

MANCHESTER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

March 27, 2013

7:30 PM

Approved Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:33

Members in attendance: Ray Berg, Susan Fielder, Jody Flowers, Karl Racenis, Russell Rhoton, and Pat Vaillencourt.

Agenda Approval: A motion to reorder the agenda to hold the farmers market discussion first. Motion by Berg, seconded by Flowers, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The January 23 unapproved minutes were reviewed: Suggestions for corrected spelling and clarifications were noted. Rhoton moved and Flowers support to approve minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Public Participation: Krisa Gjestland, editor Manchester Enterprise and Ruth Van Bogelan were present. Public Participation was opened and closed.

NEW BUSINESS

Farmers Market: Ruth VanBogelen, Chair of the Farmers Market, discussed plans for this year's market. The location will remain on Adrian Street, south of Main. Suggestions/offers of moving the farmers market out of the downtown location were rejected, although a long-term, permanent location is desirable. A marketing plan is being developed to increase the profitability of local farmers and crafters. The schedule will include 23 Thursday and 2 Saturday events. The committee is planning to apply for grant money that will in part be used to hire a part-time market manager, who will recruit participants and organize publicity. Because the market committee is not a 501C3, the committee is asking the DDA/Village "partner" in the application process. Fielder expressed concern regarding the DDA participation. Business owners in the area may be negatively affected by the closure of Adrian Street, and although we value the contributions of local farmers and crafters, the DDA's primary focus should be for the business men and women, who are paying taxes. Following discussion, it was determined to support the new marketing initiative.

Discussions also included a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 6th, the night of the Chamber's downtown Business Expo. Village Manager, Jeff Wallace will supply an invitation list of local leaders, state representatives, contractors and MDOT contributors. A letter of invitation will be sent in April.

Parking: The planning commission meets April 9th and will be considering the 2-hour limit. Racenis plans to attend the public input work group.

Economic Development: Fielder contacted the University of Michigan Director of Public Relations regarding a speaker to address best practices and marketing activities to attract new businesses to our community. Possible dates are May 22nd, July 24th, and September 25th.

Wallace is considering renewing Manchester's membership in Ann Arbor's SPARK as a preliminary step. Representative Gretchen Driskell encourages the Michigan Main Streets Program. The focus is marketing empty store fronts, connecting with people who are planning to start new businesses, and promote local resources.

MACC Contract: Vaillencourt moved the Chamber of Commerce contract be modified to read 2013 and the \$500.00 payment be authorized. Berg seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Vaillencourt yes, Berg yes, Fielder yes, Flowers yes, Rhoton yes, Racenis yes. Motion carried.

Bicycle Hoops: Following discussion, bicycle hoops, currently in storage, will be replaced in the seating areas.

OLD BUSINESS

Shared-Use Trail Status: Establishing a focus group to coordinate development/fundraising activities though out the village was discussed at a recent meeting with Neal Billedeaux, Ray Berg, Pat DuRussel, Jeff Wallace, and Pat Vaillencourt. The possibility of hiring a consultant was discussed, but may be cost prohibitive. Berg reported the \$150K from the county grant will need to be spent by April 2014. The Chelsea Wellness Fund grant is due electronically by June 7th. The grant will be released by the end to June to the Village. Berg also received \$2K from the Kiwanis and hoping to receive \$20K from the Chicken Broil committee. Berg hopes to begin walking trail construction in 2014.

Downtown Way Signs: Following discussion, it was decided to wait for a marketing image or logo to be developed before beginning the way sign projects. Racenis distributed several documents with examples of community way sign design.

DDA Board Membership:

Racenis reminded members in attendance, that his term expires in June. We currently have two open seats. Vaillencourt will contact individuals who have expressed an interest and try to recruit full membership.

Reports:

Treasurer: (Fielder) Report and any budget recommendations were delayed until information from the Village is available. Racenis mentioned revenue from the new Dollar General will not impact our budget until the following year.

Chairman: (Racenis)

Michigan Downtown Association Conference in Rochester is June 7th. The cost is \$10. Fielder suggested we invite new members to attend.

Administration:

Motion to adjourn by Flowers, seconded by Berg. The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Fielder, Treasurer and Interim Secretary