

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Meeting of the DDA Board of Directors
June 27, 2023

The May meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:03 am.

ROLL CALL

Present: *DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, David Cole, Steven Huprich, Mike Jaafar, Jim Long, Greg Presley, Shawn Riley, Mayor Brian Turnbull*

Absent: *Aaron Cozart, Ryan McKindles*

Also Present: *Lori Ward/DDA Director, George Lahanas/City Manager, Barbara Moroski-Browne/City Council, Marilyn Price/City Council, Fred Sheill*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Long, seconded by Boyd, to approve the agenda and consent agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF BOLLARDS

Lahanas briefed the DDA on the status of the bollard project. The topic was presented to the City Council on June 19th and the Historic District Commission on June 21st for approval and funding. The cost of the bollards is roughly \$83,000 and it is suggested that the City and DDA split the costs evenly. The DDA's Design Committee met earlier to review the design of the bollards and voted to support the purchase and installation in a black powder coated finish. The bollards are scheduled to arrive in late August for a September installation. OHM, the City's engineers, are working on the bid documents.

Ward informed the group that the specifications for the bollards has changed since the DDA last met and discussed the project. Lahanas provided updated information to the group. Lahanas, representatives from OHM and several department heads met to discuss the project and after discussing the functionality of the bollards made the recommendation to install pneumatic bollards at all locations rather than installing the drop-down in some locations and the pneumatic bollards in other locations. The group felt that the drop-down bollards would require special equipment to install and remove the bollards which would be both time consuming and difficult if utilized on a regular basis opening and closing the street. Previously there had been concern expressed over having two different types of bollards from two different vendors and the mixed appearance it would create. By purchasing all pneumatic bollards, they would have a consistent appearance. The pneumatic may require more maintenance to keep them up, but the ease of access, not needing any special equipment and improved appearance made tipped the scale in favor of

the pneumatic bollards. The preferred bollards are all crash rated for a 7,000-pound truck going 30 miles an hour.

Jaffar arrived at 8:25 am.

The city will be able to greatly diminish the number of street signs that are required to regulate the intersection. Only one sign will be required that provides an arrow directing traffic. All other signs will be removed. The arrow will be mounted on a movable pole for emergency access.

Boyd stated that the figures that are being discussed for the purchase, fabrication and installation of the bollards are much less than earlier anticipated and this will result in a more favorable fund balance. Ward stated that the DDA will spend roughly \$125,000 from fund balance as part of their share of the project. Turnbull stated that the City is still exploring additional funding sources that could offset the cost of the project. Long asked what the warranty on the equipment was and Ward responded that there is a one year warranty on the equipment.

Cole asked about the status of the water main conflict that the DDA spoke about at their last meeting. Lahanas responded that the issue had been resolved by moving the row of bollards out another foot into the intersection to avoid the manhole. In addition, a small amount of fiber optics may have to be moved, but the cost is minimal. At the Design Committee meeting it was discussed that there might need to be two additional bollards installed to close the gap in the bollards. Lahanas stated that we will either have 2 or 3 surplus bollards in inventory in the event any of the bollards are damaged. OHM will assist the city in determining if the proposed spacing for the bollards is accurate or needs to be adjusted.

Long commented that there is a need for a drop off location at the intersection of Main and Center Street is important. Long asked if the engineers would be looking at this issued. Riley asked where deliveries were made prior to the street being closed. Long responded that the loading zone in front of Orin's was utilized. Riley noted that there is a loading zone in front of Great White Buffalo, which is not that far away from the drop off location in front of Orin's. Long noted that Genittis has been impacted by the inability to unload deliveries in close proximity to the restaurant. A discussion on how to address loading and deliveries too place. Boyd stated that if there is some way for the DDA to support businesses in town with a reasonable adjustment to the plan, the DDA should explore it. Presley stated that the previously the police chief has expressed concern that the intersection is an active intersection with cars driving through it and that cars parked in the intersection are unsafe. Ward stated that if a car is parked in the intersection and an emergency vehicle needs to get through, it would be difficult to move the vehicle. The Police Chief concurred that parked cars in the intersection could be unsafe. The Board spoke extensively about the loading and delivery issue.

Riley asked if we have looked at the purchase of a small golf cart to use to get deliveries or people around the downtown. Turnbull suggested that the City/DDA could explore the use of valet parking. Ward noted that the Police Chief and DDA staff looked into golf carts early on in the pandemic and spoke to several of the business owners.

Motion by Huprich, seconded by Buckhave, to approve the purchase of 43 retractable manual bollards from Ameristar Security Products and authorize monies to fund 50% of the purchase cost of \$83,012.57 to a maximum of \$41,510, and 50% of the engineering costs of \$52,500 to a maximum of \$26,250 for a total of \$67,760 for the DDA share of the costs. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PURCHASE OF TRUCK FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT

The DDA currently has 6 part time seasonal employees – four that are summer employees, one that works until November and one that works year-round. The DDA seasonals currently utilize a watering truck that was purchased from the DPW approximately six years ago for \$1,500. The truck has had several issues this summer that required repairs and recently the DDA took the truck to Davis Auto on Doheny Drive to be evaluated. Davis Auto determined that the excessive rusting had caused the frame to be in danger of separating from the truck and that it should not be driven any longer and should be retired. The DDA originally thought it was just a radiator issue that could be repaired but discovered that the problem was much bigger than anticipated. Ward was aware that the Fire Department had retired a vehicle and was looking to dispose of the vehicle. Ward approached Chief Samhat regarding the possibility of the DDA purchasing the truck from the Fire Department. The Fire Department recently had a new transmission installed in the truck which cost the department \$5,000. The Chief stated that the Fire Department was just looking to recover the costs of the transmission and would sell the truck to the DDA for \$5,000.

