



CITY OF WALLED LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 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: Recording Secretary Jaquays, Deputy Managing Director Pesta, Finance Director Barlass

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

DDA 03-01-20 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 11, 2020 MEETING

Motion by Ackley, supported by Blair: **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** To approve the minutes from the February 11, 2020 meeting.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Council Member Costanzo said "I would like to talk about the public safety campus expansion. When I first brought up this empty field last June, I wanted to have this property appraised per our City Charter and to sell it getting it back on our tax rolls, generating revenue for our city. In my opinion, we are extremely underutilized asset lying around that will be the residents paid over \$1.2 million dollars for not including the cost for the contamination clean up. Think of it this way, if I have something that is not being used and I can get a return on my money I sell it. I am sure many of you do the same thing at home if you have something that is not of value that you can get some money back for it just lying around. At that time, I amended my motion to establish a committee for study session to research all the opportunities for this property, that was council motion 6-13-19 on June 18th, 19. Since the unanimous passage of that motion nothing has been presented beyond this public safety campus expansion to council for the various opportunities associated to this property. One option available is we need to consider moving our Farmers Market to our historic downtown district across from the beach. Rather than have our Farmers Market on a Wednesday morning when most residents are at work, we should change it to a Saturday or Sunday morning when most people are at home. Our Farmers Market can be so much more and another key part creating a vibrant downtown district. I believe there are other options as well for our Farmers Market such as locating it to the Michigan Airline Trailhead or locating at both in some fashion. No matter what, both places are where people are

biking or walking to the Farmers Market bringing people into our community in supporting both our businesses and our tax base. Again, living in “real-ville” the need for a facility like this in our community is just we are a small community there is no justification for this project or what is going on there. We are just too tiny. We have been training for years with other communities at other facilities.”

Councilman Costanzo said “We are surrounded by larger municipalities such as Commerce, Wixom, Novi that are right there if needed. We are not Chicago; we are not New York that can justify a need for an expense on a facility such as this. We seem to be making the city office complex more of a priority rather than meeting the long overdue needs across our downtown and in our neighborhoods. Let’s not forget that we just passed a public safety millage last August and there are no guarantees that those or general funds will not be used here or ever been used in some capacity around the engineering costs. What we need to be doing is saving ever dollar collected in that public safety millage. One last sentence here. Again, in my opinion this project can become a giant boondoggle that can easily get out of control to cost. In reality I suspect that we will end up using DDA funds, general funds or even public safety millage funds while spending a ton of money on engineering designs and project construction while ignoring the more pressing needs across all of Walled Lake. This is how I have felt on the public safety campus expansion and why I voted no against it.

Jerry Millen -103 E Walled Lake – Mr. Millen stated for the record that the Greenhouse fully paid for the old pepino’s lot and that no city funds were used for the Greenhouse’s purchase. Mr. Millen said he does not appreciate the lies that are being told by Council Member Costanzo.

Neal Wolfson- 565 Winwood Court – Mr. Wolfson explained that forfeiture funds will be used for the development on the public safety campus. Mr. Wolfson questioned where the farmers market would be held downtown since the City does not own the property across the beach. Mr. Wolfson opinioned if the City sells their property to do other projects, why not sell the park and beach to get money? Mr. Wolfson said we need to have places for activities and events and that is how the public safety campus will help.

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

2. NEW BUSINESS: None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

1. Greenhouse downtown parking

Executive Director Whitt said that no City funds were used for the purchase of the parking lot downtown. Mr. Whitt said that the property was recently purchased by a company that Mr. Millen owns. Mr. Whitt explained that the City had an agreement with the old pepino’s property to share the right of ways. Mr. Whitt provided a summary on what the agreement entailed. Mr. Whitt said he is designing a similar agreement with Mr. Millen for shared access so all the businesses and communities will benefit. Mr. Whitt explained how this will improve traffic flow

and address the need for parking. Mr. Whitt said a proposed agreement will be presented at the next council meeting.

Executive Director Whitt addressed Council Member Costanzo's comment stating that the City does not own the lot across the beach. Mr. Whitt said Council Member's statements are false- the lot is private property, not a park. Mr. Whitt said that the City can not have the farmers market there because it is not the City's property.

Executive Director Whitt further explained the City cannot move the farmers market to a Saturday. Mr. Whitt explained that other farmers market have set times and changing the date would affect the vendors and patrons. Mr. Whitt said that the developments on the public safety campus will improve the use of our farmers market. Mr. Whitt said it will be a multi-purpose facility.

