



VIRTUAL Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors

THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021 @ 8:00 AM

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/83370971044?PWD=OWFCUDRVENBKD2LISDHUEVI4EJFUZZ09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83370971044?pwd=OWFCUDRVENBKD2LISDHUEVI4EJFUZZ09)

PASSWORD: FERNDAL

PHONE: 929 205 6099 (TOLL FREE)

MEETING ID: 833 7097 1044

1. ROLL CALL

CALL TO ORDER: 8:03 am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jacki Smith from Ferndale, PJ Jacokes from Pleasant Ridge, Sarah Brown from Ferndale, Jerome Raska of Ferndale, Chris Johnston from Pleasant Ridge, JeDonna Dinges from Grosse Point, Nathan Martin from Ferndale, Mayor Melanie Piana from Ferndale

MEMBERS ABSENT: Janice Semma

STAFF PRESENT: Lena Stevens, Executive Director; Sommer Realy, Engagement Manager; Reilly Coleman, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Jordan Twardy, Community and Economic Development Director
- Sheryl Stubblefield, Finance Director
- Joseph Gacioch, City Manager
- Jenny Marr, Ferndale Library
- Derek Radell, DPW Downtown Leader
- Jon Moses, Ideation Orange
- Tim Krzyczkowski, Downtown Vision Committee
- Tim Pare, Michigan Stage: Broadway in the Burbs
- Patty Rudd, Eight Mile Boulevard Association

2. ELECTRONIC MEETING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

a. Electronic Meetings Update

Executive Director Lena Stevens reminded the Board of the current state law regarding the continuance of electronic meetings. Meetings will continue virtually for the next ninety days, which includes the next two or three board meetings. At that time, discussions can be held about what the Board feels is the safest course of action.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Mayor Melanie Piana, seconded by Member Jerome Raska to approve the agenda as presented with an addition of 7.b Downtown Ferndale Vision Committee presentation by Tim Krzyczkowski.

AYES - Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Jerome Raska, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

4. CALL TO BOARD MEMBERS

Members are provided an opportunity to share general updates, recovery planning strategy, questions, concerns, etc.

- a. No call to board members.

5. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Reports from community organization representatives in attendance, including but not limited to Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce, Ferndale Area District Library, 8 Mile Boulevard Association, etc.

- a. Jenny Marr of the Ferndale Library provided updates of current events at the library. Reopening plans are pushed to April, virtual programming continues along with some outdoor activities, and building projects will continue. Executive Director Lena Stevens stated the DDA and Library tax agreement is expiring and will be reviewed by the Board at a further date.
- b. Patty Rudd of the Eight Mile Boulevard Association introduced herself and discussed her position with the current Eight Mile and Woodward Project.

6. CALL TO AUDIENCE

Members of the public are invited to speak on any topic. No more than three minutes.

- a. City Manager Joseph Gacioch provided an update on The dot. New public WIFI has been installed, however, a light pole was recently knocked down which impacted signal strength. Compactors are being designated into four areas of Downtown. A Zero Waste Coordinator position is currently being offered with more sustainability efforts in May. Leasing efforts at The dot are also incoming. Executive Director Lena Stevens added there is potential to upgrade litter cans Downtown.

Member Jacki Smith asked if the WIFI can continue beyond current boundaries. City Manager Gacioch stated the current system is a test and the goal is to extend it beyond Schiffer Park. Member Smith asked if the signal is strong enough to handle high stream traffic. City Manager Gacioch stated it is, but it will be controlled so it is not too highly utilized. Member Sarah Brown stated a concern of the apartment building next to Schiffer Park potentially having access to it. Member Smith stated it would be useful to remind businesses that public WIFI is not recommended for private business use. Member Brown suggested the WIFI redirect users to the DDA's website.

7. PRESENTATIONS

- a. Downtown Maintenance Update from Department of Public Works

DPW Downtown Leader Derek Radell provided updates of the DPW's recent efforts. The DPW is staying on top of garbage with incoming social districts, mulch is being laid, and tree planting and flower bed rehabs are incoming. E. and W. Troy Street are primary highlights. There is also power washing in place, signs for social districts pending approval, and all flowers have been ordered. Mayor Melanie Piana informed the Board there have been recent complaints about issues around the Ferndale Foods parking lot.

