

**City of Northville  
Downtown Strategic Plan Joint Committee  
January 12, 2017  
City Council Chambers**

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Downtown Strategic Plan Joint Committee was called to order at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Northville Municipal Building, 215 W. Main Street, Northville, Michigan, 48167.

Present were:

Lori Ward, Downtown Development Association (DDA) Director  
John Iacoangelia, Beckett & Raeder  
Michelle Bennett, Beckett & Raeder  
Tom Gudritz, Historic District Commission  
Jim Allen, City Council  
Ken Roth, Mayor  
Chuck Murdock, Historic District Commission  
Mary Starring, DDA Steering Committee  
John Argenta, DDA Steering Committee, Historic District Commission  
Carol Maise, DDA Steering Committee, DDA Parking Committee, Planning Commission  
Jay Wendt, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals  
Pat Sullivan, City Manager  
Marilyn Price, City Council  
Nancy Darga, City Council  
Sam Ekong, City Council  
Greg Presley, DDA  
Anne Smith, Planning Commission  
Shawn Riley, DDA Steering Committee  
Robert Miller, DDA Steering Committee  
Jody Humphries, Chamber of Commerce, DDA Steering Committee  
Dan Ferrara, DDA Steering Committee  
Sue Taylor, Arts Commissioner/Art House

David Cole, Resident and Business Owner  
Luci Klinkhamer, Resident  
Robert Taylor, Resident

**Materials referenced in this meeting included:**

- Action Program
- Process to Position for Redevelopment – 2017
- Power Point: Joint Committee Action Plan Revised

Downtown Development Director Lori Ward introduced John Iacoangelia, Beckett & Raeder, who led tonight's discussion.

**Overview of November 17<sup>th</sup> Joint Committee Meeting and Progress to Date**

Mr. Iacoangelia gave an overview of the November 17<sup>th</sup> Joint Committee Meeting, explaining that at that meeting the focus was on survey results, market analysis, and market demand.

As a result of the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, on December 7<sup>th</sup> a subcommittee met on redevelopment issues impacting the downtown area and its immediate surroundings. Then on December 20, the DDA met to

look at the first draft of the action plan. Following that, on January 5, the Steering Committee met to review the action plan, look at recommendations to the plan, and to develop tonight's presentation.

### **Review of Action Plan**

Mr. Iacoangelia reviewed the Action Program, pointing out that the included tables were divided into what was known, what could not be controlled, and what could be controlled. Items called out were:

- Physical design opportunities
- Retail market opportunities
- Residential market opportunities
- Redevelopment opportunities, including
  - West Main Street
  - South Quad
  - Cady Town
  - MainCentre Parking Deck
  - Northville Downs Property
- Organizational opportunities

Mr. Iacoangelia explained that some of the public infrastructure goals of the last Strategic Planning Plan formulated 10 years ago had been accomplished or partly accomplished, including wayfaring signs, parking lots, streetscapes, development of the Town Square, etc. What was important now was the continued ability to redevelop property.

Action Plan Tasks took into account:

1. Limitations associated with current DDA staffing levels and subsequent unavailability of personnel.
2. Modifications in approval process associated with City project reviews.
3. DDA involvement in public-private partnerships and subsequent evolution to an "Economic Developer" level DDA.

Strategies were discussed, with timeframes (near, near/mid, mid, mid/long, long) including:

- Physical Design Opportunities
- Retail Market Recommendations, including preparing an Arts and Creative Industries Master Plan for the downtown.
- Residential Target Market Recommendations, including revising and simplifying Article 20: Planned Unit Development, and to revise the Zoning Ordinance generally to allow for density bonuses where appropriate.
- Redevelopment Recommendations, including preparing a community vision for the Sub-Area Plan for Cady Street corridor and the "Downs" property.
- Organizational Recommendations included expanding the DDA boundaries, filling DDA board positions, conducting an annual work program review session via a Joint Planning session, evaluating a contractual position and cost sharing arrangements with the City, designating one agency to do Town Square event coordination, and considering the feasibility of creating a Principal Shopping District (PSD).