Mr. Whitt said he appreciates Mr. Wolfson's tongue-in-cheek remarks and expanded on Mr. Wolfson's comment with the analogy that you can only burn your furniture one year for firewood. Mr. Whitt said selling the park off for political advantage can only be done one year or one election. Mr. Whitt said the original intent of the property was to develop it for the City and that is what we are doing.

DDA Board Member Fernandes questioned if the proposed agreement with Mr. Millen for parking downtown will be available to all businesses and residents?

Executive Director Whitt explained that administration is currently working on an agreement that will be presented to Council.

DDA Chairman Ambrose provided history on what the Pepino's agreement consisted of. Mr. Ambrose explained there was a shared cost to creating a connector between the Pepino's parking and the municipal parking.

Executive Director Whitt said that there is a parking issue downtown, and with the proposed agreement this will benefit all the businesses downtown.

DDA Board Member Fernandes suggested to include signage to make the public parking lot more identifiable to the public.

DDA Chairman Ambrose provided history on the farmers market. Mr. Ambrose said an issue was finding a time for vendors to come. Mr. Ambrose explained that Wednesday mornings worked best with vendors' availability.

Executive Director Whitt said there is a reason why the market is on Wednesday and why the market is hosted on our Public Safety Campus. Mr. Whitt said the public safety campus will be multi-purpose in that training services will be available for police and fire. Mr. Whitt said the idea that our police and fire can train somewhere else is a bizarre concept. Mr. Whitt said the Council Member is anti-police and ran two years ago to get rid of the police and fire department.

DDA Chairman Ambrose further explained that the public safety campus will be improved with a pavilion that will benefit our farmers market and summer events. Mr. Ambrose explained that if the City were to sell their assets, the residents who payed for the property and contamination capping would lose. Mr. Ambrose highlighted the benefits that will come with the Public Safety Campus.

Mayor Ackley said if the farmers market day changed, vendors would be unable to participate and overtime for staff would need to be considered.

DDA Board Member Marshall recalled a prior event he hosted and explained that attendance dropped when the annual event changed dates.

2. Preparation for Greenhouse Grand Opening

Executive Director Whitt said the Greenhouse will have a grand opening for recreation sales on March 14, 2020. Mr. Whitt explained this will require public safety planning. Mr. Whitt explained that this will be a good opportunity for businesses downtown and for Walled Lake.

Executive Director Whitt said the sidewalk survey is currently in progress. Mr. Whitt said discussion will soon begin about how the sidewalks will be paid for.

3. Update on public safety campus expansion

Executive Director Whitt addressed update earlier in the meeting.

3. CORRESPONDENCE:

DDA Chairman Ambrose congratulated Steve Blair and his family for 45 years of service to the community and business district.

DDA Board Member Fernandes presented a special tribute certificate to Murray's: Parts City from the State of Michigan.

DDA Board Member Fernandes announced that the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) house bills 5229 and 5550 did not pass thus saving millions in property taxes.

DDA Board Member Allen asked for any updates on the storm sewer system by the beach?

Executive Director Whitt said they are working with the engineer and more information can be presented at the next meeting.

DDA Board Member Marshall questioned if the businesses owners will be contacted for sidewalk improvements?

DDA Chairman Ambrose explained that yes, they will be contacted. Mr. Ambrose said the City is currently finishing the engineering studies. Mr. Ambrose clarified that the property owners will be contacted, businesses owners will be notified dependent on their relationship with the property owner.

Executive Director Whitt said the City is moving forward with engineering studies and property owners will be contacted.

4. WARRANT REPORT:

**DDA 03-02-20 APPROVAL TO RECEIVE AND FILE WARRANT FEBRUARY
2020**

Motion by Lublin, supported by Allen: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To receive and file warrant February 2020.

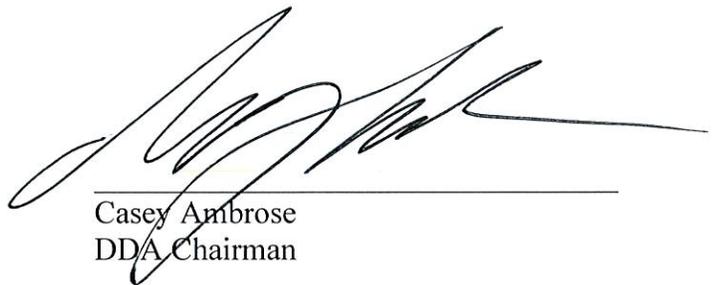
5. ADJOURNMENT:

DDA 03-03-20 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Lublin; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 4:47 p.m.



Chelsea Pesta
DDA Managing Director



Casey Ambrose
DDA Chairman