



CITY OF WALLED LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020

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

ROLL CALL: Ackley, Allen, Ambrose, Blair, Fernandes, Lublin, Marshal

ABSENT: Atwell, Easter, Shuman, Wlodarczyk

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Deputy Managing Director Pesta, Confidential Assistant Jaquays

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

DDA 02-01-20 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 14, 2020 MEETING

Motion by Lublin, supported by Blair: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the minutes from the January 14, 2020 meeting.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Council Member Costanzo discussed Oakland County Main Street program for three minutes.

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

2. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Revisiting 2012 Sidewalk Design Study. Considering funding sidewalks in front of Greenhouse, Nino's Bakery, Liz's Cleaner, State Farm, Lakes Area Homes, Clear Path, & That's Wassup

Executive Director Whitt summarized the Main Street Program and the decision to withdraw from the program. Mr. Whitt presented preliminary renderings from the 2012 sidewalk design study with Oakland County Main Street Program. Mr. Whitt prefaced the renderings explaining that the drawings were done with the intention that the City and the DDA would do the entire sidewalk front. Mr. Whitt explained that with the work, the City needs to comply to ADA requirements, thus changing the designs and budget. Executive Director Whitt explained that ADA compliance will change the design by blocking direct access to some of the storefronts. Mr. Whitt stated the first step is to identify what the City is responsible for. Executive Director Whitt said he ordered a survey to be done that will provide more information. Mr. Whitt

explained the DDA could create a financial plan for the sidewalks if all property owners are willing to participate. Executive Director Whitt said that the DDA cannot fund one sidewalk because there are other sidewalks needs to be addressed.

DDA Chairman Ambrose provided history and background on the downtown sidewalks. Mr. Ambrose further explained ADA compliance, the railings, and how that would impact businesses.

Executive Director Whitt said the City will return with a survey and engineer input. Mr. Whitt said it needs to be a fair re-do for all businesses downtown. Mr. Whitt said there is a need for cohesiveness. Mr. Whitt explained that this will be a major project downtown if the funding is available and all property owners are willing to participate.

Jerry Millen- Greenhouse- Mr. Millen said he is willing to financially participate and willing to partake in whatever amount the DDA determines is necessary for sidewalk improvements. Mr. Millen agreed that the downtown is beautiful and understands that it is a shared responsibility among business owners.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

1. Report on federal aid committee meeting

Executive Director Whitt explained Council Member Owsinek and city staff attended the Federal Aid Committee (FAC) meeting. Mr. Whitt explained that the City is still on track for the Decker road project to be done in 2022. Mr. Whitt said it is possible for the project to be completed in 2021.

DDA Board Member Fernandes asked where the match money would come from?

Executive Director Whitt explained that the match money will come from either general fund or DDA. Executive Director Whitt said Walled Lake is focused on improving infrastructure and is on the road to recovery.

3. CORRESPONDENCE: None

DDA Board Member Fernandes expressed her concern with the negativity escalation in the community. Ms. Fernandes strongly encouraged people to communicate in a civil manner. Ms. Fernandes believes that Walled Lake can be better.

DDA Chairman Ambrose agreed with Ms. Fernandes that people with questions and/or concerns need to communicate and have discussions. Mr. Ambrose expressed that those who have taken to social media have created a toxic environment for the residents, businesses, and neighboring communities. Mr. Ambrose said all the information presented at these meetings is public knowledge and can be confirmed with any of the DDA members.

Executive Director Whitt explained how he witnessed a protest outside of Jimmy Maher's building with signs that said, "Quit Whitt". While observing the protest, Mr. Whitt said an onlooker commented that the protesters' masks were very pathetic and that it makes the City look bad. Mr. Whitt commented that they are embarrassing the City. Mr. Whitt said the protesters wearing the masks are the same people requesting transparency. Mr. Whitt explained the nonsense that the protesters were doing is because they are allowed to exercise their first amendment right and say anything on social media. Mr. Whitt explained one does not have a first amendment right to sit on City Council nor do they have a first amendment right to sit on the DDA. Mr. Whitt said if one were to abuse that authority, they would be held accountable.

Mr. Whitt said one of the leaders at the protest, who was giving people the finger, followed him into the Men's room at Dave & Amy's and began shouting, "You're the devil". Mr. Whitt questioned what kind of man follows a grown man into the bathroom to create a confrontation? Mr. Whitt said these are the people who are posting on social media and these are the people who ran for City Council office.

Executive Director Whitt reminded the DDA board who received the highest vote, Casey Ambrose. Mr. Whitt said the people of Walled Lake recognize the nonsense of what is on social media. Mr. Whitt said transparency does not exist when you put on a mask in the street or when you hide behind a fake name on social media. Mr. Whitt said they are damaging the City. Executive Director Whitt said if they are public officials who are using their social media site to damage other public officials, they can be held accountable. Mr. Whitt explained that you do not have a first amendment right to abuse your position and to try and shut down an investigation that is on-going.

DDA Chairman Ambrose explained that the DDA and City Council do what is in the best interest of the City.

Executive Director Whitt clarified that not everybody on the DDA and City Council do what is in the best interest of the City.

DDA Member Fernandes emphasized that she wants the negativity and lies to stop. Ms. Fernandes strongly encouraged adult conversation.

4. WARRANT REPORT:

DDA 02-02-20 APPROVAL TO RECEIVE AND FILE WARRANT JANUARY 2020

Motion by Lublin, supported by Ackley: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To receive and file warrant January 2020.

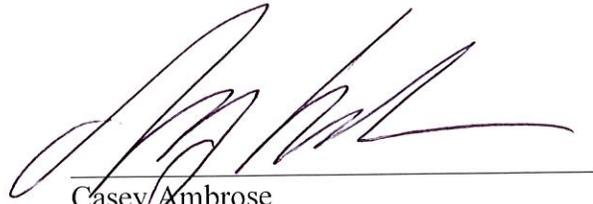
5. ADJOURNMENT:

DDA 02-03-20 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ackley, seconded by Blair; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 4:46 p.m.



Chelsea Pesta
Deputy Clerk



Casey Ambrose
DDA Chairman