

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Record of the February 1, 2017 Special Board Meeting
Strategic Planning Work Session**

APPROVED

Members Present: Supervisor Hamill, John Hirzel, Dale Feigley, Cassie Blascyk, Roscoe Smith

Members Absent: Mike Zurek
Matt Barnes
Mike Maher

Staff Present: Missy Dashevich, Executive Director

Visitors Present: Trevor and Jen VonBuskirk, Jeni's Ugly Pies

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM.

Review Feedback from the 2015 MSOC Evaluation

Mrs. Dashevich spoke of her compilation of the data into a document entitled '2015 Evaluation Feedback'.

The Vision and Mission Statement needs to be reviewed and shortened. It is important to mention that the improvements and focus on the downtown Highland Station will ultimately benefit the township as a whole. She requested that board members brainstorm and bring ideas to next meeting.

Comprehensive Work Plans are good, but need more community involvement to implement.

Historic Preservation Ethic needs improvement. Although it was not opted to be governed by an Historic Preservation Ordinance, the DDA (Design Committee) is notified by the Planning Commission when a property owner submits their plans, and the Planning Commission may request input from the DDA. This brought up much discussion about the county as well as our township being 'One Stop Ready'; being able to help prospective business owners determine what properties are available in our township, and what can be done there. Supervisor Hamill spoke briefly of each of the properties on Milford Road between M59 and Livingston Road, and the need for water/septic to improve these areas.

Mr. Hirzel spoke briefly of the types of revenue the DDA has. He feels there is a great need for another source of revenue besides TIF. Perhaps a membership program is the answer. If 1,000 Highland residents gave \$100 each to become a 'member' of a DDA group, they would learn more what we do, what needs to be done, and perhaps become more vested in helping attain goals. Mr. Feigley agreed.

Mrs. Dashevich and Mrs. Blascyk felt that the public needs to be educated on what is involved in, and what it means, to become regulated by an Historic Preservation Ordinance; since there are definitely pros and cons.

Active Board and Committees - Mrs. Dashevich stressed the need for volunteers, and also suggested having a MainStreet 101 Training Session during a board meeting in the future.

Review Feedback from Property Owner Forum that took place on September 8, 2016

Mrs. Dashevich suggested board members review the document provided.

Review Projects From Master Plan

Mrs. Dashevich also stated that Main Street wanted the DDA to choose 2 or 3 projects from each of the following identified time frames:

Possible Immediately: New Street Signage, Tree Planting Initiative

High Priority: Complete Milford Road Streetscape Improvements (banner program, benches, trash receptacles), Branding and Marketing, Sewers

Medium Priority: Historic Plaques and Photos, John Street Streetscapes (engineering the west side of John Street at Veterans Park to fill in ditch, create more parking spaces and put in sidewalk).

Low Priority: Gateway Park, West Gateway Signage/Monumentation, M-59 Median and R.O.W. Enhancements.

Mrs. Dashevich distributed work plans for the four committees for board members to review and decide which to join.

Supervisor Hamill stated that it needs to be decided who is in charge of the events that happen in downtown Highland Station, i.e. Red, White & Blues. The DDA could still be the entity that puts it on, but to bring on board other organizations that can contribute to the running of the event itself.

Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Roscoe Smith
ARS/kb