



**Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors**  
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14 @ 8:00 AM**  
**300 E. Nine Mile**  
**Ferndale, MI 48220**

**1. CALL TO ORDER: 8:10 am**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Mayor Melanie Piana

MEMBERS ABSENT: Janice Semma and JeDonna Dinges

STAFF PRESENT: Lena Stevens, Executive Director and Sommer Realy, Engagement Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Jordan Twardy, Community and Economic Development Director
- Justin Lyons, Planning Manager
- Christine Ross, Project Planner
- Claire Dion, Zero Waste Management
- Jenny Marr, Director of the Ferndale Area District Library
- Jess Minnick, owner of Not Sorry Goods
- Catherine Tolbert, owner of Good Day Selfie Museum (Mom: Lisa Tolbert)
- Michael Hennes, owner of Howe's Bayou
- Rifino Valentine, owner of Valentine Distilling

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Brown, seconded by Martin to approve the agenda with consent agenda schedule amended to move the Compost Pilot Program Overview to 5e and the addition of a Master Land Use Plan Update as item 5d.

*AYES* – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS- None*

***All ayes, motion carries.***

**3. COMMUNITY REPORTS**

- a. Jenny Marr, Director of the Ferndale Area District Library  
October is library appreciation month. Keeping communities connected with a new website [www.fadl.org](http://www.fadl.org), new emails by end of month. A new seasonal mailer has been mailed to all residents and available to take one today. In person programming is under

way, virtual is more popular. Ideation Orange façade design has begun, signage and lighting changes to LED. Youth services area is being redecorating new carpet and paint, over 10yrs of space has shed light in how it is used. Reopening has not brought surges of people, slow and steady. Board thanks director for all the effort library makes in effort to help everyone feel normal and comfortable. The library's Tiktok account is popular.

#### **4. CALL TO AUDIENCE**

- a. Jessica Minnick, co-owner of Not Sorry Goods gave a brief overview of their business and introduced themselves to the board. Lena Stevens reminds board of the You Belong Here tote that was approved and hopes to have ready on Shop Small Saturday.
- b. Catherine Tolbert, owner of Good Day Selfie Museum located at 22742 Woodward gave a brief overview of their business and introduced themselves to the board.
- c. Chris Best, part owner of Rust Belt Market expressed how proud he is of those who have outgrown his location and opened their very own brick and mortar. Chris Best shared his opinion that Social Districts should extend to 2 AM and not close at 10 PM. East and West zone is more symbolic than anything else. He loves the program thanks Executive Director, Lena Stevens for putting energy behind it and making it happen. He feels as though program is great for events yet understands festivals shutting down Patio Zones is confusing, but this is part of the reality.

#### **5. PRESENTATIONS**

##### **5.a Social Districts Update and Policy Change Discussion**

Executive Director, Lena Stevens provided an update about the Ferndale Social District also known as Patio Zones. There have been no police incidents associated with the program. There was one issue during the Funky Ferndale Art Festival which took place at Rust Belt in which patrons left the building holding unlabeled cups while the district was non-operational. No report was filed.

DPW has reported no increase in litter.

Businesses have not had to purchase any cups due to generous donations from Jim Schaffer and Associates and LIV cannabis. Total of 54,000 cups have currently been ordered with 10,000 remaining.

A critical component of the success of this program is Woodward Movement, who provides a ordering platform and oversees delivery of cups to all of the businesses.

Marketing is a beneficial aspect of Patio Zones as well. Partnerships have developed such as Brooks Brewing and Not Sorry Goods who offer specials like grab a drink and visit Not Sorry for 10% discount on any purchase.

If a special event is selling alcohol, by MLCC law, the social district must shut down. The two cannot simultaneously operate.

City Council will make final decisions about any changes to the program.

The DDA Board of Directors participated in a thorough discussion of the plan and potential updates.

### **5.b Update on the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Application for 141 Vester**

Justin Lyons, Planning Manager presented an overview of the process along with details of the development. This property must to be rezoned to allow a redevelopment. The City of Ferndale's roll is to accept the application, review all information and then present the request to the Planning Commission for recommendation. The recommendation then goes to the City Council for approval.

