

# Downtown Development Authority

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 2, 2016  
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 Olson at noon.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: John Braun, Bob Burr, Chris Campbell, Sue Frederick, Jim Marcoux, Sally Newton, Kevin Whiteford, Andrea Olson

Absent: Scott Maxwell

Also present: Jason Marquardt; Project Engineer, Abonmarche

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Marcoux, second by Burr to approve the March 2, 2016 Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 4. Approval of Minutes – October 21, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes December 2, 2015 Workshop Minutes

Motion by Marcoux, second by Newton to approve the October 21, 2015 regular meeting minutes and the December 2, 2015 Workshop Minutes with the following correction to the December 2, 2015 Workshop Minutes:

- Item 1, Paragraph 3, replace the word “Baar’s” with “Black River” in the last sentence.

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. Abonmarche staff will update the DDA Board on the Huron Street Parking Lot Expansion Plan (former Baar's property).**

Davidson noted that Jason Marquardt from Abonmarche has been working on this project; went out for bids recently; ran into some challenges in designing the site which brings up the restroom discussion again.

Jason Marquardt, Project Engineer at Abonmarche, explained the three-week bidding process with bids due next Thursday. Jason presented a slide showing the existing layout which is 138 spaces.

Marquardt reminded that at a previous meeting a couple different options were looked at and the option selected was the one which used the location of the former Baar's building as green space for future use of a restroom building. When designing the documents for bid packets, three (3) parking spaces adjacent to the alley had to be eliminated to maximize the green footprint in the area. The total parking number on this drawing after the improvements to the new parking lot is 159 spaces, an increase of 21 spaces. However, more was anticipated. Regarding the existing three spaces shown as being removed, Marquardt noted that further thought is that those three spaces could probably be left depending on what is done with the green space.

Also, Marquardt noted that part of the project includes sealing the remainder of the parking lot. It was found that the existing handicap spaces were not adequately striped and not adequate in size. Current standards for this size parking area are six (6) spaces instead of the existing four (4) which also do not have the adjacent hatched space to meet today's ADA (American with Disabilities Act) standards. With that addition, the total net ends up being 21 additional spaces for the project as designed. Depending on exactly what the board wants to do with the green space, the three spaces off the alley might be able to remain which is included in the bid presently.

Marquardt offered different options if the green space is used for restrooms, and Marquardt noted that if the green space were eliminated, perhaps the three spaces off the alley could be retained so an increase of eight (8) spaces could be realized at very minimal cost, just for the cost of the additional material. Marquardt noted that to do that might mean missing the opportunity of putting a restroom in this area.

Marquardt said there are different potential location options where a restroom with the same footprint, similar to Huron Street, could be placed in various places. Marquardt showed an exhibit on which restrooms have been superimposed in five (5) potential areas, noting that sewer and water would have to be added at these sites and there would be increased cost for utilities.

Campbell asked why only eight (8) additional spaces could be realized in the Baar's site to which Marquardt responded that parking could be added off the alleyway, with the three spaces existing as long as everybody is okay with parking accessed in and out of the alley. The eight (8) spaces would then turn to 16 total spaces, including the three (3) existing. Discussion ensued regarding the configuration, whether there are any restrictions associated with the alley and about the city's need to move the transformer.

Marcoux stated concerns that the DDA bought the Baar's building to get 21 additional spots; also made provision for badly needed restrooms. Discussion ensued regarding the size of the Huron/Kalamazoo Street restrooms which the proposed restroom building would replicate. Marcoux stated that he liked the restroom spot we talked about last fall.

Whiteford stated he agrees on the spaces and noted the alternative restroom locations that allow you to walk through fewer parking spots to go to a bathroom are probably safer; also noted that the plumbing to that building saves a lot of money, but unknown what the plumbing is like since it is so old. Whiteford stated he would vote for locations closer to the pavilion; that eliminating three (3) spots to add 13 makes him very happy.

Campbell noted that he agrees with Whiteford, having a 12-year old walking back and forth, and teenagers hanging out, he thinks restrooms being nearer the pavilion would be good.

Marcoux explained he has a grandson that skates and he hangs out but it is not because of the bathrooms, it is because of all the other things the manager of the ice rink has in place for kids to do. Marcoux asked, "Where is the skating facility going to be? That's probably where the bathrooms should be. There is not one of those locations with the possible exception of the ones immediately south of the pavilion that you are not crossing traffic. The bigger issue is where the skate rental is going to go."

Davidson said Spencer has added on and is happy with the size of that facility and a facility of that size is not going to fit in those areas proposed by Abonmarche. Marcoux suggested that maybe the city needs to work out with the building owners and leave the skating facility and restrooms there.

Newton questioned how much of the green space would be used if the bathrooms were built there to which Marquardt responded that with the building it would take the whole footprint; Newton stated, "If you stay in the space you don't gain 13, at best. You gain none if you leave room for skating stuff. And there is a net gain of 13 if we abandon the original location with one of the proposed alternative locations."

Campbell pointed out that the one that is in Dyckman Park is the only one that doesn't require crossing traffic.

Whiteford asked if any one of those spots have room for the restroom and skating facility. Marquardt went through the various possibilities of the various spots noting that the park location is the only one. Marcoux noted some green space would be lost in the park.

