

Downtown Development Authority

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 7, 2011
Noon, Council Chambers



City of South Haven

MISSION STATEMENT: The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is to be a leader in helping to fulfill the City of South Haven Municipal Plan; through planning, funding, and development of projects within the DDA District which promote, encourage and contribute to the overall economic growth and development of the community.

1. Call to Order by Sass at noon.

2. Roll Call

Present: Burr, Marcoux, Marple, Olson, Haglund, Whiteford, Zuckerman, Sass

Absent: Braun, Haglund

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Marcoux, second by Olson to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor.
Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes – September 7, 2011

Motion by Olson, second by Marcoux to approve the September 7, 2011 minutes as written.
All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Interested Citizens in the Audience Will be Heard on Items Not on the Agenda

None at this time.

6. DDA will be given an update of the Williams St. project

Steve Oosting, City Engineer gave a summary of progress: City has had a substantial increase in the scope of underground utility work on the project. The Peterson County Drain empties into the river right near the lighthouse building. Staff realized after it was excavated that the drain is in terrible condition and has been washing away the soil under the sidewalk and underneath the lighthouse building itself. A plan of replacement is being considered. A sanitary sewer line runs parallel to the river and that line runs under the lighthouse building and under the two fishing charter buildings and the drain penetrates right through that line. The contractor is now installing a new sewer under the street so the old sewer under the buildings can be abandoned to allow the drain to be replaced. Staff had a lengthy meeting with the structural geo-technical engineering consultant and the contractor yesterday to

finalize a plan. The contractor is continuing to work through December, weather permitting. Originally, the plan was to take a temporary winter shut-down in January/February to allow for some winter weather and come back in the spring as soon as the weather breaks, but the contractors now plan to work as long as they physically can in the winter. The projected completion date of Memorial Day weekend has not changed.

Oosting said that after careful inspection there is no sign of the sewer leaking into the river; it is a cast iron pipe and the sewer was actually lined for structural benefit, and for sealing, but no evidence of it leaking into the river was found. The only question is cost and staff does not have numbers on cost yet. Cost amendments will go to City Council for approval. The contract is \$1.3 million and with overages it may be another \$300,000 to \$400,000. Oosting will prepare in the next couple of weeks a complete tabulation of all and any changes and establish contract change orders. Davidson stated that the amount award from the grant is final. The City cannot ask for additional funds.

Oosting said the drain is a county drain and the City has been working very closely with the county drain commission on the construction specifics of the Peterson Drain. Oosting noted that the original site plan did not include plans to replace that portion of the drain; the City had planned to replace the portion that is under the street. Oosting said it has now been decided to leave the existing pipe in the street as it is a cast-in-place concrete structure and is in fine condition; some external sealing will be added on a few cracks in the concrete pipe but the pipe is in very good shape. The part that will be replaced is a corrugated steel pipe and that is rusted out. Oosting said technically that is the Drain Commission's pipe, not the City's pipe. There has not been a conversation between the City and the County about cost sharing. Normally, the County would generate money from adjacent properties. However, this is an emergency situation and therefore a legal procedure was not done and assessment may be difficult.

Oosting reported that the cost of replacing the sewer is \$95,000 to \$100,000 and is the only one the City has a fairly good cost estimate on. The details on the drain itself are still being finalized and then staff will work up costs. The sewer is what they are working on right now. The sewer will penetrate through the portion of the drain that is under the street because the penetration that is under the buildings now will essentially be moved over to a penetration under the street. Oosting explained that the sewer cannot be lowered three feet or the drain lowered six feet, but they must still cross through each other. That penetration has been made and now the sewer is going to be run through the penetration in the drain.

The contractor's original intent was to complete all the groundwork this fall and the road would be graded out in gravel. Depending on weather conditions, the intent is to gravel the street upon completion of the utility work. January is a difficult month to do that because the permanent gravel cannot be constructed on top of frozen sub-grade. If frozen, in the spring when the frost melts, it will settle and will not be sound to build on. Oosting said there is a good chance that the permanent gravel base will not be added until spring. If that is the case, the temporary gravel base will be put down. It will be intensive maintenance with snow plowing.

Between Center Street and Kalamazoo, Oosting said they still have to do all the storm sewer, boardwalk and retaining wall at Yacht Club property. The sewer is completed to Phoenix Street but two branching sewers still have to be done for the Kalamazoo lift station and one that picks up Quaker Street.

7. Other Business

Davidson said she is working with Chuck Fullar on the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) rental rehabilitation grants that are offered. There are no property owners who are committed at this time, although there are some who are interested. Davidson is attending the Community Development Commission meeting tonight where the administrator contract will be presented. The administrator's salary will be paid through the grant - no City funds will be used. When a property owner would like to begin the process, then the groundwork will already be in place. Once the administrator contract is approved by city council, then she/he can explain the program to the property owners. Davidson stated the program offers 25% up to a maximum of \$35,000 for new or \$25,000 for rehabbing existing, per unit.

Board member Marple introduced the idea of branding the riverfront area; creating a district within the area that can increase the chance of getting folks to come down. The heritage is rich throughout the harbor and marketing opportunities exist. The costs would be minimal - maybe three signs. A suggested title is "Maritime District" which would encompass the properties surrounding the Black River from the Dyckman Street Bridge down toward the Lake. The concept would include the HarborWalk and the Maritime Museum. Historical markers are in place and a district of such nature could provide information on decorative signage throughout the City. This could include not only the merchants down at Old Harbor Inn but the merchants on Center Street to link to the area.

Signage could include Black River Street, Maritime Museum, Dyckman Bridge, and Williams Street including both sides of the river and the Harbor Walk. There are public viewing spots: an observation deck is being created above the Yacht Club; the City has entered into a licensing agreement with Old Harbor Village for a viewing area; and the Maritime Museum offers views. The City has also entered into an agreement where the fencing along the Old Harbor Moorings (the boat docks between the Colonial and Old Harbor Village) will be removed and replaced with fencing with an open view. Now is a good time to do something like this while the Williams Street Project is underway. It was suggested giving the community an opportunity to name the district. Put something in the paper and get the community behind it. Davidson stated that City Council would have the final approval. Marple said he would like the DDA to make a motion to support the idea.

Motion by Marcoux, second by Burr to support the concept to name the riverfront an appropriate name representing its heritage as a maritime corridor. All in favor. Motion carried.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Marcoux, second by Olson to adjourn at 12:35 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom
Recording Secretary