutke seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Gould indicated that he had reviewed the Treasurer's Report and presented the report. It covered the period from February 1st to March 31st.

Mr. Gould indicated that the report was presented in a new format as requested at the last meeting. It more closely matches the budget and demonstrates funds remaining for various projects budgeted this year.

Mr. Wenzel made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Ms. Dacoba seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Citgo Station Update

Chairperson Schley indicated that the DDA had engaged Fishbeck Thompson Carr & Huber for the above ground environmental analysis of the property. This was delayed in getting started due to a transition in communication with the property owner. With that complete, the analysis will begin on May 21st. He indicated that the DDA will need to get the commitment of title and insurance from the seller before proceeding further. Chairperson Schley confirmed that Chicago Title is the title company that they are working with.

Mr. Wenzel discussed the proposals he collected for an Alta Survey. He sought quotes from three companies based on the same scope of services: Dreisinga, Prein & Newhof, and Wightman & Associates. The result was wide ranging with Dreisinga offering the lowest bid at \$1,750. He indicated that he has worked with all three companies and they all offer good service. He sees no reason to pay more for one company over another, but recognizes that the title work is necessary before proceeding.

Chairperson Schley indicated that the DDA gave the Township Board an estimate of \$2000 for the survey, so the proposed cost is within that estimate. He also indicated that the agreement should be conditioned on getting electronic copies of the survey and the ability to reuse.

Mr. Wenzel confirmed that the DDA would receive three full size copies, a pdf copy, and a CAD file of the survey for the Board's use.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell asked if this would be a boundary survey or a topographic survey.

Mr. Wenzel stated it was just quoted as an Alta survey with improvements, utilities, etc. but did not include topography.

Chairperson Schley said topography will need to be updated once the building is knocked down.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that the topographic information will be wanted for the design phase.

Chairperson Schley suggested upgrading the survey request.

Mr. Wenzel said that it can be added to the proposals.

Chairperson Schley suggested that the DDA make a motion to give the Executive Committee authorization to select a proposal for a survey with the possible addition for topography. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell made the requested motion. Ms. Garland-Rike seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairperson Schley stated that this work would probably not occur until after the hazardous material evaluation was completed.

Chairperson Schley then discussed his conversations with Prein & Newhof regarding services to assist the DDA with this process. During the course of these conversations, they recommended filing the Baseline Environmental Assessment and Due Care Plan prior to taking title of the site in order to avoid any liability. They can be filed at any time up to 30-45 days after taking title.

Chairperson Schley stated that this is a complicated site, and of particular concern to the engineers at Prein & Newhof are the open monitoring wells and coordinating access for the current owner, on-going maintenance, and future responsibilities. He asked Prein & Newhof to provide a proposal to assist with the process and provide demolition documents. Chairperson Schley stated he would communicate electronically with the DDA as this process continues.

Mr. Wenzel reiterated that the timing of the steps in the closing process is triggered by the Title commitment of the seller that has not been completed, so the DDA is still in good shape despite the delays.

Chairperson Schley also stated that the DDA had received a request from the Dacoba's to purchase the exterior parking lot lights from the Citgo property for use at their new restaurant.

Ms. Dacoba confirmed the request.

Chairperson Schley stated that he did not see a problem with the request conceptually. He said it was probably something to be worked through later with their contractor doing the removal.

The DDA discussed the idea and no concerns were noted other than the need to confirm compliance with Township standards for outdoor lighting.

Chairperson Schley stated that he met with three members of the Oshtemo Methodist Church Board who were sanctioned to meet with him. He told them that he would report the conversation to the DDA Board.

He stated that the Church owns the car wash next to Citgo and is interested in collaboration with the DDA but has nothing specific in mind. They are simply reaching out at this point.

He indicated that the Church indicated if the DDA helped with demolition, they could provide further assistance. The Church did not suggest sale of the site, but perhaps an expansion of the DDA's vision for the corner. The most immediate cross-interest is likely demolition. The Church indicated they have reviewed various ideas including a farmer's market, rental facilities, extra parking, etc. There is not a need at this time or in the long term of a building addition. Chairperson Schley also told them it would be easier for the DDA to respond if the Church had a specific proposal to make.

Dennis Raher stated that parking is still a need in the area and it would be a good use for that area particularly if a farm market went there and considering the access to the park.

Mr. Brown said that the Chairperson's report is consistent with the report that the Church representatives provided to the Board. He said they are trying to make the best use of the property within the mission of the Church. He indicated there will be a new Minister in July. They have had thoughts of a food pantry and used clothes facility to serve needs of the area as there is nothing currently like it, but they would need to partner with other churches.

Laura Rahe stated just getting the structure down will be a good thing so it will not be such an eyesore next to the park.

Mr. Wenzel asked Mr. Brown if the Church was thinking of doing some of the things they were thinking in the existing building or in a new building.

Mr. Brown said it was a good structure, so they would look to reuse that structure and get a grant to rehab.

Chairperson Schley stated that the information provided to us was that these ideas are just concepts at this point.

Mr. Brown confirmed there are a lot of ideas, which is why the church is looking forward to the new Minister to clarify the ideas.

Chairperson Schley suggested Mr. Brown carry the message that the DDA thanks the Church for the outreach and the spirit of collaboration.

Mr. Gould asked if the DDA has made a decision on whether to engage a professional to assist with the purchasing process.

Chairperson Schley said that no one has been engaged but those are the conversations that are occurring with Prein & Newhof, particularly regarding the environmental and demolition stuff.

Mr. Gould asked if a special meeting was needed.

Chairperson Schley said it was possible but the title insurance step is needed first before anything else happens.

