

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 8:30 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:32 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.
- II. ROLL CALL:**
- Present:* Andrew Agbay
Matthew Baumgarten
Erin Brick
Scott Francis
Andy Gilbert
Chris Gross
Matteo Passalacqua (via Zoom – unofficial attendance)
Ashley Poirier
Ailya Siddiqi
Brian Zifkin
- Absent:* Tim Barnes
Donna Dirkse – *excused*
Jenna Hance
Razur Rahman – *excused*
Garrett Wyatt – *excused*
- Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Lisa Kempner, Planning Commission Liaison
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director
Megan Masson-Minock, Community Development Liaison
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** On motion by Zifkin and second by Gross, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- A. Regular Meeting of January 12, 2022**
On motion by Brick and second by Agbay, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.
- V. LIAISON REPORTS**
- A. City Council – Steve Baker**
Baker reported that at its last meeting Berkley declared February Black History Month and made appointments to the Environmental Advisory Board and Historical Commission. Parks and Rec will hold a Bacon Walk on April 9 moving from Oxford Park to Jaycee Park. At the meeting Council also discussed awarding the three cannabis business licenses. After rescoring applications, the first and second place qualifiers were clear, but three applicants were tied in points for the third license. Council decided to award licenses to the top five rather than use a lottery system previously agreed upon or only award licenses to the top two. The licenses will actually be awarded at Council's next meeting.

B. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

Kempner reported that the Commission discussed Design Guidelines at their last meeting, separating those necessary for the ordinance from those that can be suggestions. A work session will be held after more Commission discussion at their next meeting. A parcel on Coolidge will be rezoned to Gateway District. A sketch plan for proposed townhouses on 12 Mile was submitted, and more detailed plans will be brought to the Commission in the future.

C. Community Development – Megan Masson-Minock

Masson-Minock reported they will be sending a short on-line survey to DDA Board members about the Design Guidelines, and two open-ended questions, asking them to rate importance of individual guidelines, “musts” versus “nice to have’s.” A work session with the Planning Commission will be held March 1.

Passalacqua noted this process helps determine what will be governed by the ordinance and what will be considered “guidelines.” Incentives can be offered to businesses to comply with those parts of the guidelines that are not governed by ordinance, and he supports the work Masson-Minock has done to streamline the process. Masson-Minock noted they are getting site plans to review, several from the proposed provisioning centers as well as developments on 12 Mile.

D. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported the Chamber finalized its budget for the year and that committees are meeting to plan their upcoming events.

VI. TREASURER’S REPORT:

A spreadsheet detailing financial position through the end of January 2022 was included in the Board packet. Gross reported that the revenue available is \$448,000 and there is \$42,000 remaining to be spent. The DDA received a state grant of \$1,500; reimbursement for the Plaza partners has not yet been received, and that will leave @\$95,000 to spend. The fund balance ends up at @\$428,000.

Poirier moved to receive and accept the Treasurer’s report, Brick seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VII. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Determining DDA Vision Statement and Mission Statement

McGuinness noted this is an important annual process for Main Street reaccreditation. In the Board packet, he listed his proposed DDA Vision Statement and Mission Statement and solicited input from Board members of terms they would include in both. He suggested the Vision Statement reflect what the Board wants the downtown to be (future, aspirational) and the Mission Statement what the Board is currently doing (present) to achieve that vision.

Round-robin, Board members offered terms reflecting vision (such as connected, fun, welcoming, vibrant, green) and mission (bike friendly, diverse, complete streets, unique, whole experience). McGuinness incorporated the terms into revised statements of vision and mission.

The proposed Vision Statement reads: Downtown Berkley is an active, friendly, welcoming, creative, exciting, and attractive destination for our city’s residents and visitors. Our many unique and diverse businesses are prospering, and there is continued growth, renewal, and momentum, along the entire stretch of both Coolidge and 12 Mile. Downtown Berkley is a broadly known, highly regarded, and leading downtown choice.

The proposed Mission Statement reads: The Berkley Downtown Development Authority exists to spur economic vitality, improve the streetscape, enhance visitors’ diverse experiences, and create connection to the community on Coolidge and 12 Mile Road in downtown Berkley, Michigan.

Baumgarten moved to approve the proposed Mission Statement, Poirier seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Brick moved to approve the proposed Vision Statement, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Coolidge Crosswalks Path Forward

Based on prior feedback from Board members of what they would like to see happen to reactivate Coolidge crosswalks, McGuinness included a summary of the position the Board could present to the City for its preferred, possible safety enhancements on Coolidge between 11 and 12 Mile Roads.

The final list includes:

1. Upright rubber crosswalk signs at median lane
2. Bump-outs* to bring pedestrians closer to crosswalk (*transitional), with a berth that allows line of sight for them (and of them) in relation to parking spaces, with bollard usage and painting for bump-outs
3. Crosswalk safety signage for pedestrians at each crosswalk
4. Uncovering of pedestrian-activated flashing crosswalk signs
5. Refreshed painting of crosswalks where needed
6. Consistent crosswalk staging along Coolidge
7. Public education and engagement initiatives
8. ADA recommended further enhancements

Zifkin noted that public safety expertise was not his forte and he would prefer to defer to experts for requirements and cost estimates. For him, another concern is liability and potential litigation in case of accidents and/or injuries. Gilbert countered that those steps had been taken prior to initially installing the crosswalks, and knowing the history, Baker agreed. McGuinness said he was looking for Board consensus on the priorities listed in the summary.

