



6:00PM Wednesday, August 4, 2021
City Hall Conference Room
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, MI 48335

MINUTES

Roll Call 6:05pm

Present: Todd Craft, Chris Halas, Claire Perko, Linda Deskins, Sara Bowman, Tom Buck, Miguel Williams, DDA staff Kate Knight, DDA staff Jess Westendorf, Main Street Oakland County liaison Tim Colbeck, DDA Board applicant Donovan Singleton

Absent: Tom Pascaris

2. Approval of Items on Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes: Jun 2, 2021 DDA Regular Meeting
- b. Minutes: May 11, 2021 DDA Business Development Committee
- c. Minutes: June 8, 2021 DDA Business Development Committee
- d. Minutes: May 27, 2021 DDA Design Committee

**Motion by Halas, seconded by Buck, to approve the items on the consent agenda.
Passes unanimously.**

3. Approval of Regular Agenda

**Motion by Deskins, seconded by Williams, to approve the items on the consent agenda.
Passes unanimously.**

4. Public Comment

Donovan Singleton, Downtown Merchant, owner of Loft Cigar Lounge, 33419 Grand River Avenue, introduced himself and stated his interested in applying for the vacant position on the DDA Board. Singleton is here to listen, learn, and apply his experience and expertise to the Board, should he be appointed by City Council on August 16, 2021.

5. Financial Snapshot

Knight stated that this is the end of fiscal year (June 30), and there is no formal snapshot during this audit season. A final fiscal year budget record will be provided in September.

6. Executive Director Update

July Regular Meeting was canceled due to severe storm event. Knight stated assumption that Board had read June packet update but wanted to reiterate that it has been a busy outdoor season thus far, and this really kicked off in June with Art on the Grand. Example shared: Clothes Encounters, longtime downtown retailer, had their best day in 20 years on Saturday during AoG. Farmers Market is in full swing, with 5,000 visitors on Saturdays. Knight acknowledged the success of Founders Festival, and expressed appreciation for the team of City, DDA, vendors and volunteers that made a huge effort toward repair and clean up post-storm, pre-Founders. Downtown merchants appreciated having the event back. It was well-produced.

MEDC Technical Assistance team visited in July, assessed potential properties and redevelopment eligible, focusing on one downtown holding. Meeting with owners went well, and more work is imminent. Project will receive \$25,000-\$50,000 in technical assistance services from MEDC.

Knight invited the Board to the Michigan Downtown Association conference November 4-5 in Detroit. Deadline for registration is mid-October.

7. Organization Presentation: “The Main Street Approach: Board Roles and Responsibilities” with Tim Colbeck, Main Street Oakland County

Tim Colbeck presented a comprehensive outlook of Board Roles and Responsibilities. (Attachment). Colbeck reminded the Board that there should be a continued effort to remind the public of the DDA’s role and responsibility to improve downtown and promote the work they do. Upon conclusion, Craft emphasized that MSOC is an incredible resource as the only county-wide Main Street program in the country. Downtown Farmington is fortunate to be a select level community, with full benefits. Deskins: Is there an opportunity for benchmarking with/against standards with other communities? Halas: How does the annual evaluation work? Colbeck: There is a rubric/criteria for select level accreditation and we provide guidance and opportunities for professional development and technical assistance. There is a day-long visit with MSOC staff and an outside consultant to evaluate status of a community’s program.

Colbeck updated that there is a larger grant earmarked for Downtown Farmington’s MSOC technical assistance. The bulk of it has already been allocated toward a communications contract with Metromode, but the balance may be applied to a different project. Colbeck and Knight have discussed the establishment of an endowed fund, with the grant going toward this effort with a party such as the Rochester Community Foundation.

8. Principal Shopping District Renewal Study Report and Recommendation

PSD renewal process is underway. Knight described the mechanism, process and calendar for this next renewal cycle. (Attachment) The study group, comprised of the Business Development Committee and city administration, made the recommendation to renew the SAD continuing the same terms and qualifications. The renewal will be considered for approval by City Council in September 2021. The next cycle begins in the fiscal year 2022-23. Deskins: Will this assessment encounter any pushback or questioning? Knight: We track communications with property owners who respond to the mailing with inquiries on their own assessment. We have had a few conversations to clarify the assessment.

9. Approval of LED Tree Lighting Program Extension

Knight described the program continuation of a Design Committee recommendation from 2020 for LED tree lighting. The second segment of the program is slated for this 21-22 fiscal year. This segment picks up at the mid-block crosswalk in front of Sunflour Bakehaus and runs down to Riley Park, encompassing 16 trees. (Attachment)

Motion by Perko, seconded by Deskins, Resolved, that the DDA Board authorize the allocation of \$11,580.00 from 248-000.00-801.006 SEASONAL DECORATIONS to contractor Holiday Light Express, to provide and install LED replacement lighting as indicated by attached proposal along Grand River Avenue. Passes unanimously.

10. Committee Updates:

a. Promotions Committee

No update this month. Stay tuned for comprehensive analytics and project reveal in September, including a parking document and kiosk update.

b. Organization Committee

Deskins presented the latest results from volunteer management outreach through the Harvest Moon Volunteer Pep Rally in July: 25 new volunteers! Deskins dealt out new business cards to the Board, with QR codes linking to descriptions and enrollment options for volunteering downtown. For the first time, all opportunities were offered and promoted during the pep rally. Turnout was strong at around 60 attendees. Deskins shared the DDA orientation binders with the Board and invited the Board to participate in an upcoming Org Committee meeting. Strategies for developing and recruiting future DDA Board members will be discussed as part of a comprehensive nomination process.

c. Design Committee

Perko shared that the next DDA Design Committee meeting would be the next morning, August 7:30am. The focus of their work is currently the Farmington Road Streetscape, which is in final design discussion.

d. Public Art Committee

No update this month

e. Business Development Committee

See PSD Study update.

f. Harvest Moon Committee

Work in progress. Work group has been meeting. Most sponsorship is set. Major update coming in September. This year we will have credit card capacity.

11. Other Business

Knight shared that the city manager had requested that the DDA appoint a representative to the City's Parking Committee. Tom Buck volunteered to serve in an interim capacity, no more than 90 days, until another representative might be identified.

Motion by Bowman, seconded by Halas, to nominate Tom Buck to the Parking Committee as an interim representative of the DDA, for a term not to exceed 90 days. Passes unanimously.

12. Board Comment

Buck: Larry Sallen is a wonderful example of how to retail. He does the best job of merchandising on the sidewalk in town. Really happy for him. Bowman: Higher level update of Founders was that it was well-received. Reviews were positive. Public Safety had six calls related to Founders, ranging from merchant dissatisfaction with dumpster placement, to complaints about noise, which were traced back to live music at the beer tent. Bowman recapped that the City outlaid \$10,000 for the event, passed through the DDA. A contract is underway for next year for the exact same thing. Buck: Let's give the mayor a standing ovation for advocating for Founders. Craft: Several comments were shared with him regarding lack of food. More options at the event would go over well. He attended all three nights and heard great reviews from visitors.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Halas, seconded by Bowman, to adjourn. Passes unanimously.

Dates of Interest:

Pending in August: DDA/City Council Joint Meeting
July and August: Kick-Off Rhythms in Riley Park and Lunch Beats
September 1: DDA Regular Board Meeting
September 16-18: Harvest Moon Celebration