

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Special Meeting of June 6, 2017
Meeting Room A

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Ken Roth, Chairman Shaw Riley, Carolann Ayers, Margene Buckhave, John Casey, Lynda Heaton, Natalie Kneifel, Jim Long, Robert Miller, Greg Presley, Mary Starring*

Absent:

Also Present: Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Sarah Prescott/School Board Liaison, Aaron Cozart/resident, John Iacoangeli/Beckett and Raeder, Inc.

Riley welcomed new Board member Natalie Kneifel and Robert Miller to the meeting. Riley pointed out that Aaron Cozart was in attendance. Cozart will be joining the DDA Board on October 1st when long time member Lynda Heaton steps down after over 25 years of service to the community. Riley noted that the new members have some big shoes to fill.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

2017 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN NORTHVILLE

Riley introduced John Iacoangeli of Beckett and Raeder Inc. (BRI) the planning consultants who have been working with the City and DDA for over a year on the development of the updated strategic plan.

Iacoangeli walked the DDA through the planning process which mirrored the process that the community went through during the development of the 2006 Strategic Plan. BRI looked at existing conditions first. The Plan contains results from the extensive surveying done as part of the data collection efforts. Both in person intercept surveys and 2 internet surveys were completed with over 1,300 unique individuals participating. Seventeen stakeholder interviews were undertaken with individuals whose names were provided to BRI from the Steering Committee. A summary of all of these surveys and interviews are included in the Plan.

Iacoangeli stated that he would spend the bulk of his presentation discussing the Action Plan which is the list of recommendations developed for the next 10 years. The Plan also contains the results of the retail and residential target market analyses that were completed in the fall and previously presented to the DDA Board. Iacoangeli stated that

there are over 300 DDA's across the state and there is a range of activities and roles that the various DDA's take on. The Northville DDA currently acts as a Facilitator for both marketing efforts and capital projects. The Plan recommends that the DDA increase its role and become more involved as an Economic Developer. The Plan recommends that the DDA create a 5th Committee, Economic Restructuring that would allow the DDA to play a formal role in the development process. Because so many of the physical implement projects outlined in the 2006 Strategic Plan have been accomplished it is time to focus on the economic development opportunities in the downtown.

Iacoangeli recommended that the DDA expand its DDA District boundaries. State law only allows a DDA to participate in activities within its boundaries and currently many of the undeveloped properties that are available for redevelop are not in the DDA boundaries.

Specific recommendations are listed in the Action Program of the Strategic Plan and are organized by Committee responsibility. Those items that are listed under the Design Committee include:

- Replacing business directories
- Expansion of East Main Street Streetscape
- Connection to Ford Field
- Improve traffic signalization
- Continuation of Alley Improvements
- Streetscape Improvements on North and South Center Streets
- Continue the replacement of high pressure sodium lighting with Induction lighting
- Downtown Mural Project
- Downtown Entranceway Signs
- Historic Markers Program
- Reinstate Façade Grant Program

Northville has an identifiable market for more retail. The DDA can educate the realtors and building/business owners but the DDA does not control the real estate. Patron strongly voiced their interests in having expanded business hours downtown. There is an opportunity for Northville to position itself towards an arts and industry center and complete with the surrounding communities. There is a statewide organization, Creative Many that could assist the DDA in developing a strategy to brand the community as a leader in the arts.

A Retail Target Market Analysis was developed for Northville that indicated that Northville could support an additional 50,000 square feet of commercial developed that would be supported by the 120,000 residents in Northville's trade area. In addition, a residential Target Market Analysis was also undertaken. The results show that Northville is able to support an additional 50 units of attached housing and 129 detached housing units. The market for attached housing is very conservative, in part because it is hard to judge the demand for a product that currently does not exist.

There was general discussion about the desire for more affordable housing options in Northville. There is a national trend in housing towards more urban housing solutions. These housing seekers are both millennials starting out, and baby boomers retiring.

Roth asked with only limited number of opportunities to create urban higher density units, what can the City do to help attract those type of products? Iacoangeli responded that what the City and DDA needs to do the “predevelopment” work which identifying the property, making sure it is zoned correctly and creating the community vision for the site. The Sub area plans that has already been created is a great start to creating that vision. Developers want predictability, assurance and a sense of fairness.

Presley asked what the Economic Restructuring Committee would be doing? Iacoangeli responded that that they would be working with the development community and the city and planning commission to attract the type of development that the community desires and to facilitate the development process. Specific recommendations include:

- Revision to the PUD ordinance
- Redevelopment Ready Community certification
- Refine the subarea plan for Cady Street and the Northville Downs
- Create density bonuses
- Potential land acquisition
- Create bonuses for LEED, affordable housing, other amenities.

