

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Record of the December 7, 2005 Meeting
Highland Station

Members Present: *Keith Rhodes (Chairman), Sharon Greene, Jim Gorman, Neil Kajy, Paul Mecklenborg, Roscoe Smith, Gail Perrin, Patricia Pilchowski (Township Supervisor),*

Members Absent: *Susan Happel, Mike Hickox,*

Staff Present: Jill Bahm (HDDA Director)

Visitors Present: *Scott Oppmann, Jim Lloyd, Red Holman, David Blosssey, Jim Gorman, Lynn Olivier, Mick Bell, Deb Bell, Robert Bauman, Jan Nastouski, Susan Bennett, Beth Corwin, Alexandra Stellas, Sue Grissim, Larry Shew, Paul Young, Joseph Salvia*

Chairman Rhodes called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

The motion was made to approve the Minutes of November 2, 2005 by Perrin and seconded by Kajy. The motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no

Financial Report: None

Old Business:

Light Fixtures Policy: Mr. Rhodes stated that Ms. Bahm is researching new suppliers for the DDA lighting fixtures. A local business is currently being used. Ms. Bahm reported that the secondary lighting fixture style that is located in the DDA can be matched but the lighting fixture style that is in the historic section cannot be matched exactly. She did feel, however, the fixtures would not be noticed as being different, if not placed right next to the original historic fixture.

Supervisor Pilchowski stated that she was under the impression that the HDDA owned the design of the historic light fixture. Mr. Rhodes stated that HDDA does not own the design, the supplier does. She then asked if the HDDA could purchase the tool to make the design. Mr. Rhodes stated that suggestion could be investigated. Mr. Rhodes also stated another solution could be to have the current supplier make a stock of the historic lighting fixtures and then have them warehoused; however, it would be expensive to have them warehoused. It was also questioned if the current supplier would be willing to warehouse the light fixtures and it was discussed the current supplier does not have the facilities to warehouse. Another alternative that was suggested was to have the light fixtures made and installed now, but the concern there is the sewers that are planned to come through would cause them to be taken down. It was noted the current supplier has been in the community for a long time and is a good man. It was asked if he could be phased out slowly. Mr. Shew asked if powder coating could be investigated for the lighting fixtures because it would be more durable and have a nicer finish. Ms. Bahm stated the new supplier would powder coat which may explain the increase in cost. Ms. Bahm will contact the identified vendors to see if they would be able to utilize the existing tool to replicate the current fixtures. If that is possible, Mr. Mecklenborg offered to contact the current supplier and discuss the possibility of purchasing the tool.

Sparks in the Park - 2006 Update: It was noted there were two front page articles in the Milford Times stating the Sparks in the Park Event will not take place if there are no volunteers to take over the coordination of the event. Ms. Bahm reported there have been a few volunteers for the day of the event, and is planning on speaking with a Milford resident who may be interested in helping out with the event. She has received no calls of concern from the public. However, Ms. Bahm noted that Township Clerk Mary McDonell has particularly spent some time on this and is trying to work something out with the Highland Business Association. Ms. Tami Flowers of the HBA inquired about having the fireworks at Milford High School. It was discussed that space is now an issue being that the property to the east has been developed. The deadline for the decision regarding Sparks in the Park will be extended until the end of the year.

Temporary Library Sign: Ms. Perrin presented the temporary library sign proposal to the Board. She stated the Library Board would like to place this sign on Town Center Boulevard and M-59. She reviewed the sign with Zoning Administrator Lisa Burkhart, who said the sign will go before the Zoning Board of Appeals and Township Board.

Mr. Rhodes stated that the boulevard location has been reserved for a permanent sign to be installed when the Civic Center area is completed in the future. The library's desired sign location will cause conflict because that is the same location that the Post Office wanted to place their sign. The Post Office's request was denied because of future plans for that location. Mr. Rhodes asked that Ms Perrin go back to the Library Board and discuss an alternative. Ms. Perrin stressed she realized that there are future plans, that is why the sign would be considered temporary. Mr. Rhodes again stated that by placing the sign in the requested location would be problematic. Supervisor Pilchowski stated that there are steps that need to be taken and needs to be investigated. She also stated she would like to work with the Library and also see that the Ordinances and Laws are abided by. She concluded that she would like the Planning Department's feedback on this as well. Ms. Perrin concluded that the library just wants a sign, so they can be easily found.

New Business:

Board Member Slate: Mr. Rhodes also stated Mr. Mike Hickox has decided to step down and there will be an open seat on the Board.

Motion to Support appointment of new HDDA Board Members Susan Bennett, David Blossey and Scott Oppmann was made by Gorman, seconded by Smith. The Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no.