Mr. Gould said that his concern is that we not rely solely on the capable people on the Board who are giving their limited time as volunteers.

9th Street Rear Access Drive Update

Mr. Lutke indicated that he contacted two local excavating companies and gave them the same drawing of the proposed driveway. The scope was a little vague, but it was to be 24 feet wide. Both Lounsbury and Cripps were similar in price with the former at \$64,000 and the latter at \$65,500.

Mr. Lutke also requested an optional add-on for an addition to the Community Center parking lot to alleviate pressure on Mr. Siegel's parking lot from the overflow parking. The cost for this was approximately \$18,000. This was just something that was added to get a sense of what the cost would be.

Mr. Milliken confirmed upon request that there is \$70,000 in the budget for the rear access drive project.

Chairperson Schley stated that the numbers confirm that the DDA's prior estimates are accurate and appropriate. This is a \$60-70,000 program.

Mr. Lutke stated that there are some details in the proposal that are not specified.

Chairperson Schley asked where the Board would like to go from here.

Mr. Brown said that based on the minutes from the last meeting, it seems like it is now up to the Township to either agree or disagree.

Chairperson Schley said that the DDA could ask the Township to initiate action to allow the DDA to use the Township land. He stated that the drive cannot be placed on private land because there is not consensus among the adjacent private land owners. The DDA cannot compel landowners who do not commit, and this is not a good choice for eminent domain.

Mr. Brown said that there will be increase in value from development.

Chairperson Schley asked if the DDA is advocating requesting the Township for a 24 foot drive on their property that owners can tap into that the DDA would pay to install.

Ms. Garland-Rike suggested the DDA consider a different perspective. Business owners do not want to give up anything but want to have it and their customers will benefit but not much else. There should be some give and take but there is not much talk about that. She personally thinks this is a good idea but wanted to bring that point out.

Mr. Brown reiterated that the point of the DDA is to increase the value of the properties within it.

Mr. Lutke stated that this idea started out as a vision from the DDA for rear parking, consolidated drives, etc. That vision cannot occur without a way to get in and out. We are paying the price for not having this drive, and we can't do what we want without the drive either. This is critical to the achievement of our vision.

Ms. Garland-Rike stated that is a good point. That is important for the Board to hear.

Chairperson Schley asked where the Board is on this. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that the Board is waiting for the DDA to present a concept. Generally there was support for the concept with some against.

Chairperson Schley recalled four members in support of the drive being located anywhere with one against its location anywhere.

Mr. Lutke remembered that the Board requested we contact the owners along the drive. He stated the DDA has done everything possible to get a hold of the owners. At this point, the DDA has tried to do everything they have asked.

Chairperson Schley asked if there was anyone who felt the drive should be proposed with some collaboration with private property owners or all on the Township property. Mr. Wenzel felt this question would come up during the discussion.

Dennis Rahe recalled previous discussion that owners would have to get buy-in on improvements.

Chairperson Schley said that the DDA solicited property owners and tried to get them engaged. All did not respond and attempts to contact owners were not returned. He indicated that this was the topic of discussion at the Township Board's February 13 work session. Since then, the DDA has proven it can't be done without giving up Township land.

Mr. Milliken explained that the Township Board was going to hold a joint meeting of all boards and commissions on May 21st. At a recent retreat of the Board, it was recognized that there are new board members who may not know much about the DDA and the previous planning work that was done and provides a basis for the decisions that are made today.

Chairperson Schley indicated that it sounds like an opportunity to update everyone on the work that has been done, read the tea leaves regarding the rear access drive, and schedule the process for the next approach.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell suggested the rear access drive presentation not be the same as it was in February.

Chairperson Schley summarized saying that the message is that the DDA thinks this is the right thing to do and is consistent with the vision of the community. It is appropriate to the budget. Although temporary, it could be installed for a long, time. The DDA tried to be collaborative, but still needs work to get buy in from some fellow owners. It will need some time to convince the owners.

Mr. Gould asked how to get on the Township Board agenda.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that she sets the agenda for the Township Board meetings. So, this could be called either June 11 or June 25. She reminded everyone that the Joint Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 pm on May 21.

Chairperson Schley suggested that anyone who would like to attend and support the DDA should attend.

Banners

Chairperson Schley stated that the DDA has two sets of banners. The DDA generally believed that the other set that is not currently displayed is yellow with a flower. Historically the planning staff has championed the storage, changing, etc. of the banners.

Mr. Milliken stated he would do it. He would look into where they are and who changed them. He would contact Chairperson Schley and confirm any expenditure.

Mr. Brown moved to authorize Mr. Milliken to have the banners installed and/or changed. Mr. Lutke seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Other Business

Ms. Dacoba wants to bring to the table the possibility of grant programs like façade improvements, etc. She indicated that Mr. Milliken has some experience with these.

Chairperson Schley said that is a good idea and suggested that she bring specific ideas to the July meeting. The Oshtemo DDA is not currently set up for that but could be.

Ms. Dacoba stated that she has experience from Paw Paw and Kalamazoo.

Dr. Dallas asked Ms. Dacoba how the reception has been at her new restaurant. Ms. Dacoba said it has been good. It is currently just dinner but will be lunch in a couple weeks. Dinner will be offered seven days a week with lunch Monday through Saturday.

Chairperson Schley said that made him think it would be nice to have a local business attend meetings to make a presentation on their business at each meeting for about five minutes.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell informed the DDA that the Kalamazoo Area Building Authority received a Southwest Michigan First Catalyst Award.

Announcement and Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for July 18, 2013.

Having exhausted the agenda, Chairperson Schley adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: May 21, 2013
Minutes Approved: July 25, 2013