

MINUTES OF THE CLAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT MEETING WITH THE CLAY TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY HELD ON MARCH 23, 2005 AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE CLAY TOWNSHIP MEETING HALL, 4710 PTE. TREMBLE ROAD, CLAY TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN 48001.

1. Chairperson Dorothy DeBoyer called the joint meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call: PRESENT: Chair Dorothy DeBoyer, Secretary Michael Watson, Pat Sharrow, George Lyle, Kathie Schweikart, Thomas Krueger, Edward Keller II.
ABSENT: Anthony Antkowiak (excused).
3. **AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:** None.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 9, 2005**

Moved by Schweikart, supported by Watson, **MOTION CARRIED**, to approve the March 9, 2005 Minutes as submitted. AYES: All. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Antkowiak (excused).

5. **COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

JOINT MEETING WITH CLAY TOWNSHIP DDA BOARD:

Chairperson DeBoyer introduced Richard Wagner, Chair of the DDA and Mary Jane Hardy to the Planning Commission.

We can begin our discussion of things we wish to address with one another.

Richard Wagner: Recently received sample zoning ordinances from other entities demonstrating a partnership with the DDA, how they were treated, design guidelines, planning differences, etc., DDA's can play a vibrant role within a community, many resources to review, goal to have the Planning Commission include a section/chapter within the Zoning Ordinance for developers, businesses, residents to review if building within the DDA District. Discussion of ideas to achieve a well-planned district.

Major objective is to extend a sidewalk/bike path through the DDA District. Design guideline is now taking shape with the assistance of SyDesign. Ideas that center on the turn of the century, this concept we felt was real close to what Clay Township represents, a theme developed, next step is to come up with design guidelines. Incorporate these designs and perhaps have available grants or low interest loans to existing businesses and new development.

With SyDesign's guidance applying the design to a pilot program (Ainsworth Street) as our showcase and the renovation to the Fire hall, the design concept for the public to see the renovations to public buildings, streetscape, etc. and understand what the DDA is attempting to do and make it enticing to the citizens and businesses.

DDA why it is not actively soliciting commercial business?

Problem don't have a baseline since can't tell them what to do, if no zoning ordinance and no incentive to come here.

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Chairperson DeBoyer: Shopping center has vacant stores, before expanding the commercial area, wouldn't it be to the community's advantage to fill those stores, letter written to the owner offering some kind of break or benefit to get businesses to move in.

Richard Wagner: At this time DDA could only offer aesthetics or grants in helping them with their business. Services are needed, something to support, need a visible capability, not sufficient parking available.

Future can see business strip coming toward Clay, need to make M-29 Pedestrian friendly. Phase I starting this fall, sidewalk from Farmer Jack to the high school, hook up to Island Drive and go up Taft, next year hopefully from St. Johns Marsh up to Ainsworth and up to the school.

Chairperson DeBoyer: A mile of commercial takes approximately 50,000 people to support.

Mary Jane Hardy: Convince the people who live here to patronize the businesses.

Richard Wagner: Do not want to be a Sterling Heights, need to create local recreation to meet the needs of our people and the recreational traffic, want to keep the people here, shops to visit, service the people here, etc.

Bridge if built will bring a lot of changes; need to offer those new businesses coming in some infrastructure, without a zoning ordinance section do not have a tool. Residents more apt to shop here if they had accessibility, goal is pedestrian friendly, attractive and accessible with coordinated vehicular traffic.

Michael Watson: Shop locally, do not want to fight the crowds on my way home from work.

All agree sidewalk east of Farmer Jack to the Drain well used, like to see sidewalk constructed from Harbor Club to just west of the DNR boat ramp and cross at traffic light.

Richard Wagner: State Street traffic light there is a walkway heading west, unfortunately it stops and than picks up again.

Community Planner Patrick Meagher: Good exchange of ideas tonight represents type of cooperation that can be established between the DDA and the Planning Commission, both bodies can benefit from each other, DDA as a financing body and somewhat able to implement many of the items talked about by the Planning Commission. To put an ordinance into the Zoning takes a master plan change or a DDA plan inclusion; DDA plan does very little to incorporate any type of real vision as to what the DDA/Township in general is looking for, #1 need to get a handle on that first and try at some of the primary issues; DDA has the financing tools, matter of taking all these thoughts and ideas and organizing them and prioritizing and understanding the financing involved and the monies that are going to come in. Ideas are an excellent beginning to an economic plan that you really need to focus on and prioritize, need to work on an organized approach using all the tools available to you, i.e.

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architectural work, funding, capital improvement programs, goals, objectives, design work, committee to discuss a site plan coming in, etc.

Design guidelines are not legal in Michigan without some type of basis, coordinating all of these plans is very important.

SyDesign: Architect Jim Yu and Herb Blackstock presentation on ideas and concepts to assist the DDA and Planning Commission in moving forward in a direction cohesive in terms of a design theme.

Explained background history of this area and images of our inspiration to envision the 19th century era, bring in the shingle style architecture and maritime design.

Guidelines are suggestions businesses may consider, i.e. boardwalks, natural plantings, stones, colors in wood and shingles, etc. In the process of identifying the basis for the guidelines, written format that will be presented to the DDA for their final approval, hold a public forum and listen to their feedback.

Streetscape on M-29 is a challenge right now, decided to concentrate on the Ainsworth Road area to apply these guidelines to the Mainland firehall as the prototype.

By using a cohesive design throughout Clay Township of a 19th Century Maritime appearance will form an impression to visitors and the residents as well.

Richard Wagner: Purpose is to present a safe and attractive area to live here and than commercial will want to follow and stay.

Pat Sharrow: How will you convince a businessperson that changing the façade will increase their profitability? Can you tell me where the DDA has helped a business to be more profitable? Not the resort area we use to be in the summer any longer, it is changing times.

Board discussion followed concerning businesses growing, moving in, attractiveness of the area, draw more people, etc.

Patrick Meagher: Good points have been made tonight by everyone, need to remember cannot all happen at once, have to go in steps in order to create something that will work, all these things have to work together, creating an environment through access control, beautification, façade changes, streetscape, piecing all those together but doing it in a logical fashion and putting resources together in a logical fashion is the “key” to the DDA success.

Richard Wagner: Working towards a user-friendly safe environment, #1 priority. Stressed the importance of a chapter in the Zoning Ordinance for the future.

Chairperson DeBoyer: Need to know your plan too, remember need to make our community user friendly to the people who live here already.

Pat Sharrow: DDA in the position to bring in a senior care facilities, tax base and provide jobs. Planning Consultant that could give the DDA guidance, another solution could be setting up an economic development program with lines of communication between the Planning Commission and DDA.

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Ed Keller: Get a handle on things in our area and make the best of what we have to work with, compliment the gentlemen on their presentation, long over due.

Richard Wagner: Quick rundown of the projects in progress completion dates.

Tom Krueger: Meeting was a good idea, like to see these two entities meet periodically.

Building Inspector Michael Kras: If a project is in the DDA district, extra set of plans are required, procedure already implemented.

Pat Sharrow: Do DDA members realize the difference between special approval and regular site plan where the Planning Commission has some power to make conditions?

Chairperson DeBoyer: As the DDA plan moves along keep the Planning Commission informed.

6. **PLANNING CONSULTANT'S REPORT:** None.
7. **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:** None.
8. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** None.
9. **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS:** None.
10. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Moved by Watson, supported by Krueger, **MOTION CARRIED**, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. AYES: All. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Antkowiak.

Valerie J. Kulba
Recording Secretary