The truck is a 2008 GMC Sierra with approximately 137,000 miles on it. The DDA is currently using another truck from the DPW fleet. It would be a stretch to continue to utilize the DPW truck and the DDA needs to replace the current watering truck. Currently the DDA budgets annually \$1,000 for gas and oil, \$525 for repairs and \$475 for insurance. In next year's budget the DDA has \$25,000 budget for a truck replacement. The DDA has been advised by the DPW on the process to dispose, through a bidding site, the truck. DPW has indicated that, given their experience, the DDA should see some revenue from the sale of the retired truck that could offset the cost of purchasing the truck from the Fire Department. Boyd asked what the Blue Book value of the truck was. Turnbull estimated that the Blue Book value of \$8,000 - \$9,000. Huprich asked if it was worth spending \$5,000 on a truck that has over 130,000 miles on it. Ward responded that the DDA seasonals put very few miles on the truck only driving it between the downtown and the DPW yard a few times a day. Usually, it is spent parked in a downtown parking lot, while the seasonals work nearby.

Motion by **Boyd**, seconded by **Long**. Motion carried 8 – 1, Huprich voting no.

FORD FIELD RAP GRANT REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Lahanas explained to the Board that the City was seeking a letter of support for a RAP grant which is an ARPA grant flowing through MEDC which can be used for activating downtown spaces. The grant is design for getting people downtown and for placemaking. The City is submitting a grant application for the replacement of the Fort Griswold play structure because the current play structure does not meet current safely standards. The City is asking the DDA

to provide a letter of support for the grant. The City is requesting a \$400,000 grant with a \$400,000 matching grant for the project.

Motion by Long, seconded by Huprich to approve a letter of support for the RAP grant application to replace the play structure at Ford Field. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Presley asked if the City was still exploring adding bathrooms to Ford Field. Lahanas responded that the additions of bathrooms to Ford Field will be addressed as part of the Ford Field Master Plan currently underway.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES

- a. *Design Committee:* The City recently held a community workshop entitled Parks, Pathways and Pedestrians which solicited input from the community on a variety of different projects. The projects that were on display included Ford Field Master Plan, the City's Non-motorized plan and the Fleiss & Vandenbrink pedestrian study. Approximately 60 people took part in the workshop. The City hopes to hold more of these types of meetings in the future.

The Design Committee met recently to discuss the bollard purchase and installation. The planter component of the project was removed from the discussion to allow the DDA to explore more compatible planters. Presley noted that the Design Committee should be involved with the pedestrian improvements, including updating the GMA plan. Ward stated that she has been in touch with GMA and they are anticipating a plan update in the near future. Ward stated the DDA funds for implementation of the GMA plan are limited, however updating the plan is essential for competing for grant funding and for demonstrating a vision to the Northville community.

Lahanas mentioned the interest from the City in exploring curbless streets in the downtown that would be part of the pedestrian plan. Lahanas suggested that instead of repairing broken concrete now that the City/DDA should take the opportunity to upgrade the area and providing a really exciting project. The streets would be raised up to meet the level of the sidewalk. The project would take roughly 6 – 8 weeks to implement.

- b. *Marketing Committee:* Marketing Committee met to discuss upcoming events. The summer concert series is in full swing.
- c. *Parking Committee:* Parking Committee met two weeks ago with downtown business owner Craig Serra to discuss parking for his business. He was interested in having a parking space near his business dedicated to short term use. The Chief will prepare a Traffic Control Order to take to City Council to facilitate the change to 1 hour parking only. The Committee also discussed parking enforcement and will be meeting again to discuss recommendations to City Council.

- d. *Organizational Committee:* Ward provided an update on DDA staffing. The DDA received 9 applications and interviewed 4 candidates. An offer was made to an applicant who declined the offer and decided not to move from Cheboygan to take the job. DDA staff will recast a net for another application cycle and will continue to work with the Organization Committee to fill the vacancy. Jeri and Jessica are continuing to help out with the workload at the DDA and hopefully will continue on with the specific tasks once the position is filled.
- e. *Economic Development Committee:* Two public hearings were held on June 19th. One of the hearings was for the DDA boundary expansion and the other was for the Development and TIF Plan text amendments. The taxing jurisdictions now have 60 days to contact the City/DDA with their plans to opt out or stay in the tax capture.

Ward stated that the City had recently held a meeting on June 22 to discuss Strategic Financial Planning and strategic Goals and Objectives for the coming year. Ward noted that the meeting was very useful and allowed staff to see the bigger picture and plan for upcoming change.

Turnbull recapped the joint State of the Community held at the Northville Township Hall. The City, Township and School District provided a recap of accomplishments and updates on upcoming initiatives.

Ward reviewed the proposed changes to City Hall. The DDA offices will be relocated to the current training room and the current DDA offices will be used for a City Council office and adjacent small conference room. The changes will provide a more efficiently layout of space and allow all employees to have a window in their workspace. The renovation should be done in early fall. Architect Robert Miller is working with Lahanas on the project.

Huprich asked to revisit agenda item #6, purchase of a new truck for the DDA. The truck in question is 15 years old and has over 137,000 miles on it. Huprich questioned whether the DDA should sell the GMC Sierra truck and put the profits towards a newer truck. Ward stated that the truck is presently owned by the Fire Department and if we did not purchase it, the Fire Department would sell the truck and capture the proceeds from the sale, not the DDA. The Fire Department has agreed to sell the truck to the DDA for \$5,000 because we are all part of the city.

BOARD COMMUNICATION

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Turnbull to adjourn the DDA Board meeting. **Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 am.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lori M. Ward, DDA Director
Northville DDA