



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2018**

The Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Ackley, Allen, Ambrose*, Blair, Fernandes, Lublin, Marshal.
Shuman

ABSENT: Easter, Maurer, Wlodarczyk

There being a quorum present, the meeting was declared in session.

OTHERS PRESENT: Executive Director Whitt, Finance Director Coogan, Police Chief
Shakinas, Council Member Costanzo

**DDA 03-01-18 MOTION TO HAVE DDA BOARD MEMBER LUBLIN FILL IN AS
TEMPORARY DDA CHAIRMAN**

Motion by Allen, seconded by Blair, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To have DDA Board
Member Lublin fill in as temporary DDA Chairman

**DDA 03-02-18 MOTION TO EXCUSE DDA BOARD MEMBERS EASTER,
MAURER, AND WLODARCZYCK**

Motion by Allen, seconded by Fernandes, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To excuse
DDA Board Members Easter, Maurer, and Wlodarczyk.

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES:

DDA Board Member Fernandes added Main Street Oakland under New Business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**DDA 03-03-18 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 13, 2018
MEETING**

Motion by Blair, supported by Allen: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the
minutes from the February 13, 2018 meeting.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Dan Lauffer – 1488 Dover Hill North – stated that his concern, since recently moving to the city,
is the restoration of the Banks House, the Dolbeer Farmhouse, Foster Farmhouse, whatever it is
called. Mr. Lauffer opined that one of the principal responsibilities of the Downtown

Development Authority is the restoration of this old important historic site. Mr. Lauffer opined the Farmhouse is one of the important sites in Walled Lake. Mr. Lauffer said he is happy to see \$5,000 budgeted from the DDA for restoration, but stated that it is not enough and \$100,000 is more what the organization needs.

**Casey Ambrose arrived 4:08 p.m.*

Susan Helke – 1361 Shaw- stated that at the February 14, 2018 meeting a comment was concerning the Dolbeer Banks Foster Farmhouse. Mrs. Helke said a comment was made that all historical value was lost when the house was moved and she takes issue with that comment.

DDA Board Member Fernandes clarified her understanding of the issue and stated the historical value is not in the house, the loss of historic value comes when one applies for historic tax credits or grants is no longer an option because the house has been relocated.

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Community Education Center Update – Rescheduled Hearing

Executive Director Whitt said the rescheduled hearing is tomorrow. Mr. Whitt explained hypothetically the judge can rule from the bench or arguments can take place and the ruling comes later.

2. Beach Party

Executive Director Whitt said Pat Wlodarczyk called a meeting of the DDA and city staff to get the DDA side of the planning started. Mr. Whitt said DDA Wlodarczyk is trying to get an early start on the Beach Party. Executive Director Whitt said the city staff and the intern program is going to run that event.

2. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mercer Beach Grant Update & Downtown Storm Sewer/Streetscape Rehabilitation Grant Update

Finance Director Coogan gave a history of the steps the DDA and city had done to address the storm/sewer problem in the downtown. Ms. Coogan said the City and the DDA had ordered up an analysis of the storm water system city wide and the city has been working on this project for two years now. Ms. Coogan stated the first area that was analyzed was the downtown. Ms. Coogan said it was determined that 80% of the downtown storm sewers are falling apart. Ms. Coogan said there have been five sink holes in the downtown. Ms. Coogan said the DDA put a plan together and the city applied for a grant and it was submitted in August of 2017.

Finance Director Coogan explained that the first part of the grant will take care of the area in from of Mercer Beach. Ms. Coogan said it will replace all the storm lines that are collapsed or

were cut off. Ms. Coogan said there were some lines that were never replaced and is nothing but an empty hole. Ms. Coogan explained when there is a storm it takes DPW four hours to put the beach back together because all the water is sheeting down the road. Ms. Coogan said this is a million dollar grant and a 25% match. Ms. Coogan explained the likelihood of Walled Lake getting the grant is low because the City is not considered a critical pollutant area and there were more applicants than there has been in the last ten years. Ms. Coogan explained the award occurs in May.

DDA Board Member Fernandes asked who is the grant with? Ms. Coogan said the DEQ. Ms. Coogan said parks and recreation also applied for some grants. Ms. Coogan said the board reprioritized, so they could also apply for a grant called a passport grant, which is \$150,000. Ms. Coogan explained this grant will assist with the City and DDA grant and it includes adding a bio swale and it replaces the storm pipes and uses green infrastructure to retain the water, so it is not all flowing into the lake. Ms. Coogan said Parks and Recreation is also applying for another grant to find funding for this bio swale and replacing that fall safe, a material kids can fall on under the playground equipment and includes replacing the porta johns and the DDA already approved that. Ms. Coogan said the DDA ordered this up a while ago and this is an update to let the board know the City is still waiting to hear who has been awarded the grant. Ms. Coogan said this is phase one out of three phases. Ms. Coogan said the DDA will have to address, the City will know in May, whether the board has the money or not, if the DDA has the grant. If the DDA does not get the grant the DDA still has a million-dollar project and the DDA will have to discuss how to finance this because the problem is getting worse.

