



Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022 @ 8:00 AM
Council Chambers
300 E Nine Mile, Ferndale, MI 48220

1. CALL TO ORDER: 8:04 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Council Member Greg Pawlica

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nathan Martin, JeDonna Dinges, Mayor Melanie Piana

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

GUESTS:

Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library
Kirsten Baker, Jim Shaffer and Associates Realtors
Omar George, New board member appointee (Property Owner)
Metari Harris, New board member appointee (Bags & Beads)
Jose Haro, owner of Mezcal

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

3. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library announced the library is open to the public with hybrid, virtual and in person programming options. Launching a new event for those who want to know more about gardening, hydroponic seed starter. April is poetry month and battle of the books with Ferndale Schools. Yoga in the courtyard will return. Book club meets at Ferndale Project the 1st Tuesday of the month. Executive Director Stevens will be appearing on agenda in May.

4. CALL TO AUDIENCE

Kirsten Baker, Jim Shaffer and Associates Realtors announced her role as business support liaison who will uplift local businesses and help with awareness. This division is still under development, and she will provide information as it becomes available.

Jose Haro, owner of Mezcal introduced himself and his business partner and sister, Sandra Haro who was unable to attend. Announced the opening of Mezcal at 201 E.

Nine Mile. Happy to be in Ferndale, great community support. Establishment is open for lunch.

5. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Metari Harris, owner of Bags & Beads located at 22754 Woodward introduced herself and shared her story and enthusiasm to be on the board of directors for the Downtown Development Authority. Her business has been located inside the Ferndale Center Building for eight years, last four have been at the corner ground level. Has worked with MI Works and provides youth training at her business.

Omar George introduced himself and locations of his newly acquired properties. Location 145 W. Nine Mile is under construction to support a retail space while location 22919 Woodward is an office space for his web-based business waste industry business. He expressed his enthusiasm to be on the board of directors for the Downtown Development Authority and appreciates the structured organized process.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

a. Placemaking and grant funding through MEDC

Application is opening for a 500,000 with matching grant. The funding will be used for an opportunity for West Nine Mile streetscapes, matching the grant with what is budgeted for the Withington Alley. West Nine Mile streetscape estimates over 1 million include sidewalk and landscaping bed re-scaping. If awarded the grant, we can revisit where the match comes from and see if we can do more with more City funding. During the next meeting, Executive Director will request the boards approval on hiring Grant Works for grant writing and submission, with a reminder of details from the budget presentation on reminder of where it is in budget.

b. Development Update

Vester flats has been approved by council for development at the privately owned parking lot at X in 14 months from approval. Dennis Zomma, owner of Ferndale Collision at 180 Vester received special land use from council for the proposal of a parking deck wrapped in retail, received special land use from council. Next steps are the design stages and proposals to planning commission. RFP from City for exploratory buy and develop parking lots 13 & 15. There is opposition for this parking deck at Como's lot from the Dorfman's, adjacent property owners. Executive Director, Stevens reached out to the Dorfman's to let them know the opportunity to present is still and option for what can be done at the 165 E. Bermuda. The intent is to coordinate the development of a new parking deck and the Vester flats to happen simultaneously. Planning commission recommendation, to coordinate. Hope is the parking garage to break ground in Fall 2023. Current proposed structure from Dennis Zomma is not poured concrete, retail first floor, and second and third will be parking.

7. PRESENTATIONS

a. Vision Committee Update

Engagement Manager Realy, spoke on behalf of committee chair Tim Krzyczkowski. Vision Committee has 13 members and on average 5 members are actively attending meetings and participating in designated projects. Currently working on finalizing the Nine-on-Nine performers. Meeting takes place the 1st Thursday of every month and has been helpful virtually thus far.

b. Outdoor Furniture/Equipment Purchasing Update

Executive Director Stevens reviewed the current purchases on order include replacement of bike racks, benches, picnic tables, planters, and Adirondack chairs.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Member Raska seconded Treasurer Brown to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

9. REGULAR AGENDA

a. Creation of Events Sponsorship & Engagement Policy Advisory Committee

Committee will include two board members, one Vision Committee member, Shella Lal to generate a draft policy and orientation process.

Purpose of the committee is to develop a policy to present for approval. Executive Director Stevens requests the board discuss the information that should be included in the policy. Reinstated that Member Johnston being on this advisory committee is not recommended, professional conflict of interest. Member Johnston reinstated that he does feel as though it is conflict of interest, per attorney and city manager. Member Raska mentioned this is a sensitive topic if a committee is forming guidelines that they hope the committee seeks the knowledge of those who have experience, opinion and history is valuable, supports a board member with experience to be part of the planning process. Third meeting could be implemented to incorporate the event organizers to provide the insight and knowledge. Member Jacokes struggles with Member Johnstons involvement in the policy development and trying to protect him in the way that the public will view your placement. A prescheduled third meeting for Member Johnston to present to the committee the presentation he has prepared with others to share their wishes and experiences. Meetings will take place in the mornings at 9 AM to start. Provide the businesses a survey so they can share the pros and cons of what they think, add that to the mix of information to help discuss the development of policy. Executive Director will draft a policy based on this discussion and provide it to the committee for final approval. Policy should include the structure of how decisions are made. Ideas for improvements, as businesses from survey, noise concerns, parking and their customers. The capacity of the DDA and purpose of a sponsorship, is not always money, can be volunteers and or in kind. Advisory committee meeting will be scheduled once the

survey information is generated, and the draft policy is provided to members by Executive Director Stevens.

Moved by Council Member Greg Pawlica, seconded by Member Johnston to appoint members Sarah Brown and Toly Ashkenazi to be on advisory committee for creation of events sponsorship & engagement policy.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Raska seconded Treasurer Brown to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 AM

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Members Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska, and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.