

MINUTES
Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
5:30pm
Virtual Meeting

Prior to the 5:30 P.M. start of the DDA Meeting, Director Korhorn held a Q&A session with local Boy Scout Troop 290. This session started around 5 P.M., and was intended to help the Troop better understand a part of local government. This will help the Scouts meet requirements for badges and rank advancements. Boy Scout Troops in the past have attended in person Cascade Township Zoning Board meetings, and the parent volunteer (Mrs. Dalin Clark) who coordinated this with Director Korhorn said that they have enjoyed this way to learn.

ARTICLE 1. Chairman Puplava called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.
Members Present: Stephan, Growney, Puplava, DeWitt, Siegle, Vogel, and Lesperance
Members Absent: Makkar, Kleyla
Others Present: DDA Director Sandra Korhorn, and members/parents of Boy Scout Troop 290

ARTICLE 2. Approve the Current Agenda.

Motion was made by Member Lesperance to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Growney. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting.

Motion was made by Member Growney to approve the Minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.

A couple of Boy Scouts asked Director Korhorn and Chairwoman Puplava questions about fire departments in the Township, and formalities of meeting actions.

ARTICLE 5. Status of DDA Projects & Joint Meeting Agenda Items

Chairwoman Puplava explained that the DDA has had joint meetings in the past with different Boards (Planning Commission, Zoning Board, Parks Committee, and Township Board) to discuss the status of active projects for future planning purposes. Chairwoman Puplava stated that Director Korhorn has summarized the ongoing DDA projects to use to put together an agenda of items to discuss during the next joint meeting.

Director Korhorn shared a timeline of Township plans from 2011-2019, stating that the Community Gathering Space has been a focus for many years. Director Korhorn reviewed the Gathering Space Master Plan, sharing pictures while explaining intent and the process of putting it together over the years.

Director Korhorn reviewed the Lower Village Plan, and the plans for developing that area along the Thornapple River.

Director Korhorn reviewed The Rapid Bus service in Cascade Township, and possible improvements to bus stop locations along the route.

Director Korhorn discussed the concept of a synthetic ice rink in the Township, and possible locations.

Director Korhorn discussed the creation of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and reviewed their role in Township development.

Director Korhorn stated that Staff will discuss potential dates for the Joint Meeting with other Boards, Commissions, and Township Staff to discuss these and other possible DDA projects.

Member Siegle asked if the slope pictured in the grass near the amphitheater in the Lower Village plan could potentially be seating, with small event and vendor space nearby. Director Korhorn stated that is a possibility for the future of that space.

Conversation followed regarding the priorities and wants/needs for both residents and Staff in relation to redeveloping spaces within the DDA district.

Chairwoman Puplava and Director Korhorn answered questions from the Boy Scouts throughout the presentation and discussion of these Joint Meeting Agenda Items, and explained to the Boy Scouts how they can share their thoughts and ideas with Staff during public meetings.

Member Vogel asked if there are assets within the Township that can be considered and discussed that would aid in accomplishing future DDA projects. Chairwoman Puplava and Director Korhorn both agreed that yes, there are potential assets within the Township, and that this will be discussed during the Joint Meeting.

Member Siegle asked about the timeline to develop the Tuffy property, Director Korhorn stated it could potentially be 10 years as the business owner has two, five-year lease renewal options at this time.

Member Lesperance asked if there are any options for the Township to partner with private owners to develop projects in certain areas of the Township. Director Korhorn stated that is a possibility, has been previously discussed, and can be discussed again in the future.

Member Siegle asked if partnering with a restaurant and renting the land of the Tuffy property is an option. Chairwoman Puplava stated that because of the remediation process of that property, anything other than a park might be tough to accomplish, Director Korhorn agrees.

Member Lesperance asked about the Verberg property and the possibility of that business moving to another location. Director Korhorn stated that without the acquisition of the other properties in that area, it would be hard to accomplish anything in that space.

