



FARMINGTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PROCEEDINGS
SPECIAL MEETING – ANNUAL RETREAT

9:00 A.M.

SATURDAY

January 21, 2006

A special DDA Board meeting was called to order by Board President Beamer at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Batzloff, Beamer, Cassidy, Cowley, Freeman,
Grace, Kuiken, Pastue, Ziegler

ABSENT: Clappison, Vargovick

OTHERS PRESENT: DDA Director Knowles, Mary Martin

The DDA met for its annual retreat with the purpose of discussing proposed committee work plans, budgeting issues and other items. President Beamer welcomed the members and discussed the desired outcomes for the day, which would include consensus on the prioritization of proposed work plan tasks.

PROMOTIONS:

The Promotions Committee has developed a calendar of events for 2006 which will constitute its work plan. The dates are as follows: Discover Treasures, April 29; Halloween Fun Fest, October 28; Holly Days, December 2 and 3 (possibly); Summer Concerts, Friday evenings, June and July, except for Founders Festival weekend and the Farmers Market. No new events are proposed. The dates for the Farmers Market and Holiday Market are subject to change based on finalization of the market calendar by the Pavilion Committee, although market dates from May 27 through November 18 and holiday market date of December 2 are tentative.

Members of the Pavilion and Promotions Committee, along with staff, have been developing a pathway to integrate the two committees. A proposed organizational chart was distributed. The Promotions Committee is intended to become the Marketing and Promotions Committee which would be comprised of the Leads of three or four subcommittees and the Chair. Introduction of a marketing component would be included with the realization of an additional part-time staff person who will be responsible for marketing the district. Sample job descriptions were distributed to describe rather than proscribe what format the position may take.

Mary Martin, representing the Pavilion Committee, provided comments concerning the expansion of the market and the need for a market master. A budget provided by the Committee indicates anticipated expenses to total approximately \$25,000, with revenue projected at \$5,400. Demands on the budget include salary for the market master, entertainment and advertising.

The Board discussed the possibility of acquiring sponsorship dollars for events and promotions. It was agreed that support exists for the creation of a sponsorship package for the market which would not include other special events.

The Board discussed the activities and direction of Promotions. It was agreed that support exists for hiring a market master. The position of Marketing Assistant could be explored further when the market analysis is complete and when an effective marketing strategy is identified (i.e. do we market the downtown as small-town?)

In regard to events in the future, the Promotions Committee has discussed surveying businesses after each event with the aim of determining if each event has the desired effect of increasing patronage and/or businesses revenue. Although community events are well-regarded, events which we organize and fund should benefit the businesses and are open to cancellation if this objective is not being met.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:

The proposed work plan for the ER Committee is the finalization of the market analysis, the development of incentives for rehab or redevelopment and creation of a parking strategy in conjunction with Design, as parking availability will impact recruitment efforts.

James Kuiken presented a proposal to address some parking concerns, especially (1) those on the north side of Grand River, just east of Farmington Road, and (2) those on the new city streets in the Downtown Farmington Center, on a short-term basis. The proposed solution would be to post signage and limit parking in the parking lot and to require those parking long-term, such as employees, to park further away in order to leave premium spaces for customers. It was agreed that support exists for the creation of a short-term program of relief. The next step in the process would be to present to the appropriate departments and commissions at the City of Farmington.

The Board has previously discussed the potential for acquiring properties with the intent of landbanking or redevelopment. The ER Committee would be the appropriate committee to study and develop an acquisition strategy. Control will be an issue when a business recruitment program is initiated after the market study is finalized.

Preliminary data from the study are available. These data discuss the results of the intercept surveys. These data reaffirm that the primary trade area for Downtown Farmington is zip codes 48335 and 48336. Other information will be derived from the data and included in the final

results, which are forthcoming. The results will be revealing in that they will describe not that which is desirable, rather what is supportable in the downtown.

A break for lunch was held between 12:30 and 1:00 p.m.

ORGANIZATION:

The work plan for the Organization Committee consists of the completion of two editions of the Main Street Messenger and four opportunities for forums for the committees to commiserate. In addition, the volunteer program will be developed further and administrative items shall be addressed. The annual cost for the Main Street Messenger production is approximately \$6,000 plus postage. In conjunction with the MSOC evaluation on February 8th, the Organization Committee is planning a volunteer appreciation dinner.

DESIGN:

The Design Committee shall be tasked with the ongoing completion of existing infrastructure projects in addition to other design related activities. Grand River and Grove Street are still on the agenda for the season. In addition, site amenities at the pavilion and park will receive attention. Maintenance in the downtown is another area of concern. Opportunities exist to improve the quality of service and to replace aging amenities, such as banners. Of mention is a parking study that would correlate with activities of the ER Committee. Such a study would delineate the current and future parking needs of the district, based on the Master Plan.

OTHER ITEMS:

The subject of commercial taxation as it relates to the public school system arose. An additional millage on non-homestead property might be attempted by the district. More information is needed before the Board would take a position on issue. This is an area where the DDA has had limited involvement in the past, but may be of concern as a comparatively high tax burden would inhibit our ability to attract new businesses.

The Principal Shopping District expires after the next fiscal year, ending June 30, 2007. It is the intent to structure the budget so that expenses in conjunction with the PSD are clear so that, upon time to renew, we are able to identify what is achieved with the additional tax dollars that are collected.

The Civic Theater was mentioned as an opportunity to develop some cross-promotional activities and could be investigated in the future.

In the 2004 Evaluation, Main Street Oakland County recommended that a Vision Statement be prepared as well as the Mission Statement. As a homework assignment, please prepare a short statement, whether it be two sentences or two paragraphs of what you envision Downtown Farmington to be in ten years and submit.

ADJOURNMENT:

The DDA annual retreat adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Annette M. Knowles
DDA Executive Director