

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Record of the April 18, 2012 Regular Board Meeting
APPROVED**

Members Present: Triscia Pilchowski, Beth Lewis, John Dowson, John Hirzel, Mike Maher, Matt Barnes, Dale Feigley, Roscoe Smith

Members Absent: Gail Perrin, Doug Bourgeois

Staff Present: Melissa Dashevich, Director
Karen Beardsley, Recording Secretary

Visitors Present: Rick Hamill, HDDA Design Committee
Mary Pat Chynoweth
Donna Gundle-Krieg
Cathryn Kristian
Brian Rhodes
Brian Howe

Mr. Roscoe Smith called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

Board Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2012

MR. MAHER MOVED TO APPROVE the Special Board Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2012 as presented. SUPPORTED BY MR. FEIGLEY and the MOTION CARRIED with a unanimous voice vote (8 yes votes).

MR. BARNES MOVED TO APPROVE the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2012 as presented. SUPPORTED BY MR. FEIGLEY and the MOTION CARRIED with a unanimous voice vote (8 yes votes).

Director's Report

Ms. Dashevich reviewed her Director's report, as well as a trip report, and a copy is attached to these minutes.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Hirzel stated that he can share only preliminary numbers, since interest earned is not included; more TIF revenue was received, bringing our YTD total to \$86,500, which is about half of our expected revenue for the year. Cash balance is \$709,000. He shared some information from Mrs. Kiley, in which she assembled some projections for what we can expect in the coming years. Mrs. Pilchowski added that the information received from Oakland County was in response to the township's request for information being gathered to estimate millage increase amounts. Mr. Hirzel will speak with Mrs. Kiley to understand all projections and what they could mean to the HDDA.

NEW BUSINESS

HWLBA - Sparks in the Park. Ms. Dashevich informed the board that the HWLBA will not be able to make a presentation tonight as originally planned. However, she stated the nature of the presentation

was that they are seeking sponsorships. The HDDA has \$3000 budgeted this year for sponsorships; last year we gave \$2000 to Sparks in the Park, noting that the businesses in the south end of Highland do very well during this event. Mr. Feigley suggested, and all agreed, that we would wait for them to present before we determine how much to give.

Main Street Oakland County They will be holding their Main Event Awards Ceremony on May 4, 2012 at Glen Oaks in Farmington Hills. Mrs. Dashevich inquired as to whether or not the HDDA will sponsor a table of ten as they did last year. It was agreed that in light of current economic times, anyone who wants to attend will purchase their own tickets. However, the HDDA will purchase one ticket for Ms. Dashevich to attend as a representative of Highland. Mr. Smith encouraged people to attend this event to have a delegation supporting Highland. It was unknown whether or not any Highland businesses would be receiving an award this year.

Mr. Maher motioned that the HDDA pay for one ticket for Ms. Dashevich to attend the Main Street Oakland County Main Even on May 4. Mr. Dowson seconded the motion, and the motion carried with a roll call vote: Pilchowski-yes; Lewis-yes; Dowson-no; Hlrczel-yes; Barnes-yes; Maher-yes, Feigley-yes; Smith-yes.

Highland HeyDays 2012 Ms. Dashevich stated that she and Mr. Maher will be attending a planning meeting with HWLBA on Thursday, May 3, 2012 to discuss Highland HeyDays which will be held on September 8 & 9 this year. She added that she would like to know in advance whether or not the HDDA will be sponsoring this event this year and for how much. Ms. Pilchowski reiterated concerns from last year about some disorganization, particularly in the Pet-a-Palooza part of the event. She added that in order for us to invest in this event, we should see a plan for all of the details in advance. The HDDA gave \$5,500 last year, with much of that amount going to the expenses of Horsin' Around Event and the squaredance. Ms. Dashevich felt that the HWLBA would be requesting \$6,000 this year, as well as volunteers. Mr. Smith felt, and it was agreed, that the HDDA will wait for their request for sponsorship, and we can voice our concerns about planning and ask to see that before we commit to an amount. Mr. Hamill added that this is one of those opportunities that we should take advantage of for fundraising to at least try to recoup what we spend in sponsorship. He suggested perhaps a 'fall planting' theme, accomplishing some of the HDDA's tasks for landscaping as well. It was pointed out that it will be a new group of people planning the event this year as well.

Ms. Dashevich will send an email out to HDDA board members giving details of the upcoming meeting should anyone like to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

Highland Community Parade May 19, 2012 Ms. Dashevich said that she was approached by the HVCA and asked if we wanted to work together on a 'float' and join forces in the parade; it was agreed that would be beneficial to all. The HDDA still needs volunteers to walk and to help decorate the vehicle (possibly a truck and trailer). The HDDA will have the same musicians as last year. Mr. Smith added that we will have magnets to pass out to the crowds.

MDOT Grant Ms. Dashevich sent out an email detailing her research on this subject. Two different entities were considered; it was agreed that Nowak & Fraus would be the best choice since they have already begun the preliminary work to submit this. While it was considered a small grant, MDOT did show interest in Highland given the relationship of this project to existing trails. We would experience about \$150,000 of the grant, since \$50,000 would go towards administrative costs and fees. It was the

consultant's feeling that there was a strong possibility that we could receive this grant. Ms. Dashevich added that we would be required to 'match' the funds received, and more information as far as other requirements or qualifications would be determined.