Member Vogel asked if there is a way to use each potential new space in the Township year-round, serving as multi-purpose spaces for all ages of residents while highlighting specific features of Cascade.

Member Lesperance agrees with Member Vogel that enhancing areas that residents love in Cascade is important.

Chairwoman Puplava and Director Korhorn state that these ideas can be kept in mind and revisited when planning projects.

ARTICLE 6. Discuss Holiday Lighting

Director Korhorn stated that Bronner's (where Township holiday decorations are purchased) is having their annual sale through March 1st, and is looking for input from Members on how they think current decorations look, if anything else is needed, or if no additional decorations should be purchased this year.

Chairwoman Puplava stated that she thinks the current decorations looked nice, and are sufficient for holiday decorations.

Member Lesperance also stated that she believes the current decorations are sufficient.

Both Chairwoman Puplava and Member Lesperance agree that no additional decorations need to be purchased this year.

Member Growney states that she would like to see live decorations (such as wreaths) purchased from local businesses next holiday season.

Director Korhorn stated that it has been discussed in the past to decorate the bridge over the river even though it is not in the DDA District.

Chairwoman Puplava stated that it sounds like all Members are in agreeance that the purchase of any additional holiday decorations can be skipped this year.

ARTICLE 7. Any Other Business

a. Update on Planning Activities

Director Korhorn stated that there are no current updates for any planning activities.

Member Lesperance asked Director Korhorn if she knows who bought the Pizza Hut location on 28th St. Director Korhorn stated that she is unaware at this point.

ARTICLE 8. Adjournment.

Motion was made by Member DeWitt to adjourn. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 P.M.

The DDA held a scheduled Informational Meeting after the conclusion of the regularly scheduled 2/16/21 meeting.

ARTICLE 1. Chairman Puplava called the Meeting to order at 6:27pm.

ARTICLE 2. What is a DDA and How DDA's Work

Director Korhorn stated that a DDA (Downtown Development Authority) is authorized by the State of Michigan, and the main purpose of a DDA is to promote economic growth, halt property value deterioration and increase property tax value where possible, and to eliminate causes of deterioration. The Cascade DDA was established in 1993, expanded in 2003 to the Interchange Area, and then expanded again in 2004 to the Centennial Business District.

Director Korhorn stated that the current Cascade DDA is governed by a Board of Directors that has nine Members who are appointed by the Township Board. The majority of DDA Board Members are required to be business owners within the District, and also has DDA residents, and at-large residents as Members.

Director Korhorn stated that the DDA can be funded by donations, mills (up to 2), bonds, revenue from properties, grants, special assessments, tax increment financing, and more. Cascade DDA is funded by tax increment financing. Any DDA captured funds need to be spent within the District, and any project needs to be public, not private.

ARTICLE 3. Review of Projects Completed over the Last Year

Some projects completed by the DDA in the past few years have been sidewalks and decorative lighting down 28th Street, the Museum Gardens Park, the black traffic signal masts that hold traffic lights across the street at interchanges, and a midblock crossing across on Cascade Road.

ARTICLE 4. Future Plans/Projects

In addition to sponsoring these events in the past, the DDA will also sponsor events such as the Cascade Metro Cruise Warm-Up, concerts at the library, and the tree lighting ceremony. Projects such as the Gathering Space and Lower Village Plan are included in future plans of the DDA.

ARTICLE 5. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak.

Director Korhorn and Chairwoman Puplava received and answered questions from the Boy Scout Troop in attendance of tonight's meeting.

The Boy Scouts expressed interest in being able to voice their opinions and be involved at future Township meetings, Chairwoman Puplava and Director Korhorn explained to them how to find the schedule of these meetings, and how to attend them.

ARTICLE 6. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Siegle to adjourn the Informational Meeting. Supported by Member DeWitt. Motion carried 7 to 0. The Meeting was adjourned at 6:47 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rene Growney, Secretary