

**Sault Ste. Marie
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
August 12, 2015**

MINUTES

Present: Raymond Bell
Johann Ingold
William Karr
Michelle LaJoie
Scott Parker
Les Townsend
Oliver Turner

Josh Billington

Absent: Ray Bauer and Carl Stutzner.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.**
2. **ROLL CALL.** Attendance was taken as noted.
3. **CONSENT AGENDA.**

- **Approval of Minutes: July 8, 2015 regular meeting.**

Moved by Raymond Bell, supported by Michelle LaJoie, to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2015 DDA meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS.**

- A. **Application for Music in the Park MCACA Mini-Grant. Recommendation: Authorize application of MCACA mini-grant for Music in the Park in the amount of \$4,000.** Director Knepper provided a copy of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Assurances application. This is a cash grant with no conditions or restrictions.

Moved by Raymond Bell, supported by Les Townsend, to authorize the application of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs mini-grant for Music in the Park in the amount of \$4,000. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. **Transfer of \$2,500 from Sign Grant Program to Façade Grant Program. Recommendation: Transfer \$2,500 from sign grant fund to façade grant fund in anticipation of at least one more application for a façade project this fall.**

The new owners of the Seven Seas property on the corner of Portage Avenue and Ferris Street have indicated that they would like to apply for a façade grant. Over the last few years the Façade Grant Program has encouraged several downtown

businesses to upgrade their exterior storefronts. The façade grant fund balance is down to \$1,000 and Director Knepper would like to transfer \$2,500 from the sign grant fund to the façade grant fund so that the Seven Seas property owners can utilize the grant money to renovate the exterior of their building. The transfer of \$2,500 from the sign grant fund to the façade grant fund would leave a \$2,500 balance in the sign grant fund.

Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by William Karr, to transfer \$2,500 from the sign grant fund to the façade grant fund in anticipation of at least one more application for a façade grant project this fall. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. **Review Application for \$500 Sign Grant for Superior Coffee Roasting’s New Location in Conjunction with Bird’s Eye Outfitters.** Recommendation: Authorize \$500 sign grant for Superior Coffee Roasting’s new location in conjunction with Bird’s Eye Outfitters.

Director Knepper provided a copy of Mr. Ron Kurnik’s Sign Grant Application, as well as renderings of the proposed sign.

Moved by Raymond Bell, supported by Scott Parker, to authorize a \$500 sign grant for the new Superior Coffee Roasting Company Café located in conjunction with the Bird’s Eye Outfitters retail store. The motion carried unanimously.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

- A. **Placemaking Implementation Grant.** Stakeholder meeting set for August 21st with Michigan Municipal League.

Michigan Municipal League/Placemaking Implementation Grant project staff will be in Sault Ste. Marie on Friday, August 21, 2015 to meet with City staff, property owners and tour the three sites included within the Moloney Alley PlacePlan. At the June 10, 2015 DDA Board meeting the DDA Board voted to accept the MML’s matching grant offer to complete detailed architectural renderings and cost estimates for three development sites: Shawn Atto’s building and lot, Pat Cleary’s buildings on Ridge Street, and the Templeton lot on Portage Avenue. The matching grant is \$6,400.

- B. **ParkMobile Implementation.** Parkmobile’s decals and other supplies took a bit longer than anticipated; launch is predicted for the end of next week.

The DDA parking office created a spreadsheet showing every meter in town. Parkmobile’s decals will be shipped this week and staff will be affixing the decals as soon as possible.

- C. **Michigan Mainstreet Program Select Level Application.** Discuss formation of steering committee.

DDA Board members Les Townsend, Michelle LaJoie and Raymond Bell, who attended the Michigan Mainstreet training sessions, will be meeting to discuss development of a steering committee. The steering committee, comprised of approximately twelve enthusiastic citizens of Sault Ste. Marie, will move forward with the next step in the Michigan Mainstreet Program which is the Select Level Application. The steering committee will be discussed further at the next DDA Board meeting.

D. South Ashmun Streetscape – 2015 Construction. Discuss status of streetscape project.

Every Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. in the second floor conference room at City Hall Director Knepper holds an Ashmun Street progress meeting. Three or four business owners typically attend these meetings. Construction and issues regarding parking and access to businesses has been going as smoothly as hoped. Reactionary time for complaints, issues, etc. has been timely. The residents of *Little Italy* have been very cooperative.

Director Knepper provided a map with locations of approved (and those pending approval) bench walls along south Ashmun Street. Light poles and tree placement are pending at this time.

E. Events Planner Job Description. Erica Smith had emergency family health issues arise, which has resulted in her withdrawing from the position. She felt that she could not commit to 20 hours per week. Director Knepper will be looking through resumes again in the next week.

Director Knepper will be meeting with Human Resources Generalist Alicia Karr to go through resumes. The position will be revised to more of an assistant/clerical position to help with the DDA's day-to-day activities, along with planning events. Director Knepper will follow-up with the DDA Board at the next meeting.

F. Wayfinding Signage. Wayfinding signage is currently 50 percent updated; four more signs need to be pulled and painted.

Six wayfinding signs have been updated, painted and re-installed. They look great and will make a big impression downtown.

G. Head Start Playground. City and DDA staff are working to schedule a meeting with CLMCAA and Head Start staff regarding the existing design plans and how a green space for children and seniors would fit with the plan.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Discussion Regarding Sidewalk Sales. Review Sidewalk Sales' current format; discuss addition of concert, other elements.

Director Knepper reported that the overall feedback regarding Sidewalk Sales was positive. Last year's Sidewalk Sales was record-breaking and this year the numbers were down a bit. Several stores did not put sale items out on the sidewalk, which was disappointing, and parking was an issue with all of the road construction in the downtown area. The DDA Board's general consensus is that this event needs to be refreshed to make it more productive for business owners. It was suggested that the DDA Board meet with business owners to discuss next year's downtown event.

7. DOWNTOWN MANAGER'S REPORT.

A. State Façade Grant Program. Work has commenced at the Chippewa County Historical Society. Cross-K Construction won the bid for a Cut Above the Rest; bids are being finalized for the final three buildings.

- The Chippewa County Historical Society building is 60% complete. They are waiting on new windows and the exterior bricks are being washed, which has brought back the original color and historical appearance of the building. The CCHS is happy with the results so far.
- Renovations to A Cut Above the Rest is just starting.
- The contract has been signed for the Lewinski & Brewster building. Construction is slated to begin in September.
- Island Books and Crafts is close to signing with a contractor.
- U.P. Engineers and Architects renovation will occur in the spring of 2016. It has been found that the exterior of the building consists of lead-based paint.

Director Knepper indicated that the State has given the green light for more State Façade Grant Program projects in downtown Sault Ste. Marie once the original five buildings have been completed and paid in full.

B. National Register Historic District Update. Surveys are being distributed to building owners along Ashmun Street.

Reference Librarian Amber Clement at the Bayliss Public Library has been working diligently to complete the research for each building located in the proposed National Register Historic District. Surveys have been sent to property owners requesting specific information about their building(s).

8. MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE BOARD.

Oliver Turner reminded the DDA Board that the master plan update community meetings will continue tonight from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall. Tonight's topic is downtown Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Superior State University.

9. MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC.

10. ADJOURN.

In that there were no other issues the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 a.m. upon motion of Raymond Bell, and support of Michelle Lajoie. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

William Karr, Vice-Chair
Downtown Development Association Board

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