DDA Chairman Ambrose asked is that part of Wellsboro property? Ms. Coogan there is no easement on the beach, but it does include some of the parking lot of Bayside because there is a storm pipe under Bayside's parking lot.

Executive Director Whitt said this is a report on grant issues and is touching with the drainage and flooding problem. Mr. Whitt said DDA Chairman Ambrose asked for a presentation on the troubles with East Bay and Gamma subdivision. Mr. Whitt said it all ties in to the deteriorating system and the city had to start from the beginning and it started with televising all the lines for the past two years. Mr. Whitt said the City have a solution for Mercer Beach and a solution for the Gamma subdivision. Mr. Whitt said the drainage backups behind East Bay and Sparks Lane and it should not flood and city council are the ones who have to decide to fix it, to spend the money and how to fund for that repair.

2. Trailway/Trail Head Update

Finance Director Coogan explained the city has been fighting to include the trailhead as part of the grant and project. Ms. Coogan said there was an executive decision made by the Trailway Manager and City Manager of Wixom to say there was no need to worry about the trailhead now until the group worries about the depot.

Executive Director Whitt said it is important to know what is occurring, the trailway council was going to complete the trail without touching the depot or the parking lot. Mr. Whitt said these are the issue Walled Lake has been dealing with from the beginning and he called it, the trailway

council were moving on it until Walled Lake got a hold of it. Mr. Whitt said the project is going to cost Walled Lake taxpayers a million dollars more than anyone has peddled. Mr. Whitt said it will cost a million dollars, the city has \$450,000 budgeted and now the railway council is looking for more money for the match and the trail council did not want to do Walled Lake's part. Mr. Whitt said the railway council was trying to leave Walled Lake holding the bag to repair the depot and parking lot. Mr. Whitt said the trail should have been left to the city administration to cut the best deal for Walled Lake, this is not the best deal for Walled Lake and it has become a fiasco, it is going to cost a million dollars more than what was told to the people.

Ms. Coogan said this has been a fight and the railway council put out a RFP to get an engineer firm to do the design for the railway including the trailheads. Ms. Coogan said the railway received a donation for engineering services and signed an agreement with the donor that said this would include the railway and trailhead. Ms. Coogan said the two made the executive decision during one of the grant discussions to exclude the trailhead. Ms. Coogan found this out months later at a trail meeting. Ms. Coogan said she has been battling and fighting to add the trailhead in. Ms. Coogan said the City of Walled Lake put their money on the table to get an asphalt paved trail because that is what Commerce Township and Wixom wants; Walled Lake was happy with crushed lime stone but Walled Lake's two neighbors wanted this higher level of trail so Walled Lake committed \$420,000 dollars and then Walled Lake found out the trailhead was not included in the project. Ms. Coogan said Walled Lake has been fighting the engineer never did do the trailhead and tried to tell the city they would pay it out of contingency money. Ms. Coogan said the city's engineer did the design for the trailhead, to make sure it was included. Ms. Coogan said there was a phone call earlier in the day and the department of transportation that the trailhead would not be participating because it was not part of the original grant application. Ms. Coogan said another fight is coming directly across Pontiac Trail. Ms. Coogan said that is what the trail council, Walled Lake and MDOT wants but Oakland County wants the city to widen the sidewalks and take the bikers down to Maple Road crossing. Ms. Coogan said this has been a fight to protect Walled Lake's interest in the trailhead.

Ms. Coogan said that the three communities original match was 20% of the grant match. Ms. Coogan said MDOT came back said they spent more money in this area and gave money to the trail council to buy the trail and gave money to build a five-million-dollar bridge over M-5. Ms. Coogan explained now MDOT wants a 50% match, that would take Walled Lake's \$420,000 match to over a \$1,000,000 and as the trail representative, Walled Lake is out, the city cannot come up with over a million dollars. Ms. Coogan said the trail council is looking for private donors.

