

**Sault Ste. Marie
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
JUNE 15, 2016**

MINUTES

Present: Ray Bauer Josh Billington
 Raymond Bell Tony Haller
 Marla Bunker
 Greg Collins
 Johann Ingold
 Michelle LaJoie
 Scott Parker
 Carl Stutzner
 Les Townsend
 Oliver Turner

Absent: There were no DDA Board members absent.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. ROLL CALL. Attendance was taken as noted.

3. CONSENT AGENDA.

A. Approval of Minutes: May 11th, 2016 Regular Meeting.

B. Schedule DDA Annual Meeting, Budget Review, and Officer Elections for Regular Board Meeting on Wednesday, July 13th at 8:00 a.m.

Moved by Raymond Bell, supported by Les Townsend to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2016 regular meeting and schedule DDA Board annual meeting, budget review, and officer elections for regular Board meeting on Wednesday, July 13th at 8:00 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

4. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS.

A. Downtown Snowplowing Meeting. Recommendation: Set a special meeting, with public participation encouraged, to consider the renewal of the sidewalk snowplowing agreement and costs associated with such.

Furthermore, consider releasing a request for proposals for contracting for the removal of all snow in downtown City-owned and DDA-owned parking lots and examine how this may affect the parking budget.

Background: *At the 2016 goal-setting session, the DDA Board established the goal of considering the privatization of downtown public parking lots to learn whether this may increase efficiency and save on costs.*

The three-year contract with Matheny Lawn Services for downtown sidewalk snow removal expires this year. The cost was \$26,000 per year. Before the DDA issues a request for proposals for snow removal, Director Knepper would like to have a public meeting to discuss options for snow removal. The new RFP will include sidewalk snowplowing west on Portage Avenue to Carl's Cuisine. Downtown property owners will again have the option to opt-in, at a cost per linear foot of property frontage, or opt-out and remove snow on their own.

Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Ray Bell, to schedule a public meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers to discuss downtown snowplowing options for the winter of 2016-2017. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Consideration of "Air and Light" Easement for National Office Products.**
Recommendation: Request the City Commission to authorize an air and light easement for the north wall of National Office Products, to allow windows to be installed in their upper floor apartments.

Background: *National Office Products is wishing to upgrade their second floor apartments, all of which are historic and lack proper egress in case of fire or emergency. The building just north of National Office Products burned down decades ago, which left an exposed interior wall. This wall lacked any north-facing windows into the upper floor apartments, which discourages renters and poses a hazard to safety.*

In order for windows to be installed, National Office Products is required by building code and/or City ordinance to secure an "air and light easement" of at least 10 feet and one inch, which would allow egress to be made on to the City owned property next door.

The City Commission is interested in seeing the City-owned property be developed, and may be concerned with the loss of 10 feet of property, as well as the potential discouragement of future development that would not be able to build directly next to National Office Products, because of blocking the new windows.

The DDA is focused on improving the buildings we already have, and a new building could still be built in the lot, but instead of being full width of the lot (37 feet approximately), it would be a 25 foot wide building, or could be incorporated with Tony Haller's building. A sidewalk connecting the rear parking lot to Ashmun Street could/should be maintained anyway.

The owners of National Office Products are in the process of renovating the interior of their building, including the apartments on the second floor. In an effort to make their apartments more rentable, they would like to put windows on the north side of the building to provide natural light, and a means of egress from the building. There is a 37' wide City owned vacant lot/pocket park on the north side of National Office Products and the Building Code requires a 10' 1" easement to allow egress to be made on the City's vacant lot. This would reduce the footprint of the lot to approximately 27'.

Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Greg Collins, to request the City Commission to approve an "air and light easement" for the north wall of National Office Products to allow windows to be installed in their upper floor apartments. The motion passed unanimously.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

A. PlacePlans Mini-Grant Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Background: *The PlacePlans are now live at www.saultcity.com/placeplans. The press release is to be distributed this month, with a final deadline of August 31st for the DDA Board to receive responses from qualified developers.*

Director Knepper, along with IT Director Bonnie Raffaele, built the website for the PlacePlans RFQ. The RFQ's will be reviewed in September. Director Knepper has already received an inquiry on this.