Burr asked the proximity of the one proposed in the park with utility service lines. Marquardt stated he has not been able to determine that yet but pointed out the sanitary sewer goes right through the west side of the park. Discussion ensued regarding the depth of that sewer line and how connection could be achieved.

Newton suggested that if these five spots are big enough for the restroom maybe one becomes a bathroom now and another one of these locations becomes a skating facility in the future. Marcoux stated, "You are better off having a plan with bathrooms and rental building together."

Whiteford thinks the city should have a nice size spot for skate rental and restrooms and noted that Burr's question is a good one; that he believes there is access from Phoenix Street for sewer and water.

Olson noted that the DDA has talked about the Visitor's Bureau in the past; it is in the scope of the DDA and asked what the city's thought on that is. Davidson noted that she does not know about the plans of the developer who bought the corner lot to which Burr responded that the developer has not indicated any intent in the last year, the project has gone dormant. "So assume nothing is going to happen for a while." Olson noted that the money is not in our budget to do restrooms. Could we put buying the Visitor's Bureau on the table? Should we pursue the additional (parking) spots and abandon the idea of the restroom at the Baar's site?"

Burr asked, "If we abandon the Baar's building, make that parking, does it require a separate bid?" Marquardt responded that the total increase would be 31 extra spaces with the adequate ADA spaces and that Abonmarche has an addendum drafted up adding this last bit in there, which would be included in their bids; all we would do is do a drawing and the bidders add quantities of their paving and other materials.

Burr asked about the transformer, whether it is pad or pole mount and Marquardt noted it is pad. It definitely has to be moved; with Baar's gone it might not have to be in that location, in the parking lot. Marquardt said it was to be put in the green space where the restroom facilities were going to be and there is room for it to go between those bays of parking.

Marcoux noted, "We trade in a dilapidated building and gain 31 extra parking spots." Olson added, "Contingent on alleyway issues." Marquardt does not think that is an issue; we could dress that up. "We'll complete and repave that and make them look nice and new to the parking lot but accessible off the alley."

Whiteford commented, "What Andrea said. Should we vote on the alternative spots?" Whiteford noted he would only have engineers spend the money looking at spots that make sense to the city. Asked whether any of those 5 potential spots would be spots that include both bathrooms and skate rental and asked, "Can we look at alternative spots that would allow us to have bathrooms like Huron Street and rental at that facility. Let's plan for the fact that if we will have rental there we will have the space." Marquardt thinks there are two of those spots that could potentially have a rental added to them; the one in Dyckman Park and one other, to the south of the pavilion.

Davidson asked about staff starting conversation with the Visitor's Bureau noting that the Visitor's Bureau will have to have a place to go. In response to a question by Braun, Davidson noted that the Visitor's Bureau owns the building they are in. Burr interjected, "We need to add the parking spaces at the Baar's printing site."

Motion by Marcoux, second by Braun to move forward without a restroom building in the parking lot project.

All in favor. Motion carried.

Whiteford asked if we can add another vote about restrooms which Olson said can be tabled and brought back in the future.

Burr noted that the big thing is the electric transformer site which Marquardt reassured that he has been working with Bill Conklin at the Department of Public Works and that can be added to the addendum. Discussion ensued regarding the relocation of the electric transformer and whether it should be linked to the possible restroom site.

Davidson noted that the bid opening is next Thursday at 2:00 p.m. and this group will need to approve that bid. There will have to be a quick special meeting to approve the bid. After discussion it was decided to hold a special meeting on Monday, March 14.

## **7. DDA will be given an update about the following projects:**

### **A. Splash pad grant application**

Davidson noted the City intends to submit an application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund for the construction of a splash pad. Davidson and Abonmarche staff are writing the application. The City Council will be asked to approve a resolution to submit the application at their March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Davidson stated grant award announcements are not made until November. The total project cost is \$568,000 and the city will be asking for \$300,000 from the trust fund.

### **B. PSD update**

Davidson said some of the merchants have asked for information regarding a Principal Shopping District (PSD) over the past couple of years. The City Manager said he would take it to council at their priority setting meeting to inquire of support for funding a consultant to explore a PSD. The City Manager requested a letter from downtown merchants showing support to explore a PSD and there were 21 signatures turned in yesterday. The Visitor's Bureau says a PSD will help fill rooms; create events; advertise to get people here in the off-season. The Visitor's Bureau submitted a letter to the City Manager stating their financial support to help fund a consultant to explore a PSD. Brian will present this to City Council at the priority setting session next Monday evening. Davidson noted the consultant would present findings to the downtown merchants and business owners; it will be a fact-finding mission.

Discussion ensued regarding the previous effort to develop a PSD and some of the issues, numbers of people that are interested compared to the total number, that there was not a consultant involved. It was noted that a PSD can do many of the things that a DDA cannot do.

Newton asked who would be voting and Braun explained that it would be property owners within the PSD district. "You can set your own guidelines and standards; business owners who rent can also petition their landlords for it, knowing their rent will probably be increased."

Davidson noted that a consultant can also give scenarios about how it would be funded. Braun said how to fund dues was a hang up regarding second floors.

Olson said this is a good positive move.

## **8. General Comments**

There were none.

**9. Adjourn**

Motion by Whiteford, second by Newton to adjourn at 12:50 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom  
Recording Secretary