

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Meeting of the DDA Board of Directors
November 16, 2021
Zoom Meeting

The November meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:11 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Brian Turnbull, DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, Aaron Cozart, Jim Long (Longboat Key, Sarasota Co., Florida), Ryan McKindles, Greg Presley, Greg Richards (Canton, Wayne Co.), Shawn Riley, Mary Starring*

Absent: *None*

Also Present: *Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/DDA Marketing & Communications Director, Jessica Howlin/DDA Marketing Assistant, Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Sandi Wiktorowski/Finance Director, Sarah Prescott/School Board, Dave Gutman/Resident, Ashley Raden/Plante Moran, Joe Kowalski/Plante Moran, Nate Shureb/Plante Moran, Kathy Spillane/Resident, Andrew Krenz/City Council, Chuck Murdock/Resident, Fred Sheill/Resident, Marilyn Price/City Council, Susan Haifleigh/Resident, Barbara Morowski-Browne/City Council*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Ward introduced Greg Richards, manager of Browndog Barlor, as the newest member of the DDA Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by McKindles, seconded by Boyd, to approve the agenda and consent agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2020-21 DDA AUDIT

Joe Kowalski, Audit Partner at Plante Moran, presented audit results for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Kowalski reported that there are no control deficiencies and issues on the audit due to strong internal controls. Ashley Raden, of the Plante Moran audit team, said the DDA net position is at approximately \$360,131 which is up from approximately \$299,000 last year. Raden added the DDA revenues show approximately \$260,000 is unassigned, which is the amount the DDA currently has available for future spending. The \$47,000 in committed fund balance is related to the TIF capture for street improvements that have been ongoing. The DDA revenues were approximately \$1M,

expenditures were approximately \$985,000 which was a net increase of approximately \$61,000. The increase in revenue was mostly due to increase in donations. Raden pointed out that the debt service will expire in 2025, and at that time the DDA's collection of Northville District Library millage may go away and should be taken into consideration for future DDA planning. Ward added that in 2025 there will be approximately \$175,000 available for debt service if new bonds were issued.

Motion by Starring, seconded by Long, to accept the DDA audit. Motion carried unanimously.

WALKABILITY REPORT

Dave Gutman and Kathy Spillane presented highlights of the walkability study. The study includes analysis of current streetscapes and includes proposed development sites in the City of Northville. The study is intended to be a guide for walkability issues, ongoing road construction programs, supplement traffic management planning, River Walk pathway planning, and feedback to City boards and commissions with respect to the Social District impact on the community. Spillane said challenges and areas of improvement in current parking and road segments were analyzed. The Committee found that many of the current crosswalks are a box style, which present lower visibility than a block style crosswalk that has white striping across the crosswalks. The City also has several high curve radius roadways, including the large curve at Dunlap and Hutton.

South Center Street is also a concern for walkability due to minimal protection for pedestrian traffic even with the dedicated bike lane. The city should consider reducing the posted speed to 25MPH from the current posted 35MPH. Spillane said that while the social district itself has excellent walkability, the immediate surrounding areas have created walkability hazards due to impatient drivers. Boyd commented that as a cyclist, he finds most drivers are more cautious due to stop signs and street closures. Long added that traffic has just about returned to pre-pandemic levels and with street closures many motorists are now utilizing Wing Street. Spillane clarified that the data used to identify motorists on Wing Street was collected via field research conducted by members of the Walkability Committee.

Spillane said a challenge and area of improvement is the location of current handicapped parking spaces. Several handicapped parking spaces are distant from downtown locations and far from elevators in parking garages. One parking area in particular that the study highlighted are handicapped spaces in the E. Cady/S. Center parking deck. The spaces are currently located close to stairs and farther from the elevator. Spillane added that additional areas of possible improvement include restriping crosswalks, adding parallel parking, tree and plant maintenance along streetscape, constructing new paths and reconfiguring existing streets for non-motorized paths, reducing street lanes and reducing posted speed limits.

Audience comments noted that many motorists regularly travel the wrong way on Mary Alexander Court and a possible solution could include speed bumps or other deterrents. Audience comments also brought attention to the accessibility of Fish Hatchery Park and the challenge to walk or bike there while crossing Seven Mile Road. Another area

highlighted by audience comment is the current design of the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the curb on N. Center Street. This was not included in the initial study, and Spillane acknowledged that the Committee would like to further research this area. It was also noted that attention should be brought to current and proposed street widths due to traffic speeds and parallel parking.

MURAL INSTALLATION

Ward said as part of the DDA's Wayfinding project, project designer, Buzz Bizzell suggested the use of murals in Downtown Northville and included some suggested graphics should the DDA decide to move forward. The Design Committee has recently started meeting again after pausing due to Covid, and is addressing the mural project that has been in progress for about 4-5 years. The mural placement would be located on the west elevation of the building located at 102 E. Main Street. A variety of design concepts have been explored including a Concours d' Elegance mural and a Race Day in Northville mural. The Design Committee agreed upon a version of Race Day in Northville. Presley suggested the Design Committee delay selection of a final graphic until a joint group of citizens and members of the development team are able to research artifacts and photos currently at the Northville Downs.

Boyd, addressing the comment mentioned at last month's DDA Board meeting to hire a local artist, said the Design Committee previously reached out to source the project locally and were not able to generate interest in the project. Boyd added that the Design Committee will entertain additional art ideas for a final graphic during the December Design Committee meeting. **Boyd motioned, Cozart seconded** to approve the concept of the mural project with input on additional graphic designs before December 10th, and bring back final design to the DDA Board for approval. **Motion carried unanimously.**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES

a. *Design Committee:*
None

b. *Marketing Committee:*
Riley said October was very successful in Downtown Northville with Skeletons are Alive. Northville is gearing up for a new event, A Holiday to Remember. Johnson said that this event will run during the first three weekends in December. Friday nights will feature strolling live music. Saturdays will include carolers and free horse and wagon rides picking up in Town Square. Sundays are slated as a family day, with live reindeer and elf, a petting zoo and costumed characters. The DDA has been working on filling the stands with a variety of vendors for the event. The DDA staff will be distributing postcards and posters to downtown businesses in addition to a Mailchimp email blast.

c. *Parking Committee:*
None

d. *Organizational Committee:*

Ward noted that Greg Richards filled one of the open DDA Board seats. The City Council Selection Committee is currently interviewing for the second open DDA Board seat. In January the DDA Board will vote on officers. The DDA Board vice-chair will remain vacant until elections.

Ward added there is current legislation in process to update social districts to eliminate the sunsets and allow DDA and social district communities to utilize both social district and special events permits in conjunction with one another.

e. Economic Development Committee:

Cozart said the EDC is working to schedule a meeting to look at impacts of street closures. Cozart attended the Planning Commission meeting and speaking on behalf of the DDA Board and EDC, spoke in favor of the PUD eligibility for the Downs project.

f. Sustainability Committee:

None

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Presley shared that the Planning Commission is holding a public meeting tonight regarding the Master Plan updates. Long inquired about the status of the development at the southeast corner of N. Center Street and Dunlap Street. Ward said the project will be starting within the month. Lava Grill, the development going into the old Brick's location, just received their liquor license transfer and is moving forward with opening plans. The next DDA Board meeting is scheduled for December 21, 2021.

Motion by McKindles, seconded by Buckhave to adjourn the DDA Board meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 am

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Howlin, Marketing Assistant
Northville DDA