Jordan Twardy, Community and Economic Development Director explained the reality of parking challenges. We need a plan to meet today's demand and a modest about growth. His role is to find solutions to ease the pain of development. Neighbors like Ferndale Collison have offered up 25 spots on weekends managed by Park Ferndale. Planning Commission has expressed initial support for the project concept, but wanted to see a more detailed response to the parking concerns expressed by the businesses.

The DDA Board of Directors participated in a thorough discussion of the development plan with levels of concern and support.

Michael Hennes, owner of Howe's Bayou located at 22848 Woodward just south of the area in discussion shared his thoughts with the board. He asked the board members to review the parking study done in 2015, especially the section on how far people walk willingly and the East side of Woodward has the most need of parking. He expressed the nature of the area in his experience is customers like the convenience of parking close to their destination. He experiences community support; some do walk from the neighborhoods however twice as many drive. Michael Hennes expressed that a large parking development is not needed.

Rifino Valentine, owner of Valentine Distilling located at 161 Vester adjacent to property in discussion. Rifino shared that he has lost more sleep over this project. He feels as though this is a death sentence for all the businesses on the East side of Woodward. He is in support of developing Vester into a pedestrian area only. Expressed that Ferndale is a destination for people from all over the state. He suggests solving the long-term solution first then talk about development.

Executive Director Stevens noted that the DDA does not play a role officially in the process, but local leaders on the Planning Commission and City Council would like to hear the boards discussion and considers this information is valuable.

Board members shared appreciation to the businesses owners who shared their thoughts and continued to discuss the variables of change and pain of growth to great length. Concerns were expressed about the possible Woodward road diet and this project happening at same time.

#### **5.c Woodward Moves Update**

Executive Director, Lena Stevens provided an update about the status of the Woodward Moves Project.

The Board discussed what role they can play when this project rolls out. Members mentioned implementing a texting and SMS notifications service to update businesses of closures and progress, promote and inform the public by using social media.

#### **5.d. Designation of the Master Use Plan representative**

Justin Lyons, Planning Manager provided a brief update about the planning process.

Chair, PJ Jacokes will be DDA Board of Directors representative.

#### **5.e Compost Pilot Plan Overview**

Claire Dion, Zero Waste Management presents an overview of the Compost Pilot Program the City has launched. This one-year residential and commercial is designed to help reduce the amount of food waste being sent to landfills. The City's Compost Pilot is looking for businesses who are interested in collecting and composting food waste. Participation to the program is free and voluntary. 64-gallon compost bins will be serviced in the compactor area (the same as the recycling carts). Businesses committing to the pilot program includes completing a 6-month program survey in April and a post-program survey in the Fall of 2022.

Pilot will gather data such as metrics, site usage, placement and see if it is worth the associated cost moving forward.

### **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Brown, seconded by Martin to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

*AYES* – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS* – None

***All ayes, motion carries.***

## 7. REGULAR AGENDA

### Consideration of Resolution Related to Continued Policies for Temporary Outdoor Seating, Sales, and Accessory Structures as a COVID-19 Response

The DDA Board of Directors participated in a discussion of the policy and provided opinions in support of the resolution to continue temporary outdoor seating, sales, and accessory structures.

Motion by Brown, seconded by Raska to authorize the DDA Executive Director to collaborate with City of Ferndale staff to draft the necessary resolutions for City Council to consider adoption of the extension.

*AYES* – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS* – None

***All ayes, motion carries.***

## 8. OTHER BUSINESS

Frosty Ferndale, the holiday campaign will launch on Small Business Saturday. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual People’s Choice Halloween decorating contest is live.

Member Chris Johnston inquired about placing a QR code on the Patio Zone cups the directs public to the participating businesses and rules. Director Stevens informs members that a QR code doesn’t fit with legal agreements.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

***Motion by Member Raska, seconded by Mayor Piana to adjourn the meeting at 11:01 A.M.***

*AYES* – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS* – None

***All ayes, motion carries.***