

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 20, 2008**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Jennifer Shoub, Chris Shook, Dan Van Sweden,
Kenneth Miller, John Schmitt, Derek Wissner,
Lisa Prasher, Erma Gordon

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Bobby Hopewell, Jim Escamilla, Ann Rohrbaugh

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Nacci, Steve Deisler, Deb Houseman
Vicky Kettner, Rob Peterson, Jillian Green

OTHER: Val Lazdins, Alex Nixon, Leslie Hoffmann,
Sonja VanderVeen, Melba Colca, Valda Karlsons,
Jerome Kisscorni, Rob Hammond, Nelson Nave,
George Peterson, John Kneas, Marty Dodge,
Dean Hauck, Mac Waldorf, James Glessman,
Andrea Augustine, Deb Killarney, Bob Dunbar,
Paul Ecklund, Michael O' Connor

Vice-Chair Shook called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. on behalf of Chair, Director Shoub who arrived directly after. Director Shoub then welcomed Director Schmitt back from medical leave on behalf of the entire Board and staff.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

**DIRECTOR MILLER MOVED TO ADOPT
THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SUPPORTED
BY DIRECTOR VAN SWEDEN. MOTION CARRIED.**

III. MINUTES — September 15, 2008

**DIRECTOR VAN SWEDEN MOVED TO
APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 9/15/08 AS
PRESENTED. SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR
MILLER. MOTION CARRIED.**

IV. FINANCE REPORT—August 31, 2008

**DIRECTOR SHOOK MOVED TO
APPROVE THE FINANCE REPORT OF
8/31/08 AS PRESENTED. SUPPORTED
BY DIRECTOR MILLER. MOTION CARRIED.**

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Resolution to Call a Public Hearing on 2009 Budget

K. Nacci explained that the draft budget would be reviewed at a public hearing during the November 17 Board meeting in the City Commission Chambers. He noted that the Board needed to set the hearing via roll call vote.

**DIRECTOR WISSNER MOVED TO SET THE
THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR REVIEW OF
THE DRAFT 2009 BUDGET ON 11/17/08
AS DISCUSSED. SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR
VAN SWEDEN. MOTION CARRIED.**

ROLL CALL VOTE. 8-0.

B. Business Recruitment Incentive Program Grant Requests

1. Jim Endres - 210 South Kalamazoo Mall

New Retail Tenant

R. Peterson briefed attendees on a request from J. Endres for the current Subs-n-More location. J. Endres has come to an agreement on a lease with Peyton Wood for a five-year term with the option for two renewals. P. Wood is the current owner of Big Joe's Pizza & Sub shop, plans to relocate his business in the downtown location within one month. The Business Recruitment Retention Committee has reviewed and approved the request for the maximum amount of \$5,000.

**DIRECTOR PRASHER MOVED TO APPROVE
THE GRANT REQUEST FOR \$5,000 AS DISCUSSED.
SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR WISSNER.
MOTION CARRIED.**

2. Joshua Weiner - 221 Farmers Alley

New Entertainment Tenant

R. Peterson shared details from a presentation made by Adam Weiner to the committee regarding the Farmers Alley Theater. The goal for the theater is to be the only year-round, fully operational theater in the area. The theater is black box style, with no fixed seating and capacity of up to 120. The programming will be family-oriented and will include programs for children. The Business Recruitment Retention Committee has reviewed and approved the request for the maximum amount of \$5,000.

**DIRECTOR SHOOK MOVED TO APPROVE
THE GRANT REQUEST FOR \$5,000 AS
DISCUSSED. SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR
PRASHER. MOTION CARRIED.**

C. Comprehensive Plan Update—Presentation

K. Nacci provided a brief overview of the update process noting V. Lazdins of LSL Planning, Inc. would be making a presentation on the refinement of the draft conceptual land use plan. He clarified no formal endorsement would be sought from the Board until January and shared handouts of relative documents. V. Lazdins then summarized the conceptual land use plan via a PowerPoint presentation.

