

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting of the DDA Board
January 19, 2021
Zoom Meeting

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Brian Turnbull, DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, John Casey, Jim Long, Ryan McKindles (Southfield, Oakland County), Greg Presley, Shawn Riley, Mary Starring*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers, Aaron Cozart*

Also Present: *Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/Marketing & Communications Director (Montgomery County, PA), Fred Sheill/Resident, Dave Gutman/Sustainability Committee, Marilyn Price/City Council, Barbara Morowski-Browne/City Council, Laura Genitti/Genitti's Hole-in-the-Wall, Robert Florka/Energy Reduction Coalition, Susan Haifleigh/Sustainability Committee, AnnaMaryLee Vollick/Sustainability Committee*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Sheill commented he would be in favor of expanding the street closures from Main Street West of Center Street to Wing and South Center Street down the hill to Mary Alexander. Sheill believes this would open up the intersection at Main & Center and offer a pavilion or mall feeling becoming more conducive to foot traffic. It would also eliminate the unsightly orange barricades at Main and Center. The street closures have helped existing retail and expanding the boundaries would encourage new retail shops to come to downtown Northville.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda:

- a. December 2020 Financial Statement
- b. December 2020 Invoice Report
- c. November 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- d. December 15, 2020 Informational Meeting Minutes
- e. December 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Casey to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PRESENTATION BY ROBERT FLORKA, ERC ON CONVERSION OF DOWNTOWN STREETLIGHTS

Ward introduced Robert Florka from the Energy Reduction Coalition Nonprofit. ERC is currently working with the City on energy-saving technologies and the DDA is interested in a possible partnership as well.

Florka said the ERC has been around for 10 years and works with mostly municipalities in MI. They have been working with the City for the past year and will do a final presentation at the City Council meeting tonight.

Florka said they not only do LED lighting but also Induction lighting which the downtown currently uses. The first step in the process is signing a contract that allows the ERC to do a deep dive into the DDA's existing lighting costs and future needs. The contract is not binding until the research has been done and both parties have signed off on the findings. Once the contract is signed by both parties a partnership is formed. ERC will take ownership of all the lighting and will be responsible for the initial complete conversion and all products moving forward as well as a stipend for maintenance as long as both partners choose to stay in the program.

Florka said the benefit of conversion is the difference between what the DDA is paying currently and the new cost after the high efficiency lighting is installed. That savings is shared between the DDA and the ERC. For exterior lighting the benefit to the DDA will be 10% of the saving and that percentage will continue to grow each year throughout the benefit period. The user share will continue to go up as the ERC share goes down till the user is getting the majority of the benefit. The contract between ERC and the DDA lasts as long as DDA would like to continue the partnership. There is an option to buy out at any time and the cost of the buy out goes down each year. There is a 2-year commitment from the DDA and after two years the DDA can buy out the program by purchasing the lighting equipment that was installed by ERC. The ERC allows the DDA to avoid all the risks associated with product failure.

The DDA has some high-pressure sodium lamps that need to be converted to Induction but also has some light fixtures that have already been converted. The ERC can buy those already converted lights back from the DDA and then continue to maintain all the lights in the downtown. The ERC will give the DDA two proposals, one that has the existing Induction lighting owned and maintained by the DDA and another proposal that has the ERC buying back the existing Induction lighting and taking ownership of all the lighting in the downtown. The ERC will make sure the DDA is satisfied with their current Induction lighting before determining what to replace moving forward.

The Founder of ERC believed strongly in helping communities and businesses become more energy efficient while removing all the obstacles that might discourage the changeover to high efficiency lighting. The ERC contract will clearly state the beginning benchmark and yearly percentage changes. ERC owns the lights but when the agreement is over ERC usually does not come and dismantle the fixtures. ERC believes most lights will fail before their designated lifecycle and need to be replaced before the 30-year end date. At about the 30 year mark the City would be getting all the benefit from the cost savings. The user continues to pay their electric bill directly to DTE. ERC

will replace any lighting that fails, provide a maintenance stipend for repairs and pay all disposal costs. ERC is not responsible for the poles because they are not electrical. The goal of the ERC is to reduce the overall electric bill with the high efficiency lighting.

