

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

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD MAY 29, 2014

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 29, 2014. 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: Terry Schley, Bruce Betzler, Grant Taylor, Fred Gould, Andy Wenzel, Jack Siegel, Glenn Steeg, Maria Dacoba, Chip Everett, Jay Brown, and Libby Heiny-Cogswell.

Members of the Board of Directors absent: Michael Lutke and Stephen Dallas.

Also present was Gregory Milliken, Planning Director and two guests.

Approve Agenda

Mr. Taylor moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Betzler seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approve Minutes

Mr. Taylor moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 20, 2014 as presented. Mr. Siegel 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 met with Mr. Milliken and reviewed the Treasurer's Report. He explained that the report presented the revenues and expenditures to date and that a budget change would be needed due to the fact that the Citgo purchase was in 2014 but was included in the 2013 budget since that is when the purchase was anticipated.

Mr. Wenzel asked if the attorney charge was based on the hours billed. Mr. Milliken explained that in accordance with their annual agreement with the Township, there would be quarterly payments. This is done to make the administrative process, particularly at the end of the year easier as well as to address concerns from the DDA about some of the unknown costs throughout the year.

Mr. Gould explained that on the table presented to the DDA, the revenues were removed from the top of the report. There is a minor amount of revenue activity so not sure of the value of showing it. But he was interested in hearing from others on the change.

The Chairperson indicated he wanted to see the whole picture. Mr. Wenzel agreed. The Board members engaged in a discussion about the table and how it could be laid out including adding the fund balance to the bottom of the report.

Mr. Steeg asked about the attorney charges and if the attorney could send an invoice. The Board members engaged in a discussion of the attorney billing process.

Mr. Brown asked what the projected capture was and how that compared to the actual amount that was captured. Mr. Milliken indicated that the 2014 capture was a little less than anticipated by the Treasurer, which is what was put into the budget. It was indicated that this would be a good reason to have the revenues added back into the report.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to amend the 2014 budget of the DDA to add \$245,000 to the fund for Land Acquisition from the fund balance for the purchase of the Citgo Station, an expense previously budgeted in 2013. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wenzel. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Betzler moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Everett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Election of a Secretary

Chairperson Schley indicated that Ms. Garland-Rike is no longer on the DDA, which was not realized at the last meeting when she was elected Secretary. Therefore, the DDA needs to elect a new Secretary.

Mr. Taylor volunteered to fill the position. There were no other volunteers or nominations.

Mr. Wenzel moved to elect Mr. Taylor as Secretary. Mr. Betzler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

CITGO Station Update

Chairperson Schley indicated that just this morning he had received bid documents for the demolition of the Citgo property for final review. He also sent them to Attorney Porter for review as well. Following the review, they will then set a bid date and establish a process. He indicated the companies that were previously contacted by Mr. Lutke would be contacted again.

Chairperson Schley stated that the demolition process would eliminate the curbs and driveways from the site. Access will remain from the back of the site and through the church.

The Chairperson asked if the Board members wanted to do anything particular with the resources available at the site. Mr. Everett indicated that the party that was previously interested in the canopy was no longer interested. Ms. Dacoba said that she may still be interested in the lights.

Mr. Steeg said he did not care what was done with the lights. The Chairperson said language could be put in the bid saying lights may or may not be retained. Mr. Wenzel advised that the demolition process may be different depending on the answer, so it might be better and advantageous to have an answer prior to release of the bid docs.

The Chairperson indicated he wanted to close the door at options beyond that to streamline and simplify the process and enhance the security of the site.

Mr. Taylor asked if any salvage of metal was possible. Chairperson Schley said that would probably be factored into the bid and the cost of demolition by the contractor.

Mr. Steeg asked about conversations with the Church regarding the car wash property and if there could be a better deal on demolition if a company does both properties at the same time.

Mr. Brown said that the DDA has talked before about not wanting to get involved with the car wash because it was not environmentally cleared.

Chairperson Schley reminded Board members he had a previous conversation with representatives of the Church who stated they did not have a clear plan for the future. He did not choose to pursue it further due to the focus on the Citgo property and therefore did not push the DDA on it.

Mr. Steeg indicated he did not want to delay the Citgo demolition but thinks this is worthy of consideration.

Mr. Brown clarified that the Church is not close to a decision. He also stated that the property is owned by the conference, not the local Church, which adds to the time and complication.

Mr. Steeg stated that the complication does not prevent us from having the conversation so they are aware we are proceeding.

Chairperson Schley asked for clarification from the Board members that they were satisfied with proceeding with demolition of Citgo with its blight and safety issues. The Board concurred.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell asked if the bid documents include the demolition and construction of the curb.

Chairperson Schley stated that restoration of the street is included as is the asphalt cap of the demolished area. He said that the due care plan will need to be updated. He said that in theory there will be a clear site with a mix of surface materials.

Mr. Steeg asked if the cap is permanent. The Chairperson said it was; it was asphalt.

Mr. Steeg then asked if grass or sod could be put on top. The Chairperson said that a lot of options exist for the site design on top of the cap. There was discussion of short term, interim improvements that could be maintained when the long term improvements are implemented.

Mr. Steeg asked what the time frame is for the long term improvements. Chairperson Schley indicated there is no timeframe for the improvements. The design needs to be finalized and a funding source identified.

