

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 18, 2008**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Jennifer Shoub, Chris Shook, Dan Van Sweden,  
Ann Rohrbaugh, Lisa Prasher, Bobby Hopewell

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** Jim Escamilla, Derek Wissner, Kenneth Miller  
John Schmitt

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ken Nacci, Steve Deisler, Deb Houseman  
Vicky Kettner, Nicole Wilson, Jillian Green

**OTHER:** Erma Gordon, David Brinkert, Alex Nixon

Director Shoub called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

**II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Director Shoub cited one addition under V) Discussion Items, *Nominating Committee Recommendation*.

**THE AMENDED AGENDA WAS ADOPTED  
BY CONSENSUS.**

**III. MINUTES — June 16, 2008**

**DIRECTOR SHOOK MOVED TO APPROVE  
THE MINUTES OF 6/16/08 AS PRESENTED.  
SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR VAN SWEDEN.  
MOTION CARRIED.**

**IV. FINANCE REPORTS**

**A. May 31, 2008**

**B. June 30, 2008**

**DIRECTOR VAN SWEDEN MOVED TO APPROVE  
THE FINANCE REPORTS OF 5/31/08 AND  
6/30/08 AS PRESENTED. SUPPORTED BY  
DIRECTOR SHOOK. MOTION CARRIED.**

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Nominating Committee Recommendation**

Director Shoub introduced Erma Gordon, Executive Director the Minority Business Alliance, who was identified by the Nominating Committee as a potential Board member. Ms. Gordon has agreed to participate on the Board pending City Commission approval. Ms. Gordon then provided an overview of her professional background, including founding the Minority Business Alliance. She explained the Alliance is membership-based organization serves minority and women-owned businesses by providing training and tools for aspiring entrepreneurs. Board member and staff introductions followed.

### **B. Comprehensive Plan—Presentation by LSL Planning, Inc.**

K. Nacci introduced Val Lazdins of LSL Planning, Inc. to provide an overview of the vision and strategies derived from feedback gathered from focus groups, public forums, and stakeholder interviews spanning March and May. Another community forum is scheduled for September 23 at 6 p.m. in the Cityscape Event Center.

V. Lazdins reviewed a PowerPoint presentation containing feedback from the focus groups, community forums and stakeholder interviews conducted between March and July. The presentation also included a downtown conceptual land use plan. The plan is in Phase III which includes D's Boards review and refinement of the information. LSL Planning, Inc. and TSI Consulting staffs are looking to condense the feedback into a mission statement. The draft plan is not yet ready and cited the following next steps: draft document, staff/committee review, September 23 community forum, document refinement and finally adoption. He cited some changes in Michigan legislation specific to planning and a rigorous process of dispersing information to the community, this might result in a November adoption.

K. Nacci added that the mission statement language would be discussed at the staff and leadership retreats in September and October. He reminded attendees that the City would also be updating their comprehensive plan within the next year. S. Deisler added that he has been in discussions with the City's planning staff regarding the respective plans. He then opened the floor to questions and comments.

Director Van Sweden observed that WMU was absent from the conceptual land use map. K. Nacci noted that there was feedback captured related to a student connector/trolley and cited challenges of the Amtrak rail line and an M-DOT trunk line. He assured that the university wasn't being left off the list of priorities. V. Lazdin's added that aside from the trolley option, non-motorized options (i.e. bike paths) are being considered. Director Van Sweden also inquired about the inclusion of Borgess Hospital. K. Nacci clarified that from a land use strategy the hospital doesn't surface, but from a connection standpoint it does as it is located on a major gateway.

Director Prasher asked about the community perception to the mass transportation from WMU to downtown. K. Nacci clarified that there is a currently a free shuttle service for WMU students which is underutilized. There needs to be a more appealing option for the students; this item was discussed at the student focus group level. Discussion ensued regarding alternative transportation options from the WMU campus into downtown.

E. Gordon asked about the timing for implementation of the new plan/priorities and what would be achieved first. K. Nacci answered that it was a matter of matching the resources with the priorities. D's and City staff would start setting some of the priorities and LSL Planning, Inc. staff would help with implementation strategies. He noted in 1996, Project Downtown pinpointed 10 projects; 8 of which have been realized. Two-way traffic conversion/traffic calming and the west gateway projects are the two remaining items identified in the 1996 plan.

### **C. New Downtown Legislation**

S. Deisler provided a quick summary on legislation authored by Senator Allen and approved by Governor Granholm in late-July. He clarified not all would apply to downtown Kalamazoo, but many bills focus on downtowns and provide tools for small communities establishing DDAs. He cited opportunities for retail incubators, urban trail ways, personal property tax abatements for distressed parcels, commercial redevelopment acts—allowing for tax abatements for commercial use. He noted the tax abatements would impact the TIF budget and offered to share detailed handouts to any interested parties.

## **VII. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **A. Citizens Advisory Council Minutes**

K. Nacci noted that the minutes were included in the packet as an informational item. He noted that Jon Reeves, Council Chair, would be reporting out to the City Commission which is done on an annual basis by all neighborhoods.

## **VIII. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Ken Nacci provided an update on Director Schmitt, who was seriously injured in a bike accident and is currently recovering at the Mary Free Bed Hospital in Grand Rapids. Director Shoub asked if Director Schmitt would be taking a leave of absence and if there would be quorum issues. K. Nacci responded he wasn't sure of the standard policy and would follow-up with the City Clerk.

Director Hopewell shared that he had just met with 7 youth from the street academy about their aspirations for their future, which was very inspiring. Regarding the Comprehensive Plan update, he asked about bike racks specific to the Comprehensive Plan update. V. Lazdins acknowledged that there are opportunities for additional bike racks, noting some communities have incorporated the additional racks as part of their updated plans. Director Hopewell cited some opportunities for funding through Humana and opportunities for loaner bikes. He noted that accommodations for non-motorized traffic are in line with the desire for sustainability and greening. K. Nacci noted that bike lockers are being researched for the parking ramps. Director Shook, Parking Committee Chair, noted that a sub-committee had been formed related to the Comprehensive Plan and they were looking at additional bike racks.

Director Prasher commended the staff on the MI Biz insert specific to downtown Kalamazoo. She added that she is in final negotiations with a firm who is planning to bring their offices to Kalamazoo.

E. Gordon shared her enthusiasm about participating on the Board.

Director Shoub shared that she hosted a friend from Chicago the past weekend who was very impressed with the evolution of downtown Kalamazoo. She lauded staff for their efforts in the progress which has transpired.

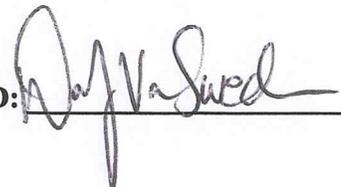
## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_



Jillian Green  
Recording Secretary