Executive Director Whitt said because of the political push that kicked in, it eliminated all possibility and legitimate negotiations to benefit the City of Walled Lake. Mr. Whitt said it was all eliminated when the trail was politicized. Mr. Whitt said the city committed to the trailhead which is a buzz word for the depot in the downtown area. Mr. Whitt said the railway decided they did not need to fix anything in Walled Lake, they just need to get from West Bloomfield to Wixom and that makes sense if I am on their side. Mr. Whitt said no one in Walled Lake believed without redoing the depot. Mr. Whitt said the city still commits a million dollars and the depot still is not completed. Mr. Whitt said it happened cause some folks did not get what was

going on, it was in negotiation process and should not have been politicized. Mr. Whitt explained it should have been a fair deal for Walled Lake. Mr. Whitt said it should have been done in a different way and now it is 1/3 third and Walled Lake is subsidizing Commerce Township and Wixom. Mr. Whitt said this was a no cost to the taxpayers, this has not been transparent and misleading to a lot of folks from the beginning. Mr. Whitt said it has to be discussed to spend a million dollars and still not have the depot repaired.

Finance Director Coogan said there was a call this afternoon and MDOT is still not committing to put the trailhead in the grant application.

DDA Board Member Fernandes asked if the city can look for a grant just for the City's part of the trail. Finance Director Coogan said the city is part of the trailway council now, so the City cannot go out for their own grant. Ms. Coogan said had the city pulled out from the council the city could do what they want with their money.

Executive Director Whitt said Walled Lake is funding the other two communities trail. Mr. Whitt said what the two communities want is different from Walled Lake. Mr. Whitt said the City could have used the money to redo the depot and fix the parking lot and could have pulled out of the trail council and done the job cheaper for the city taxpayers.

DDA Board Member Lublin asked if the City can back out now without losing money?

Finance Director Coogan said the city council passed a resolution to commit \$420,000. Ms. Coogan said the city has not committed any more. Ms. Coogan said the \$420,000 is still in the bank and the City has not accepted the grant, only tentatively.

DDA Board Member Shuman questioned why the trail has to be asphalt. Mr. Shuman said crushed lime stone is better and cheaper and less maintenance.

3. Main Street Oakland

DDA Board Member Fernandes said to join Main Street Oakland is a process for developing a vision and goal for the downtown. Ms. Fernandes said the DDA should not to start at the bottom but start with a process in place so DDA does not have to spend money on experts to develop a process. Ms. Fernandes said she still does not know what the cost would be but would like to continue more research.

4. DDA Budget

Finance Director Coogan said she did not change anything from last year. Ms. Coogan attached history from where the DDA has captured money from. Ms. Coogan explained that in past DDA brought in more money and it will take years to get back to that. Ms. Coogan explained property value can only go up the CPI and people have asked for a tax cut in the DDA district. Ms. Coogan said the DDA transfers and supplement city funds and called out what the board has done to help the city. Ms. Coogan said when the economy went down the city council downsized

the operation and the city took over the demonstration and reduced the cost of what the city was charging for administration use to keep as much money on the DDA budget as possible.

Executive Director Whitt said having a DDA allows the city to collect more money from the County and the DDA can do things easier than a city council can do. Mr. Whitt explained the DDA is still a child of the city council. Mr. Whitt said all this money belongs to the taxpayers. Mr. Whitt explained that the DDA has to do downtown development. Mr. Whitt said the City is not charging any cost to the DDA operation and that is why the DDA has been able to put more money away.

DDA Board Member Fernandes asked if the DDA budgeted \$5,000 for the Foster Farmhouse.

Executive Director Whitt said he will not partner with a group who will not provide an audit. Mr. Whitt said his intent secure the building because it is a city facility and on city property and the city will own it. Mr. Whitt said twenty years of collecting and still cannot get an audit and does not know where that money has gone. Mr. Whitt said he has met with Ms. Flammer who demanded a meeting and then the first thing out of her mouth is why are we meeting. Mr. Whitt explained Ms. Flammer brought a lawyer and not an auditor. Mr. Whitt said he will secure the house and do an assessment of what needs to be done.

**DDA 03-04-18 APPROVAL OF THE 2018-2019 BUDGET FOR DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Motion by Fernandes, supported by Lublin: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the 2018-2019 budget for downtown development authority.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Planning and Development Report

Executive Director Whitt said there is an interest in property downtown across from the beach and the applicant wants to build homes and try to change the zoning from central business district to residential.

B. Executive Director Report

C. Promotion Committee

3. CORRESPONDENCE: None

4. CONSIDERATION OF WARRANT:

DDA 03-05-18 APPROVAL OF THE WARRANT FOR FEBRUARY 2018:

Motion by Lublin, supported by Ackley: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the warrant for February 2018.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

DDA 03-06-18 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Easter, seconded by Lublin; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 5:14 p.m.



Chelsea Pesta
DDA Managing Director



Casey Ambrose
DDA Chairman