



FARMINGTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 6, 2019
Farmington City Hall

The February 6, 2019 meeting was called to order by Todd Craft at 6:09 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Todd Craft, Stephanie Clement, Sean Murphy, Steve Schneemann, Kathy Griswold, Rachel Gallagher and Micki Skrzycki

ABSENT: Tom Pascaris, Tom Buck

OTHERS PRESENT: Kate Knight, DDA Executive Director
David Murphy, City Manager

2. APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Gallagher, seconded by Griswold, to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- a. Financial Report
- b. Minutes: January 9, 2019 Meeting

Motion carried 7-0-2.

3. APPROVAL OF REGULAR AGENDA

Motion by Schneemann seconded by Gallagher, to approve the February 9, 2019 agenda as presented.

Motion carried 7-0-2.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Call to the Public at 6:11 p.m.
Call to the Public closed at 6:11 p.m.

5. FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

No questions or comments

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Knight confirmed the date for Metromode's contracted event on February 27, An Evening with Metromode, at the Farmington Civic Theater. The panel discussion will feature Dan Gilmartin, CEO of Michigan Municipal League, Steve Schneemann, Metromode founder Brian Boyle and Kate Knight, talking about how promoting a

vibrant, walkable downtown improved community engagement and workforce productivity. The event is free, but ticketed online through LocalHop. Light fare from a downtown restaurant will be served. The DDA is hoping to gain coalition partners to support future work with Metromode.

Work planning is underway for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The work plan includes the planned Oakland Street reconstruction, which fulfills several of the key themes of the DDA mission and also commits significant funding.

Main Street Evaluation is February 13. Ray Scriber from Main Street Louisiana will lead the evaluation. The Board is scheduled to meet with Scriber, as well as elected officials, volunteers and business owners. The agenda will begin at 9:30 for the Board to accommodate the State of the Cities breakfast.

Knight asked Griswold to report to the Board regarding the D Business District Detroit meeting they both attended at the WSU Ilitch School of Business on Feb 7. Griswold briefly described the presentation by the urban design and marketing team for District Detroit, and that it was applicable to small downtowns like Farmington. Walkability, public art, and small business environment are key to attracting new visitors and residents. Griswold said it gave a renewed perspective and boost of energy toward the work required for the DDA.

7. COMMITTEE UPDATES

Per discussion at the January Board meeting, the DDA will ask Committee chairs to present on current work per project or meeting group. The chairs for active committees are Schneemann, Design Committee, Murphy, Promotions Committee, Craft volunteered to chair the Public Art Committee. Skryzcki and Buck, Co-Chairs for a recently formed Founders Festival Committee, to gauge merchant concern and interest in programming to compensate for Founders moving to Shiawassee Park in 2019.

Design Committee Update by Chair Steve Schneemann:

Design Committee hasn't met since December. Oakland Street planned reconstruction is the biggest project going. The committee has looked at recommending some improvements at Riley Park. The festival lighting installation was completed in December and there are more items there for consideration. Gallagher suggested that the Design Committee look at iron fencing on southeast side of park to improve pedestrian access. Schneemann also mentioned screening around the ice rink and chiller.

Public Art Committee Update by Chair Todd Craft:

Craft discussed the Evening with Artist John Martin on February 3. More than 50 attendees gathered at MI.Mosa to listen to the muralist talk about the design thought and iconography behind the mural. Gallagher, Skryzcki and Craft attended, and reported that there was good attendance support from members of the Arts Commission and community, despite it being Super Bowl Sunday. Other projects

planned by the Public Art Committee include a downtown window design contest, with the theme “Old Time Radio Hour” to align with Main Street Oakland County’s contest in early Spring. Merchants have been notified and the contest is posted. More mural projects are a priority for the committee. Another project idea is the display of public art in Farmington City Hall. The Board discussed the opportunity for public art as part of the improvement at Oakland Street. Knight shared that the idea had been brought up in past committee discussion: using public art to mark pedestrian connections into downtown, as identified in the Downtown Master Plan. Schneemann asked whether the David Barr sculpture, “Shift” had been repaired. Some damage had been incurred, and evaluated with DPW. Spot welding and painting is planned, and will be finished once weather allows. Knight will follow up. Knight shared that DPS won a \$100,000 grant to install security cameras throughout downtown. Installation is set for Spring 2019.