Ward said currently we give the City \$50,000 for street lighting. The DDA also has lighting in other areas that they pay directly. Ward said DPW is responsible for some of the maintenance costs and the DDA gets billed for those repairs but there are some maintenance costs out of the scope of the DPW expertise and the DDA hires outside electricians to help. Ward said we have already converted 100 poles to induction lighting at a cost of \$2000 per pole, the DDA has 100 more to convert. Ward said for the rest of the poles we would just do a conversion kit, \$300 each plus the cost of installation. Ward said it would be helpful for ERC to manage the conversion of the remaining 100 poles. Sullivan said that the City did a cost analysis on doing the conversion themselves and found it much better to allow the ERC to absorb the up-front costs and do the conversion. Given the small scale of our City it makes more sense to have ERC manage the lighting program rather than doing bid proposals to numerous companies. Sullivan said that given how many years the City has already lost on not converting to LED it is even more cost efficient to move quickly by hiring ERC. Sullivan said that the \$50,000 the City currently pays for electricity now would be reduced to around \$20,000 and we would receive a percentage of the \$30,000 savings from ERC. Of the \$30,000 savings the City would initially receive about 16% of the savings. Ward said given how long it has already been since we have been able to move forward on converting the rest of the DDA poles to induction lighting, she is in favor of letting ERC do a deep dive into our situation and give us a proposal.

Motion by Casey, seconded by Boyd to allow the ERC to take a deeper look at our current lighting costs and prepare a detailed proposal to manage the conversion to full induction lighting of the DDA street poles in the downtown. This motion is contingent on what City Council decides tonight. **Motion carried unanimously.**

HEAT IN THE STREET

Riley said the Heat in the Street Town Hall call was very successful with over 100 people on the call and at least 30 participant comments. Riley said at least 90% were in favor of keeping the streets closed. The participants did not mind the traffic diversions or the reduced street parking. Riley said that at the Executive Committee Meeting they wanted to have an additional follow up conversation in February. Riley believes that conversation needs to happen quickly so the merchants and restaurants have plenty of time to prepare for the future. The current Special Event application expires on March 1st. Ward said there is currently an active online survey that is circulating till the end of January. Carlisle Wortman is overseeing the survey and has not released the results yet. Ward said we have had over 1800 survey responses so far. Ward reiterated what Riley said that the next step is a conversation with the DDA Board on the results of the Town Hall Meeting and the street closure survey results. Ward has encouraged the restaurants to convert their temporary/permanent 204a permits to permanent 204 permits so there will not be an interruption in their permitting. Sullivan said in order for the streets to remain closed the City would need an action from the DDA Board which

would then be sent for approval to the City Council requiring two separate meetings. Sullivan did not feel a second combined meeting would be necessary since the DDA Board would not be able to vote at a combined meeting. Casey suggested we move forward with the recommendation to keep the streets closed today. Johnson said without the survey results that would not be prudent and may disenfranchise participants that took the survey. Boyd recommended we close the survey early so we can schedule another DDA Board meeting before City Council meets on February 1st. Ward cautioned the DDA Board to also look at whether or not the DDA has the budget to move forward with the street closures for another year. Ward also drew attention to the additional staffing needed to keep the street closures viable and how that would impact the budget. Sullivan said some of the budget shortfalls could be offset by increasing the rates for outdoor dining because of the additional square footage being used. Ward said in the past the outdoor dining permit money went directly to the City not the DDA. Sullivan said that could be changed moving forward.

Genitti commented that the street closures have been very well received but there needs to be a liaison managing the program. People need information on where to buy food, where they can purchase alcohol and the location of tables to eat. Genitti feels the Social District is big enough and the borders should not be expanded. There needs to be drop off and pick-up areas for deliveries. The Social District hours need to be more defined and we need to welcome outside vendors if downtown restaurants can't staff the Stands. Ward agreed we need to due our due diligence moving forward and have proper support staff and funding to keep the street closures successful.

Presley suggested closing the survey early and have a special DDA Board meeting scheduled on January 27th so we can have a recommendation to the City Council on February 1st. Casey felt waiting a couple weeks will not make any difference to the restaurants in terms of ordering product and delaying would buy more time for Ward to prepare. Riley felt that we should move quickly and rap it up next week. Sullivan expressed concern the DDA will not have a good budget in place for next week. Sullivan felt Ward should determine when the next meeting of the DDA Board should take place and communicate that date via email.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION & UPDATES

a. Design Committee:

No meeting

b. Marketing Committee:

Riley said the committee met and continued to share information about upcoming events.

c. Parking Committee:

No meeting

d. Organizational Committee:

No meeting

- e. *Economic Development Committee:*
No meeting

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Casey to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

FUTURE MEETINGS/ IMPORTANT DATES

- a. Economic Development Committee- TBD
- b. Marketing Committee Meeting – February 4, 2021
- c. Design Committee Meeting – February 8, 2021
- d. Follow up to Town hall Meeting – Proposed Date: February 9, 2021
- e. Executive Committee Meeting – February 10, 2021
- f. DDA Board Meeting – February 16, 2021
- g. Parking Committee – TBD
- h. Parking Credit Subcommittee Meeting - TBD
- i. Sustainability Committee Meeting - TBD

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATION

The next DDA Board meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2021.

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Cozart to adjourn the DDA Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 am

Respectfully submitted,
Jeri Johnson, Marketing and Communications Director
Northville DDA