Mr. Feigley made a motion to approve up to \$1,500 maximum to spend on securing Nowak & Fraus to pursue an MDOT grant on our behalf. Mr. Hirzel supported and the motion carried with a roll call vote: Pilchowski-yes; Lewis-yes; Dowson-yes; Hirzel-yes; Barnes-yes; Maher-yes, Feigley-yes; Smith-yes.

Ms. Dashevich will send an email with more details as she receives them.

Sidewalk Recommendation from Design Committee

Mr. Hamill presented the final design plans changes as a result of the Design Committee walkabout.

L1 - Milford Road from M59 south to child care and auto parts store.

Mr. Hamill noted some removal of asphalt to make way for the 'gateway-type structure', but nothing to be modified for drawings. Ms. Dashevich added that she has invited Ron Campbell from Oakland County (who will assist in the design of the gateway-type structure) to the May 7, 2012 Design Committee Meeting.

L2 – from child care center south to Gov. Crapo Street

Mr. Hamill pointed out some notations in the drawings for the sidewalk to go around a tree; there are paved aprons in already; nothing to be modified for drawings.

L3- Gov. Crapo Street to Livingston.

Mr. Hamill noted that there were no critical changes to be added on this one, but there are some issues worth noting. This would be the section to perhaps add a banner pole, which needs to be away from traffic lights, etc.; there is existing pavement in front of the Shew Buildings and the party store and to the Meck building. Some modifications will need to be made for drainage, as this area always has standing water; an idea of cutting out asphalt for two parallel parking spots and adding planting beds perhaps. It was brought up that the party store has an interesting issue, i.e. their beer delivery trucks would not be able to get back into and out of their parking lot very easily. Maybe this is an area where we work with him, give and take, easement for allowing beer delivery in the front for better functionality, or adding a bit of interest, such a sculpture. Mr. Hamill also felt that the HDDA should offer to work as a team going before the Planning Commission to present; making sure everything works out correctly. Another area of concern is on the east Livingston component; in order to have angle parking on Livingston Road, the Meck building would be closed off from Livingston access, then requiring a driveway behind his building from Milford Road for both entrance and exit. Mr. Hamill spoke to Oakland County about this. It was also felt that regarding the width of the sidewalk, bicycles should not share these walking paths. Paving the dirt part of the road to the grass area (shoulder area) would provide additional area for bicycles to ride, providing a safer environment.

L4- from Livingston road south to Mcpherson (closed Carpet Store)

No changes

L5 –From closed carpet store south towards Colasanti's, including Fragments: this is the southern Gateway

Per Mr. Hamill, a crosswalk drawing needs to be added, at McPherson, including plantings, etc.

Further down, there would be the retaining wall – rustic, similar to the one in front of the library.

Across Milford Road, where the tree and roots rise high, a complementing retaining wall could be placed around the base, providing another feeling of entering. Also, a guardrail in front of the retaining wall needs to be discussed, not only for safety but for aesthetic reasons.

The revised lighting plan showing reduced number of locations was passed around.

Mr. Hamill concluded his presentation adding that we will need to have specific selections for lights, adding in benches, etc. ready for Tad. Also, there is a long stretch at Livingston and Ruggles that might benefit from the addition of benches, etc. to break up the long line of parking. He suggested we have Tad draw it in as part of the initial costs; it could always be removed if necessary. Another area that warrants further discussion is proposed parking on east Livingston; he shared a drawing of maximized parking done by Sue Grissim that Tad did some initial drawings on, so it could be added on with the design drawings without much additional cost.

Mr. Smith added his comments regarding a raised sidewalk, or a means to get across the 'pond' in front of Colasanti's. It would be a fairly expensive undertaking, and could take the form of a raised wood structure or berm, but is definitely something we would want to pursue, given the amount of traffic that Colasanti's brings to the area. We would like people to be able to continue past Colasanti's, on foot, to explore more of the downtown area.

The next step is to get Tad in to review these drawings and present changes and then he will pass it off to the engineers to produce the engineered drawings for the bid process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Restructuring

Mr. Smith shared this month's co-op ad in the Hometown Connection (which goes to every household in Highland Twp.) The concept is that we buy the page, sell off the ads and the businesses get a very good rate they maybe couldn't afford on their own. We recoup half the cost and it's a value-added for our local businesses. There is a different theme every other month. We also do a co-op ad in the Milford Times much the same way, except it includes a write-up from the editor and they sell the ads, but again value added for businesses in district. Mr. Maher confirmed its effectiveness by acknowledging they get quite a few coupons used at their store.

Mr. Smith also shared the latest edition of Mainstreet Now magazine featuring "arts in the district". We're hoping to have art in public spaces and get artists involved. We have talked to the Arts Council about providing canvases and supplies to artists who would create pieces of art which we could hang in windows around the district to get people to walk around and enjoy the paintings. It would be nice to add some pieces of art in the windows of vacant businesses. Afterwards, maybe raffle the paintings off. Also, Mr. Smith said he has had conversations with a local metal sculptor who does large pieces and he would like to become part of Highland. Maybe putting a piece at the train station, Four Corners, Fragments, etc.

Organization & Promo

Ms. Pilchowski noted that the summer concert schedule was underway. Ms. Dashevich is getting vendors on board and looking for sponsors. So far the Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce and LaFontaine have given donations.

DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT REVIEW

Ms. Dashevich announced a new business – Discount Battery –is preparing to open in the old Karen's Dance Studio. They are in Planning Commission Review.

At 8:00 p.m., Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Roscoe Smith

ARS/kb

APPROVED