There was discussion on the recommendation about whether to create a parking incentive program. An incentive program was on the books several years ago, but is no longer current. The recommendation from the Steering Committee is to evaluate the need to introduce a new program in response to first floor space converting from retail to office.

There is a need for the development of a comprehensive evaluation of parking structures due, in part, to the age of the decks. A maintenance manual would be developed as a part of that evaluation. The City/DDA needs to acquire information about the needed repairs and the cost to address them. Roth mentioned that the required repairs will be expensive and a funding strategy will need to be developed to address the repairs.

Iacoangeli went back over the recommendation for the Design Committee and the Marketing Committee. During his comments on the Marketing Committee he mentioned the need to develop an executive summary of the two TMA reports to distribute to the real estate community. Another recommendation mentioned is to develop a Downtown Property Exchange. This would be a site that holds information about all available space in the community. Iacoangeli recommended that the Chamber of Commerce, with assistance from the DDA develop Business Assistance Team or BAT that would pull together volunteers in different fields like finance, web design, insurance. This team would meet with prospective or new business to offer support.

Many of the recommendations of the Economic Restructuring Committee had already been discussed. Many of the recommendations in this area are center on the redevelopment of property adjacent to the downtown. Most of this property is not within the DDA boundaries, therefore a recommendation to expand the DDA boundaries is included under the Organization Committee responsibilities. Presley wanted to make sure that the recommendation was very strong in language to expand the DDA Boundaries. Roth stated that the issue of expanding the DDA boundaries was not a “no brainer” and would require lots of exploration. Riley asked what the resistance to expanding the boundaries was. Roth responded that taxing jurisdictions could opt out of the capture, leaving only the City contributing to the TIF capture. In addition, there are current bills in the legislature that, if enacted could impact or reduce future DDA TIF capture. Iacoangeli reminded the Board that the DDA cannot get involved financially, or otherwise, in any project or program located outside of the DDA Boundary.

Riley suggested that the Board review the staffing of the DDA. The DDA Director could take on more of a role of the Economic Development and the part time funded staff position could be tasked with addressing items like events, website development, social media, and marketing. Presley asked what would happen if the DDA does not expand the DDA District, does it mean that the DDA cannot participate in the redevelopment projects? Iacoangeli responded that the DDA cannot respond with funding or staff for these efforts outside the DDA boundaries. The southern boundary of the DDA includes some of the frontage of the Northville Downs. Planning can take place on behalf of the City/DDA, but the DDA could not participate financially with TIF revenue for the infrastructure or other physical projects nor have staff participate in specific economic development meetings with developers.

The Organizational Committee would be tasked with fully staffing the DDA office. There is a serious capacity issue that needs to be addressed. A joint planning session with the DDA, City Council, Planning Commission and Historic District Commission should take place annually to coordinate projects and policies governing development. Ayers suggested that the Northville School District be included in the discussions. Periodically the Executive Committee and Finance Director sit down and discuss the allocation of costs between the DDA and the City. An event coordinator needs to be identified to more actively program Town Square.

Iacoangeli recommended that the DDA and City consider setting up a Principal Shopping District. If funded through a special assessment district, this position could concentrate exclusively on marketing, freeing up the DDA Director and other DDA staff for economic development, planning and other tasks. The final recommendation for the Organizational Committee is to expand the DDA Board to include 2 new position and the City Council has already addressed this recommendation by appointing Robert Miller and Natalie Kneifel to the Board. Roth inquired what the skill set would be for the part time job that the DDA would fill. Iacoangeli stated that the economic development

The highest priority recommendation of the Parking Committee is to prepare a RFP for the evaluation of needed repairs and maintenance of the two parking decks. It is very important to get a better understanding of the extent of the needed repairs and the cost

of addressing them. Additionally a phasing plan for the repairs and a maintenance manual would be required of the consultants.

Ayres inquired as to when the report would go to the City for review. Roth commented that the DDA staff could present the report at the next City Council meeting if Iacoangeli is not available. Riley thanked Iacoangeli for his hard work on the Plan.

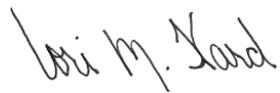
Motion by Long, seconded by Heaton, to approve the 2017 Downtown Strategic Plan as presented and refer the Plan to City Council for consideration. **Motion carried. Ten ayes (Buckhave, Heaton, Riley, Long, Presley, Ayers, Casey, Starring, Kneifel, Miller. No nays. One abstention (Roth)**

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The next DDA Board meeting is June 20, 2017.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori M. Ward, Director
Northville DDA