Motion to support reappointment of Rhodes, Happel and Gorman was made by Smith and seconded by Mecklenborg The Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no

Officer Nominations: Motions to support next years board appointments were as follows:

Motion to nominate Keith Rhodes as chair was made by Pilchowski and seconded by Kajy. The Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no

Motion to nominate Jim Gorman as vice-chair was made by Green and seconded by Smith. The Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no

Motion to nominate Dave Blossey as Secretary/Treasurer was made by Gorman and seconded by Mecklenborg. The Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no

Sewer Update: Ms Corwin reported on the Sewers. She circulated a report that listed the most frequently asked questions and noted cost was the greatest concern. She stated the approximate cost would be \$10,000 to \$13,000 per household/business amortized over 15 years at approximately 6%. She stated those participating could anticipate an additional \$1,000 to \$1,200 a year on their taxes for sewers

Mr. Kaji questioned if 15 years could be extended to 20 years and also felt the finance rate was high. It was also asked if water would be brought in at the same time. Ms. Corwin stated that 6% is about what a homeowner would pay for a home equity loan but the Township will be carrying the debt. She also answered that the water is still under investigation because it is looking more costly than what was anticipated.

Mr. Gorman asked how long a home/business owner would have to connect to the sewer system once it is available to them. Ms. Corwin answered a home/business owner will have a window of 3 or 4 years to connect to the sewer regardless if their current system is working.

Mr. Rhodes asked Ms. Corwin how many times she gave the Sewer Presentation and how many residents attended. Ms. Corwin answered that the presentation was given about 10 times to the community and probably 200 people have attended. She stated out of those 200, probably 60 to 80 people would like to see sewers but are not in favor of the sewer bill. She stated approximately 30 people of those attended were totally against it. She concluded those that need sewers are excited but in general there is not a huge push for septic. She also stated the issue with the commercial population is they have a huge investment in their current systems.

Mr. Rhodes asked Ms. Corwin when she felt the sewers would be put in and she stated Highland Station would probably have sewers by spring of 2008. She also stated there are 260 property owners, both commercial and residential involved in the SAD as it is mapped to date.

Mr. Bob Bowman, a resident on St. John St., stated his property will be part of the Highland Station and would like to know if his home is still involved in the plans. He is at a point where he needs to make some decisions regarding septic maintenance etc. Mr. Rhodes stated a lot of people are in the same situation.

Mr. Rhodes also stressed the importance of the success of the SAD stating it is a critical part of the DDA plans. Mr. Rhodes continued that the redevelopment of Highland Station will be contingent upon a viable infrastructure. If sewers do not go in the Highland Station area, there will be no downtown. He also stated the TIF funds are based on a plan that instructs what needs to be done and when something is to be done. If we do not implement the development plan, we will not receive our TIF money. He concluded that the group needs to get the SAD approved, which will be the future of the DDA. If Highland does not have a DDA we will not have control of what comes into the community. He concluded that if Highland wants to successfully implement its future vision as a rural, small-town atmosphere, the HDDA needs to be an advocate of sewers.

Ms. Corwin concluded that she will meet with two local property owners to discuss their willingness to circulate a petition for sewers at 9:00am on December 19th. Ms. Bahm said she would be willing to attend that meeting.

Main Street Oakland County:

Technical Service Visit to Highland: Ms. Bahm reported that the DDA and Mr. Larry Shew met with Oakland County and discussed how the open issues such as road right-of-ways and curbs were discussed and how they will be resolved. The Main Street group will be out to visit Highland for a small tour to get a feel for the area. This will happen sometime in December.

MOSC Training Opportunities: At our next board meeting, January 4, 2006, Bob Donohue from MSOC will be giving the Board an orientation to Main Street. On March 14-15, there will be a two-day training called Main Street 101. This training is for volunteers as well as Board Members and will include half day sessions for each of the four committees at the Main Street Training Center. Ms Bahm also stated that she attended Main Street manager's meeting on Dec. 7, and although Highland is small on the scale compared to some of the other communities, they were all very interested in what we are trying to do. Ms. Bahm briefly discussed the presentation made by members from Michigan State University Extension and Oakland County Extension offices regarding farmers markets and their roles in downtowns. Ms. Bahm asked the group to give this idea some thought, keeping in mind that we do not want to conflict in any way with nearby Colastanti's Market.

HDDA Mission and Vision Statements: Ms. Bahm asked the board members for feedback on the rough draft she prepared. It was decided that Ms. Bahm would send out this rough draft to the HDDA contact list, asking for comments. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

Committee Reports: There are no committee reports at this time.

Community Reports: None

Development District Reviews: None

Adjournment: Motion by Perrin, seconded by Gorman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Motion carried 8 – yes 0 – no