Chairperson Schley provided background on the streetscape plan, its status, and the budget associated. It demonstrates the importance of the Board nailing down its vision so as to nail down the costs.

Mr. Steeg stated that in the short term, we need a solution that will realistically last a couple of years. A decorative fence may be one option.

Mr. Taylor asked if the short term design was something a subcommittee was addressing.

The Chairperson said we could task the subcommittee focusing on the streetscape to address this as well.

Mr. Steeg moved to have the Streetscape subcommittee develop short term design recommendations for the demolished property. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Update on Car Wash Property

Chairperson Schley said that the blighted appearance of the car wash will become more apparent after the gas station is removed. He is a proponent of shared vision and cooperative work. He suggests continuing outreach to the church.

Mr. Taylor indicated that he has talked with the Minister for the church who suggested further conversation with Mr. Brown. They would like to see it demolished but do not have a good vision. They are currently using it for storage and are still discussing what they want to do.

Mr. Brown said that the subject has not been on the agenda of the Church trustees; there are more immediate problems to be addressed. The parking lot needs to be replaced. He reiterated that the properties belong to the conference, not the local church.

Chairperson Schley summarized saying this is a larger discussion, and he will leave it to the subcommittee discuss the fine details.

Stadium Drive Streetscape and Transportation Alternatives

Chairperson Schley said that one of his tasks was to evaluate the relationship with the previous Landscape Architect that prepared the Streetscape Plan and any ongoing obligations for going forward with the project. He indicated he had no problem with the designer but was concerned about their fees for continuing with the project.

Mr. Betzler said he agreed with that explanation. He said a lot of time has passed since the plan was prepared so use of another design team should be fine.

Confirmation of Banner Selection

Mr. Milliken indicated that there has been a lot of work on banners and they should be ready to finalize and purchase the banners. He indicated that there were two options to select from for each of the two banner designs and then a proposal for banner swaps from a sign company. He stated that he had sent out a request to three sign companies for quotes to store and swap the banners on an established quarterly program. He received one response from SignArt, who currently provides this service. The quote is less than what they currently charge.

Mr. Themis Corakis indicated that on the first sign, the letters should be the same size as opposed to Village being smaller. The small is hard to see.

Mr. Wenzel asked what the current banner said. The Board confirmed that it said "Village Area".

Chairperson Schley said that the theory was to brand this as the Village Area and its own node. The key was consistency. He feels visibility is important with the banners.

Mr. Betzler liked the move to Village from Village Area. He liked the text that was the same size on the blue sign.

There was consensus from the Board that on the blue banner, the option with the two words being the same size was preferred.

Chairperson Schley said that for the red sign, he liked the left image that used the same font as the other sign, which is easier to read. Members agreed.

Mr. Taylor moved to approve expenditures for the purchase of the two banners as discussed at the meeting and to enter into agreement with SignArt for storage and swapping of the banners. Mr. Betzler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairperson Schley asked if Staff could get in touch with SignArt to request a change in banners to the yellow, summery banners. Mr. Milliken indicated he would address that.

Discussion of Grants and Loan Programs

Ms. Dacoba brought a hand out to explain a variety of grant and loan options that are used by communities in the area. She wanted the Oshtemo DDA to discuss the possibilities of using programs like this to aid the redevelopment of the Village.

Ms. Dacoba said some grant programs give owners opportunities to complete the project. Grants include façade improvements, design assistance, and rehabilitation. There are also loan programs that help subsidize projects.

Chairperson Schley asked Ms. Dacoba what she thought would work in Oshtemo.

Ms. Dacoba thought grant programs would be best. Loan programs require more coordination and effort. Grants are less involved.

Mr. Taylor indicated he thinks this is a good idea moving forward. He was concerned about cost considering the unknown costs of Citgo going forward and possible tie ups with a streetscape project. He said it was hard to give out grants if there is not a good handle on future needs.

Ms. Dacoba explained that there is a cap on grants and a limit in the budget. She said she is just trying to get the conversation going at this point to see if it is worth moving forward.

Mr. Taylor said he was in agreement with that for sure.

Mr. Wenzel said it was a great idea. He was surprised they did not have it already. They are meant to encourage redevelopment efforts.

Mr. Brown said it should be heading that way. He said the DDA has not done anything to help owners to upgrade their properties.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said she supports the endeavor. She suggested starting small to vet some of the details.

The Chairperson asked if there were any volunteers to serve on a subcommittee to come up with some proposals for the Board to consider. Mr. Taylor, Mr. Brown, and Ms. Dacoba volunteered.

Other Business

Mr. Milliken indicated that KATS had distributed the RFP for the Circulation Study again but again not received any response. Therefore, KATS has said that they will not be funding that Study. He will include the RFP in the next packet, and the DDA will need to determine how to proceed with the Study.

The Chairperson said that the DDA had a list of priorities that guided their activities. The list was generated several years ago, and it may be time to revisit that list.

Mr. Siegel asked about status of the rear drive.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated it will be on the Township Board agenda in June. Staff has been working on an agreement and that agreement needs to be in place. She has some schematics and concepts for design but nothing formal.

Announcement and Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2014.

Having exhausted the agenda, Chairperson Schley adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: June 2, 2014

Minutes Approved: July 17, 2014