S. Deisler cited some revisions to the land use map, based on feedback from a series of Project Team meetings and public forums. Additional priorities identified included: the Eastside Neighborhood as a connector neighborhood, the Kal-Haven Trail as a key pedestrian/biking linkage, emphasis on green spaces and the vacant E. Michigan Ave. properties owned by DTI as a key redevelopment area. K. Nacci explained that staff has identified some implementation strategies; however funding sources need to be determined. The floor was then opened for comments and questions.

Director Van Sweden expressed some uncertainty regarding the viability of an arena project. K. Nacci explained that the site identified for the project is underutilized and after a professional assessment by urban planning consultants, the area seems best suited for the project. He added that the financial feasibility has not yet been determined. Should the arena project not be realized, the alternative of an in-town neighborhood is being considered as a part of the planning process.

Director Schmitt observed the parcel of land being considered for the arena is an obstacle to traffic flow from WMU into downtown and an in-town neighborhood would open up the area and draw people from the university. He also suggested there seems to be opportunity for synergy with new state legislation specific to economic incentives for redevelopment. K. Nacci assured that in order for the arena project to move forward, WMU would need to be a partner (i.e. hosting Bronco sporting events and drawing students). He added that downtown Kalamazoo has had economic stimulus tools (e.g. façade programs and recruitment incentive programs via tax increment financing) for years and the new state legislation is helping other communities to offer similar incentives. He suggested that when some implementation strategies were devised for the project, the policies and legislation would have to be reviewed to begin applying some of the related tools and incentives.

Director Gordon affirmed that it would be critical to communicate to surrounding businesses and residents who might be affected by the passing of bonds or higher taxes in order to fund projects identified. K. Nacci assured if there were ever any increase in taxes or bonds issued, it would require a public vote. At present, there are no plans for increased taxes.

Director Prasher appreciated the focus on green and LEED initiatives as a professional in the construction industry.

Director Wissner commended V. Lazdins and staff on their efforts, agreeing that the redevelopment of the E. Michigan properties and other areas of blight downtown are key issues to address.

VI. COMMITTEE UPDATES

There were none.

VII. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Schmitt asked about participating in a draft budget review meeting prior to the November 17 meeting. J. Green noted she was coordinating meetings and would follow-up with him regarding scheduling.

Director Gordon reiterated her enthusiasm to be a member of the Board.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

James Glessman noted that he had attended a public forum at the Radisson and appreciated the input opportunities. He expressed concern with the proposed arena project, affirming that it was important to focus on less lofty initiatives.

Marty Dodge commended staff on the thorough public input process. He recommended looking at the neighborhoods where students reside as an opportunity for connections, noting students don't only travel from campus into downtown.

Dean Hauck, owner of Michigan News Agency, noted she had attended all of the public meetings during the 1996 process and avowed it was important not to lose sight of the two-way traffic conversion this time around. She also shared concern about potential attrition to her business if an arena was built downtown stating that her business suffers when there are large events at the festival site. It is especially important if public funds are used in the construction of an arena project or similar initiative that might detract from retailer traffic. Deb Killarney countered that the arena could be an incentive to draw students with money downtown. She suggested that unlike the events at the festival site, there might be an opportunity for spillover traffic into downtown businesses after arena events. She asked what the proposed capacity for an arena would be. K. Nacci answered the total number of seats would be determined based on the market demand, citing a possible range of 6,000 to 10,000. He noted that a mixed-use development (ancillary retail, restaurants, etc.) is being discussed to maintain activity during non-event hours.

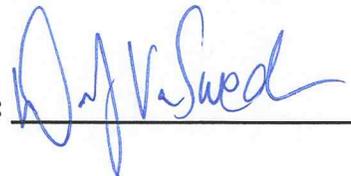
Bob Dunbar shared appreciation for the process and opportunity input. He asked for a stronger stance in regards to the WMU's East Campus. He added that WMU is also revisiting their master plan and forming a committee specific to East Campus and its historic significance, encouraging D's staff to attend the forums. K. Nacci appreciated the comments clarifying that the Comp. Plan Project Team includes representation from WMU.

Paul Ecklund of the Disability Resource Center expressed gratitude for the focus on accessibility for all public spaces during the planning process.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

APPROVED: _____



Jillian Green
Recording Secretary