Kempner noted that the current road diet configuration had not yet been *officially* adopted, and it might be premature to install *permanent* bump-outs. Brick noted something dealing with enhanced safety especially for people with disabilities (ADA compliance) could be added.

Passalacqua added that presenting this to the City and getting their support is the most important next step in the process before any concrete plans or cost estimates can be undertaken. Gilbert agreed to consult further with Kempner so that this step can be taken and the Board's consensus sent to Council as a road map for moving forward. Kempner strongly recommended that whatever happens, public education will be key to successful implementation.

McGuinness noted these points could be added/explored: Painting of parking space delineation lines and green painting of entire bike lane footprint.

C. DDA Mural Program Project Funding Limitations

McGuinness noted that under the current mural program, a \$2,500.00 match per project was the maximum DDA contribution. Murals have become a real selling point, but the current maximum puts limitations on what can be done, especially for large walls. He was proposing raising the DDA maximum contribution limit to \$4,000 for the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Zifkin moved to approve raising the maximum DDA mural contribution to \$5,000.00, Francis seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Frozen February Block Party (February 12th, Noon to 4 PM, Robina and Twelve Mile)

Brick reported the event was coming together really well but can always use more volunteers to run craft stations. Siddiqi said NHS high school students need volunteer hours, and she might be able to

recruit some after she lets other students know about the opportunity. Norup band members will also be playing during the event.

B. Berkley High School Drama Department Collaborations

McGuinness reported that conversations are underway to encourage the Drama Department to engage with Berkley businesses and fundraise for their upcoming musical. They are excited about being a part of all future DDA “block” parties and partnering with downtown businesses on candy bar fund raisers.

C. Main Street America National Evaluation Process, Reaccreditation

Main Street held a group Zoom meeting January 25 to solicit information from several Berkley stakeholders about their impressions and give necessary feedback required for reaccreditation to Main Street interviewers. Our Berkley DDA has been informed that Downtown Berkley has received national accreditation from Main Street America for another year, and McGuinness thanked those who helped make that possible.

D. Downtown Development Authority Annual Budget Development

McGuinness has met with the City Manager about the upcoming budget process, and McGuinness says his approach is to budget conservatively and keep most anticipated revenues and expenditures at the same funding levels, other than completed projects (Plaza and Wayfinding). Additional spending on Holiday Lights and Advertising/Marketing and Events was already approved this fiscal year. Streetscape improvements, Coolidge enhancements, and public art and placemaking are the areas he would anticipate increasing expenditures. Pocket parks and Robina north improvements were suggested to be added to that list.

E. Downtown Design Guidelines Progress

Covered in V.B and C above. Board members were invited to the upcoming March 1 work session.

IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Siddiqi noted NHS students need 12 hours of volunteer work. The high school is recognizing February as Black History Month.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua

Passalacqua reported receiving a proposal from HRC for the initial design of Robina North improvements.

B. Business Development Committee – Jenna Hance

In Hance’s absence, McGuinness reported their conversations about scaling up the work of this committee and connecting with prospective businesses and current businesses wishing to expand.

C. Marketing & Promotions Committee – Ashley Poirier

Poirier reported the committee would be meeting that evening, and they would be focusing on upcoming events. Baker suggested T-shirts, scarves, or gift cards to entice more volunteers to work on committees.

Organization Committee – Scott Francis

Francis reported the committee is still working on balancing the committees. Some Board members terms will be expiring at the end of June, and Organization is finding out who wants to continue on the Board.

D. West 12-Mile Improvements – Tim Barnes

In Barnes’ absence, Zifkin reported he would be able to take a more active role. He reported there was an opportunity for a pocket park near D&D Bikes and wondered if the DDA can buy or rent property. Baumgarten said a long-term lease would be the most viable solution.

XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

A. Updates on Downtown Businesses and Construction Coming, Going, Expanding

McGuinness reported 3737 Twelve Mile is a proposed site of a town home development. Property at Coolidge and Columbia is being rezoned. Work on the interior of the LaSalette project property is underway. A site plan was submitted for the property next door to that project. An amended site plan was submitted for the Aqua Tots property. Two Mexican restaurants have received their business licenses, one in the former Patrick J's. Peninsulas has submitted a façade improvement grant application, and O'Mara's will be reopening. Nova Primary Care, Health Call, Yankee Design, and Hot Lou's Chicken are new or expanding businesses downtown.

B. Michigan Downtown Association Professional Downtown Management Program

McGuinness will be taking part in the program.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: The opportunity for public comment was offered, and there were no in-person requests to address the body. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

XIII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS: None.

XIV. Adjournment:

The meeting lost quorum at 10:20 AM and ended at 10:30 AM.