

MANCHESTER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

March 26, 2014

7:30 PM

Unapproved Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members in attendance: Ray Berg, Susan Fielder, Jody Flowers, Aaron LaRock, Julie Marvin-Manders, Ron Milkey, Karl Racenis and Russell Rhoton. Pat Vaillencourt was absent.

Julie Schaible was present and formally swore in new members, LaRock, Marvin-Manders and Milkey.

Approval of Agenda: The Administration Report was deleted. Moved by Milkey, seconded by Rhoton to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: LaRock moved, Berg seconded the motion to approve the minutes as amended. Berg, Marvin-Manders and Flowers abstained. Motion carried.

Public Participation: Karin Asplund, CCI Greenhart, announced the After-prom Committee is offering gift cards to local businesses this year instead of those given to Target etc. in the past. DDA Members expressed appreciation for the After-prom Committee's community support.

New Business

- 1) MEDC Programs: Marilyn Crowley, MEDC economic programs coordinator presented information at the Washtenaw Council of Chambers meeting at Dan's River Grill. One of the programs discussed would offer TIF funding for improving brown-field properties. Manchester's brown field properties include the "Wallace property" on Macomb Street, east of the grocery store and west of the Village Hall (a former railroad station location) and the former Tirb property on Adrian Street. TIF funding would be achieved after establishing a tax base year in the same way the TIF funding supports the DDA. Funding both tax incremental-based revenue programs present unanswered questions. Gretchen Driskell, Michigan House of Representatives, was also in attendance. Mary Kerr from the Ann Arbor Convention and Visitors Bureau distributed copies of the printed visitors guide. Manchester's representation was minimal. Ads in guide cost about \$2000, which is not the most effective promotional opportunity, given our limited financial resources. Berg talked about the free, online version "Ann Arbor's Neighbors" which is sent to 500K across the United States.

The United Methodist Church Retirement Community is consulting with the community during April and May to assess the viability of establishing a retirement community in Manchester. Some suggested locations include the property east of the IGA, behind the United Church of Christ, and the old cement factory property on Territorial Street. Planners have a list of current Manchester residents now living in one of the facilities in Chelsea.

Another MEDC program, the Blissfield Michigan Main Street Program, was featured. Because Manchester doesn't fund a full-time paid position, we are not eligible to participate.

- 2) Building façade improvement program: Some unanswered questions include: Does the brick repair and other cosmetic improvements require a building permit? Does obtaining a building permit automatically lead to an increased tax assessment. It was suggested a consorted effort by multiple business owners might reduce the overall cost. Denise Collins of Frank's Place has expressed an interest. Further discussion of brick refinishing was tabled.
- 3) Other: Marvin-Manders asked about impact for Manchester residents and businesses regarding truck routes using M52 to deliver sand and gravel. Similar concern is expressed by Chelsea business owners. Concern for school students and increase traffic was discussed. Berg will investigate and report to members. Initial information suggests the truck routes will use M52 north of I94 and then access markets via I94. Manchester is not expected to be impacted.

Old Business

- 1) CTAP Meeting: As suggested during the Ypsilanti Convention and Visitors Bureau presentation last week, historical terminology or slogans might focus on branding ideas for the community. Berg and Alan Dwyer are going to compile a list. Berg is also familiar with the 1921 poem about visiting Manchester landmarks. He will bring the list of historical slogans and the poem to the next CTAP meeting on May 9th.
- 2) Building Inventory: Berg has been gathering information, more work needs to be done, and he may have additional information at the next meeting.

- 3) Shared-use trail. The Chelsea Wellness and the Washtenaw County grants have been reconfirmed. Original cost estimates are within the current revenue sources, but the Village's decision to black-top the trail surface east of M52 up to the observation deck on the west side of the river will increase the needed revenue. Berg is investigating a Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) that might provide the projected increased costs. With the recent snow melt, more accurate cost estimates for the observation deck north of St. Mary's Parish Center, etc. will soon be available. It was also suggested the DDA sponsor a community challenge to "name" the trail. The title "Shared Use Trail" has been used as part of the standard grant application process. Identifying a unique and possibly historical reference for the trail appealed to DDA Board members. Fielder was asked to confirm the status of the DDA request to use a small section of church-owned property to connect the old railroad bed with Madison Street. The committee is hopeful that Fr. Tim's earlier enthusiasm will be an influencing factor in spite of his recent announcement to transfer his service to other opportunities outside the Manchester community.
- 4) The Manchester Wellness Foundation Coalition was recognized with a State of Michigan Service Award recently for their work the shared-use trail, Kirk Park renovations, and the Riverfront plan development. The partnership of more than 40 individuals from a variety of local service organizations impressed the evaluation committee.

Reports:

Chairman:

Next meeting: April 23rd

Adjournment: Moved by Flowers, seconded by Mavin-Manders. Meeting adjourned at 9:00

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fielder, Int. Secretary and Treasurer