Promotions Committee Update by Chair Sean Murphy

Plans are underway to activate this committee to meet on a project basis, beginning in March.

Founders Committee Update by Co-Chair Micki Skrycki

Skrycki stated that no formal survey has taken place.49”30 Gallagher updated the Board with what would be required to produce a renewed Alley Regally event during Founders, if Legato’s Diane Cassidy took the project on. Cassidy would need: sponsorship, underwriting from the city or DDA, and specified that the tent and layout should locate at Riley Park. The Board discussed that the Farmers Market would relocate back to its usual spot at the Riley Park pavilion for the weekend of Founders. Knight has confirmed that concert producer Go2Guy is available to produce an additional Friday night concert as part of the Rhythms in Riley Park, a la carte. Knight shared that she, Craft and Gallagher had met with Mary Martin of the GFAC the morning after the January DDA Board meeting. Martin had listened to concern from the DDA, and agreed to approach the Chamber Board with the idea of downtown programming that would complement the whole of Shiawassee Park’s festival efforts. Gallagher cited that any Alley Regally plan would need sponsorship development. The Board discussed whether marketing downtown programming in cooperation with the Chamber’s efforts, as part of Founders Festival, was prudent, or even possible, as the bulk of the program would be out of downtown. The Chamber stated that outlying programming located downtown would need to be separately insured. Knight reminded the Board that it would need to be determined by the majority whether DDA staff time should or would be spent on vetting options for sponsorship and other due diligence. The Board determined in January 2018 that a committee would be formed to engage downtown business with outreach and feedback regarding Founders Festival activities. The ad hoc committee was formed, and Skrycki and Buck agreed to lead. Knight offered again to create a survey for the committee to use in collecting data from business. The Board discussed how many hours of Board and staff time should be committed to efforts that may or may not be to the benefit of the greater DDA community. Is it for a few vocal businesses, or all? Craft stated that the DDA is interviewing for promotions coordinator currently, and is understaffed to take on exploratory festival investigation or planning. Murphy

concluded that the DDA work plan doesn't have extra room to produce an additional event. The Board agrees that they would prefer to have Founders Festival downtown, and if it isn't downtown, that something else should be done. Griswold commented that you can't erase a community brand in one year, and what if this is a one year experiment? Griswold expressed doubt that an Alley Regally-type event should even be held. Murphy and Schneemann asserted that downtown restaurants would still thrive during the festival. Gallagher and Skryzcki contested that restaurants would suffer without direct walkable adjacency. Craft mentioned that the most vocal businesses, complaining about the relocation of Founders, had also stated unwillingness to produce their own promotional activity. Although, Martin (GFAC) shared that one downtown bar owner had contacted the bands under contract with the Chamber, and asked them to break their contracts for the Founders dates. He said that he would hire them at his establishment instead, for those dates. Craft asked whether the DDA has something like underwriting an Alley Regally in the budget. Schneemann iterated that the DDA should be frank with the Chamber that the DDA would retain the right to market an Alley Regally outside of the Chamber's Founders marketing efforts. Gallagher listed the logistical sequence for an Alley Regally. Schneemann pointed out that the Farmers Market had already received Council permission to use the pavilion at Riley Park, so locating a tent for Alley Regally would have to accommodate that use already committed. Council would not approve two events for the same space, same time. Another location might be more appropriate. Schneemann stated that the DDA needed to make a decision one way or the other. Skryzcki agreed that she and Buck would reach out to Walt Gajewski to inquire about the possibility of sharing the park space. Knight cited minutes from the January 2019 DDA regular meeting, affirming that the committee chairs, Skryzcki and Buck had agreed to lead the Founders exploratory effort. Skryzcki committed to canvassing the merchants and working with Buck to bring an organized understanding of merchant opinion. Knight agreed to create a survey for businesses for this purpose. The Board agreed that the discussion was inconclusive, and that they would wait to hear downtown business consensus. Schneemann: We need to hear from the merchants to make a qualified decisions. Griswold: We'll wait to hear from merchants; let's not react to a few vocal business owners if it's not a concern or benefit for the entire downtown. Chemical Bank is not able to open during the Saturday of Founders, usually. However, if the majority of businesses want it, the DDA is obligated to support that. Clement: Ask the businesses specifically what they want AND how they would commit to participate with promotion and marketing. There are other options for expanding downtown activities: sidewalk sales, concert, farmers market, that would bolster downtown activity that weekend. Gallagher: Let's hear from merchants. Murphy: We do it if the merchants want it. Let's poll them.

8. PUBLICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT OF TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Pursuant to Section 125.1665 of Act 197 of the Public Acts of 1975, the Farmington Downtown Development Authority is required to publish an annual report on the status of its tax increment financing (TIF) account. The report is to include information regarding the revenue, expenditures and bond indebtedness of the TIF account, which, for our purposes, is the DDA general fund.

New legislation (2018 PA 57, Effective January 1, 2019) requires new DDA/TIF reporting and informational meeting requirements. TIF information must be publicly posted on a municipal website, and a second informational meeting must be held annually.

It is still required that the report be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality. We will, therefore, arrange for the report to be published as a legal notice in the next available issue of the Farmington Press.

ACTION:

Authorize the publication of the Fiscal Year 2017-18 Annual Report, funds to be derived from Miscellaneous Expenses, Account #248-00.000-956.000.

MOTION by Schneemann, SECONDED by Gallagher, RESOLVED, that DDA Board authorize the publication of the Fiscal Year 2017-18 Annual Report, funds to be derived from Miscellaneous Expenses, Account #248-00.000-956.000.

Motion carried 7-0-2

9. Work Plan

Knight discussed the work plan changes from the previous fiscal year. The planned Oakland Street reconstruction would consume a large amount of effort and funding from the DDA. Murphy asked about next steps for that project. What does Council's authorization to "proceed to bid" mean? Schneemann explained that the project would go out to contractors to receive costing. Once bids are received, the final decision would be made by Council. The Oakland Street project would fulfill multiple core themes within the DDA work plan, covering everything from increasing and improving parking, to supporting cleanliness and maintenance downtown. Public art would continue as a focus. Knight observed that the funding for service and maintenance is probably accurate, and there is a plan ready to execute as a result of the newly created Landscape and Maintenance Guidelines, once warmer weather arrives. Efforts to organize operations with DPW will continue. Events funding will remain consistent. Lunch Beats promotions spending will increase slightly, to bolster this new series in its second year. Continued investment with IMG/Metromode is included for consideration. Another contract would commit a major percentage of the DDA's communications and promotions budget. The Board has shown support for the project thus far. Knight recommended the reinstatement of a façade improvement program, seeded with \$20,000. It's an effective matching program that incentivizes private investment, and is supported by the Main Street program. It's a reasonable expectation as annual tax assessments are finalized, that there will be a slight increase in TIF capture, which would support funding this program. Any unspent, budgeted monies, could be potentially allocated toward physical improvement to supplement city investment, such as streetscapes, parking, etc.

10. Other Business

Board member Schneemann, City Council liaison to the Board, reported that a suggestion was made at the January 14, 2019 City Council meeting that it may be beneficial to broadcast future DDA meetings. Council members discussed the idea and decided not to recommend to the DDA that meetings be broadcast at this time. A discussion by Board members on whether DDA meetings should be broadcast live ensued. The Board discussed the challenges a live broadcast might present with the small meeting space and lack of microphones. The Board discussed the importance of providing an open forum and its commitment to ensuring that DDA meetings continue to be open and accessible to the public. The Board was in agreement that live broadcasts were not practical at this time.

11. Board Comment

Schneemann requested that Knight look into the Samurai sign, which never went through Design Committee approval. Knight agreed to follow up. DDA staff inquired of Economic and Community Development, and was informed that existing signage was grandfathered. Schneeman maintained that the DDA Design Committee would want to contest whether the “grandfathering” precedent applies to this temporary sign.

Schneemann thinks that we as a Board need to be supportive of our volunteer advisory committees.

Sckryzcki invited the DDA Board to a film screening of the Greater Farmington Film Festival this Tuesday at the Farmington Civic Theater.

Craft requested that the DDA explore more ways to be autonomous- maybe not shared services such as payroll and rent, but in ways that promote partnership in a shared mission for a great downtown. Schneemann asked whether DDA staff has a positive working relationship with city administration. Knight commented that she and city administration have a strong and positive working relationship, and that the benefits of adjacency to city departments facilitate an efficient and helpful environment.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Murphy, seconded by Skryzcki to adjourn at 8:46 p.m.

Motion carried 7-0-2.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Knight
Executive Director,
Farmington DDA

The next regular meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2019, in the conference room at Farmington City Hall.