B. Michigan Mainstreet Program Select Level Application.

Recommendation: *Review draft Mainstreet budget.*

Background: *Various groups have met to work on the Mainstreet application including:*

- *Budget Committee: Debbie Jones, Greg Collins, and Michelle LaJoie met to discuss the Mainstreet budget. The budget is attached for review.*
- *Background Questions: Tony Haller, Jeff Hagan and Josh Billington have met and are working on this item.*
- *Mainstreet Boundaries: Oliver Turner, Kelly Freeman, Linda Basista, Tina Fuller and Justin Knepper have met.*
- *Physical Characteristics of Proposed Area: Tina Fuller has provided a master list of properties in Excel; Ben Duff, Justin Knepper and Steve Twardy are reviewing the spreadsheet.*

Director Knepper provided a draft Sault Ste. Marie/Mainstreet Five-Year Budget for the DDA Board's review.

C. National Historic District Application.

Background: *No updates at this time. CCHS is finalizing a draft of building histories.*

D. Mural Installation Crowdfunding Campaign. *Recommendation: The mural fundraiser went live on June 13th. The DDA has 30 more days to reach our goal. Please contribute and share:*

www.patronicity.com/saultmurals.

Background: *A video will be presented during the meeting, and based on this video, Director Knepper would like to request that the DDA Board commit to assisting in raising the \$16,000 necessary to complete this project.*

The Patronicity video was presented to the DDA Board. All agreed that it was well done with kudos to Director Knepper.

E. Pedestrian Safety Bollards.

Background: *Director Knepper placed an order for two bollards a number of months ago, and has yet to receive them. He is working to contact the company and figure out a different option.*

This issue will be on the agenda for the July DDA meeting.

F. Crosswalk Art.

Background: *Director Knepper met with the granting agency last week regarding crosswalk art. Upon further review, they are going to work with the DDA to get stakeholder input from the various businesses along Portage Avenue. Director Knepper doesn't want to close the street down for a day or an afternoon if the business owners are not in full support of the artwork proposed. The DDA is considering the last week in July for painting.*

The DDA received a \$4,000 grant from the Building a Healthier Community Program/Walking Coalition for creating crosswalk art in the DDA District. There is concern regarding closing Portage Avenue when the tourist season is still underway in late August. Director Knepper indicated that they have until the end of the year to utilize the grant funds.

G. Budget Review. *Recommendation: Make various budget line item amendments for end-of-year "housekeeping."*

Background: *Budget report will be distributed at the meeting on Wednesday.*

Director Knepper went through 3 DDA accounts that need to be amended:

- DDA, TIFA 1 and TIFA 2. Two recipients of the MEDC façade grant are slightly over budget. The amount needed for the first property (Historical Society) is \$2,400 and the amount for the second (A Cut Above the Rest) is \$100. Director Knepper is recommending that the City Commission authorize \$2,500 for these projects.
- PARKING FUND AND PARKING DECK FUND. In the parking deck fund, the operational expenses are at 100% budget as of the end of May. Director Knepper and Finance Director Kristin Collins carefully reviewed the year-to-date expenses and agreed upon a revised total estimate to close the year of \$74,200, which is an increase to the current operating budget of \$13,100. The increase is due to emergency repairs to the parking deck's drain systems this winter, automatic door opener to the third floor, and elevator inspection fees.
- DDA GENERAL FUND. In order to balance the budget to cover Events Assistant Kristy Wyngaarden's position through the remainder of June 2016, Director Knepper is requesting a transfer of \$2,000 from printing/advertising into this position's line item, as well as the \$4,289 left in contracted services, the \$1,910.28 left in travel, and \$500 from repair/replacement.

Moved by Scott Parker and supported by Raymond Bell, to authorize the implementation of budget amendments to the DDA, TIFA 1 and TIFA 2, Parking Fund and Parking Deck Fund, and DDA General Fund as noted above. The motion passed unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Resignation of April Jones.

Background: *Due to a variety of reasons, April Jones has announced her resignation from the Parking Department as enforcement officer. The job has been posted and closes on June 17th.*

April Jones has worked for the DDA for three years. Her position is part-time, 24 hours per week, and is a union position with the Police Records Unit.

B. Replacement of Part-time Seasonal Maintenance Staff.

Background: *Kevin Killips was approved by the DDA board to replace Arnie Hallai as the full-time maintenance employee for the DDA. Upon review of the various positions, Director Knepper is suggesting that the DDA hire a full-time seasonal employee for 120 days as permitted by the City's Human Resources Department. The position would conclude at the end of the*

summer (September) and be focused on weekend trash removal, parking garage cleaning, and weeding, lawn care, and events and festivals.