Process to Position for Redevelopment, 2017

- City-wide steps
  1. Revise Article 20 – Planned Unit Development
  2. Adjust Zoning Ordinance to include density bonuses when the project met or exceeded the goals of the master plan, sub-area plan or DDA Development Plan recommendations.
  3. Adjust Zoning Ordinance to include density bonuses and reduction in review period if the project includes LEED elements.
- Downtown

1. Expand the Downtown Development Authority District
2. Include within the Development Plan for the expanded district refinements to the Cady Street Sub-Area Plan and a community vision for the Northville Downs property.
3. Include within the Development Plan for the expanded district redevelopment options for the Wing Street area.
4. Incorporate into the 5-Year Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan the concept of acquiring the floodplain within the Northville Downs site.

Mr. Iacoangelia gave details of a project that went from concept to completion: The Marquette Lower Harbor.

### Discussion

Roundtable discussion included:

- Incentivizing the inclusion of LEED elements did not mean a project had to be LEED-certified.
- It was important to encourage development rather than wait for developers to come to the City. This included having design elements in place before a developer came in with a plan.
- An Arts and Creative Industry in the Master Plan would require an inventory of the arts-related/creative industries in the region, including non-profits, social media, graphic design, software development, etc. These could be harvested via events-centered themes.
- Northville should/could be positioned in unique ways, separate from other surrounding communities.
- Creativemany.org was a good resource.
- The City Council, Historic District Commission and Planning Commission were the gatekeepers to development in the City. Were the members of those groups on board with tonight's discussion?
- Terms needed to be defined. Development – and vision – meant different things to different people.
- Perhaps the shared contractual person mentioned above could be “the” gateway person for developers.
- Right now a developer would start with DDA Director Ward or City Manager Sullivan, with a subsequent meeting scheduled with the City's Planning Consultant.
- City processes for redevelopment could be streamlined, including the PUD process, as noted. However, fast was not necessarily good. Processes needed to be predictable and fair, and user-friendly.
- More important than streamlining processes was attracting good developments that were viable and synergistic with what was desired. The City needed to be proactive regarding future development while preserving the historic value of Northville.
- Bonuses, including density or height bonuses, could also be tied to affordable housing and housing for seniors. The City's demographic was aging and should be encouraged to stay within the community.
- Bonuses could also be offered for historic integrity/character, as well as rewarding LEEDS elements.
- Demographic studies and market analyses demonstrated a high preference for single family homes in Northville.
- There was limited acreage in Northville. Two-thirds of Northville Downs was in a flood plain. The cost of land was at a premium. In Northville's case, how was affordable housing defined? How was the historic tradition defined?
- All age groups and demographics should be encouraged to live in Northville, along with different types of housing: attached condos, apartments, studios, as well as single family homes. Much of this was market-driven. It was important not to be a monoculture.
- Residents needed to feel included and have means of input into community-wide decisions.

- The downtown should not be extended into the neighborhoods. The Master Plan was critical in understanding future development goals.
- Processes should be streamlined to make it easier for the developer at the beginning of the process, so that huge outlays of money did not have to happen before the developer knew if they even qualified for approval.
- Perhaps a committee could be formed to evaluate expanding the DDA District, with an eye toward making the DDA more important in the redevelopment process.

The next step was for Beckett & Raeder to put together a draft Strategic Plan for the DDA, including cost estimates of moving forward. It was important to demonstrate the cost/finances of expanding the DDA.

It was also important to solicit input and opinion from residents through a community charette process. Part of the charette process involved educating the community regarding the current framework, including surveys and resident input so far, the Master Plan, overlay districts, the Historic District, the draft Strategic Plan, etc. However, new ideas and resident input were always welcome throughout the process.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting ended at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl McGuire, Recording Secretary