Member Sarah Brown asked about the process of private businesses not upkeeping landscaping. Leader Radell stated business areas are policed regularly and violators are brought to the attention of the DDA. Mayor Piana stated this role of responsibility is

confusing to business owners. Executive Director Lena Stevens stated this conversation can be pushed forward with the upcoming Social Districts. Member Brown stated it would be helpful to include that information to new business owners.

Member Jerome Raska stated there are sanitation concerns on Paxton St. and Vester Ave. Community and Economic Development Director Jordan Twardy stated the Code Enforcement will follow up wherever code applies and can develop a strategy moving forward.

b. Vision Committee Introduction

Chair Tim Krzyczkowski of the Downtown Ferndale Vision Committee introduced himself and provided an overview of the Committee. The Committee will continually communicate with the Board on all projects, will be cultivating a volunteer base, planning and executing events, following city recommendations, and so on. There are seven people who have pledged so far. An internal Facebook group has been created. The first task was a public art discovery, and a new idea is a calendar of local events to share with businesses. Member Sarah Brown asked if volunteers of the Vision Committee will be used for other DDA-partnered events. Executive Director Lena Stevens stated the committee membership is strictly below twelve, so this is not likely. Chair PJ Jacokes asked if there was anything the Board can do to help guide the Committee. Chair Krzyczkowski stated the biggest thing is to help facilitate tasks, as the more the volunteers work, the more they can be involved.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Treasurer Sarah Brown, seconded by Member Jacki Smith to approve the consent agenda as presented.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Jerome Raska, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

9. REGULAR AGENDA

a. Accept Placemaking Plan for The dot

Jon Moses of Ideation Orange provided an overview of The dot's placemaking plan. The theme is nature, humanity, and connection, which is exemplified through the design. Each level has a theme of a natural environment. The colors and art would change on each level. Ideation Orange spoke with the Ferndale Arts and Cultural Commission and also conducted original research to identify artists for the project. Safety is a top priority. Executive Director Lena Stevens stated the funding for this project will be combined from the DDA and the City with additional research for grants. The project will be in phases and a timeline will be provided. Member Sarah Brown stated as much that can be done this year is important to set the tone for what has been paid for and asked if there are rules for new businesses to fit the theme and if there will be directional arrows on the ground.

Director Stevens stated the total budget for the project is estimated between \$500,000-700,000 and it will be broken down into primary and secondary phases. Member Jacki Smith stated priority features need to be established and asked about the light pollution problem. Director Stevens stated mesh will be tested on the inside to diffuse the lights and there has been a shield installed behind one of the lights as well. Vice-Chair Chris Johnston offered old banners to serve as a test.

Member Brown asked if there will be emergency buttons on each level and stated the project will be a positive thing to promote on social media.

Motion by Member Jacki Smith, seconded by Treasurer Sarah Brown to accept the Placemaking Plan for The dot.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Jerome Raska, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

b. Broadway in the ‘Burbs Event Proposal and DDA Financial Contribution Not to Exceed \$4850

Executive Director Lena Stevens stated the proposal of the event will be up to the discretion of the Executive Director and Tim Pare of Michigan State: Broadway in the Burbs. The event will most likely take place in late summer or early fall. The estimated project budget is \$7,500, and the DDA would contribute at a rate with private fundraising. Pare stated this is an exciting opportunity to bring awareness on many justices, and it is a great opportunity to get local musicians involved.

Motion by Treasurer Sarah Brown, seconded by Member Jerome Raska to Approve the proposal for Broadway in the ‘Burbs and maximum financial contribution from DDA of \$4850.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Jerome Raska, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- a. The Affirmations bench is nearing final production and will hold five bollards within the structure. DPW has been critical about producing signs for PATIO Zones, the cups are on order with a donation from Jim Schaffer, and the stickers will be purchased. There are fourteen applicants so far, but it is unsure how many have submitted their Liquor License Application. A minimum of two is needed in each zone prior to opening. COVID-19 is still a major concern and logistical issues are the main preventative factor in deciding a date. Member Sarah Brown asked if the cups are refillable. Director Stevens stated they are not, but they are biodegradable materials with no lids. Member Brown asked if there is an alternative sticker or accessibility feature for those who cannot drink

out of cups. Mayor Melanie Piana suggested reaching out to the Ferndale Accessibility Inclusion and Advisory Commission. Director Stevens stated this would require going to the state level to change the current state law regarding cup dimensions and specificities. Input will be researched and shared with the Liquor License Control Commission.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Melanie Piana, seconded by Treasurer Sarah Brown to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 A.M.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Jerome Raska, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.