Moved by Scott Parker, supported by Raymond Bell, that the DDA hire a full-time seasonal employee for 120 days as permitted by the City's Human Resources Department. The seasonal employee will be working a total of 40 hours weekly on Tuesday through Saturdays, cleaning the parking garage, cutting grass, weekend events, etc. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DOWNTOWN MANAGER'S REPORT.

A. Review of LSSU Retail Class Projects From Spring 2016.

Background: Director Knepper and Kristy worked with five teams of students from the LSSU spring 2016 retail class on multiple independent projects. The projects included:

- *Analysis of the retail "dead space" between Huntington Bank and the River of History Museum.*
- *Study of downtown signage throughout the City and on I-75. Director Knepper will go over the LSSU students report on signage at a future DDA Board meeting.*
- *Business plan for the vacant American Café.*
- *Review of the DDA's social media and web presence and usage.*
- *Ladies Night Out photo shoot and event planning assistance. A group of LSSU students helped put together the first annual Ladies Night Out, which was a huge success with over 400 people participating. The students had a photo shoot (red carpet) that was enjoyed by many.*

Five groups, a total of 30 students participated in the five assignments listed above. Director Knepper will provide reports from each in the future.

B. State Façade Grant Program.

Background: *Island Books & Crafts is the last building to need substantial finishing work. Limestone on the second floor needs complete stripping and refinishing; glasswork is still ongoing, and various other wood trim elements have to be completed. All other projects are nearing completion.*

U.P. Engineers and Architects building is being painted this week; brick replacement is complete. Brewster building is still waiting for several windows. Status of Island Books and Crafts is mentioned above. Completion of all buildings is required by August 31, 2016. A new list of applications for the next State Façade Grant Program will be compiled in the fall.

C. Retailers, Bar Owners, and Parking Committee Updates.

Background: *The DDA is holding consistent retail meetings on the first Wednesday morning of every month at 8am in the basement of Huntington Bank. They are also holding consistent bar owner meetings at 2pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the Ramada Ojibway. The Parking Committee is working on finalizing a date each month for the new fiscal year.*

Both the retailer's and bar owners' meetings have had good participation.

D. Upcoming Events.

- *Music in the Park starting 6/15/16.* The Corps of Engineers is requiring a weekly count for this event. Two volunteers will be utilizing clickers to count those in attendance.
- *Engineers Day on 6/24/16.*
- *Slashin' Ashmun Car Cruise on 7/1/16.* A week or two prior to this event, Slashin' Ashmun buttons will be sold with funds to go towards a dog park, which was the goal of Don Kelly, creator of Slashin' Ashmun, who passed away last summer. Over 250 people participated in the first annual Slashin' Ash last year.
- *July 4th Parade at 7pm on 7/4/16.* Floats will be judged by members of various community boards, with \$300 for first place, \$200 second place, and \$100 third place.
- *Gus Macker to be relocated to Portage Avenue, 7/17-19/16.* Gus Macker Tournaments have re-located this year to Portage Avenue from Ashmun Street to Osborn Boulevard.
- *Sidewalk Sales on 8/5&6/16.* The DDA is looking for more vendors, as well as new activities, for this event.
- *Art Show on 8/2/16.* The Art Show will take place on City Hall grounds.
- *Beerfest on 8/15/16.* Portage Avenue will be closed for this event. There will be a micro-brew tent, live music. Proceeds from ticket sales (\$25 per person) will go towards the *Raise the Roof Campaign* for the Soo Theatre.
- *LSSU Summer Bash on 8/27/16.* Soo SuperValu is sponsoring a LSSU Summer Bash and Welcome Back Party at the Downtown Farmers' Market pavilion from 3:00-11:00 p.m.
- *Antiques on Ashmun on 9/10/16.* Local business owners Brad Blair and Tony Stackpole are organizing this event, which will include antique vendors and an antique appraiser.
- *And more!*

8. MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE BOARD.

Michelle LaJoie indicated that the Sault Chamber's Business After Five will take place this evening from 5:00-7:00 p.m. aboard a Soo Locks Tour Boat (Dock No. 2).

9. MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC.

10. ADJOURN.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:20 a.m. upon motion of Oliver Turner and support of Scott Parker. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Stutzner
Downtown Development Association Board Chair

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