

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Meeting of the DDA Board of Directors**  
**May 18, 2021**  
**Zoom Meeting**

The May meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** *Carolann Ayers, Margene Buckhave, John Casey, Aaron Cozart, Jim Long, Ryan McKindles, Greg Presley, Shawn Riley, Mary Starring*

**Absent:** *Mayor Brian Turnbull, DJ Boyd*

**Also Present:** *Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/DDA Marketing & Communications Director, Marilyn Price/City Council, Dave Gutman/Resident, Barbara Morowski-Brown/City Council, Fred Sheill/Resident*

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA**

Long noted that Redford Lock was used to do some work for the City and suggested using Northville Lock in the future because they are a local company. Ward stated that the work was commissioned by DPW but she would reach out and share the information with DPW for future purchases.

**Motion by McKindle, seconded by Ayers** to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda as amended. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**SUMMER MUSIC SERIES**

Ward highlighted the changes in the Jag Entertainment contract. First, because of additional sponsorship money obtained the DDA has been able to add more concerts for a total of 46 beginning Memorial Day weekend through the end of October. The total cost of the expanded series is \$27,600. The second change in the contract is the concert performance time, they will now be Friday and Saturday from 7 – 9 pm. Lastly, Jag Entertainment modified the language of the clause to eliminate the need to get signed statements from participating parties alleviating Boyd's concern.

Presley questioned now that the pandemic guidelines have been lifted whether the DDA could have concerts back on the stage in Town Square. Ward said for this year the DDA has already booked smaller groups to play on the streets but they could possibly move

to the stage if that is what the Board desires. The street concerts helped promote the restaurants and merchants because people were able to stroll through town while listening to music. Riley said putting the Main Street concerts in front of the Marquis allowed more people to hear and see the bands. Long asked if and when the Friday Concerts will be brought back to Town Square like they were before the pandemic. Ward said the DDA Board will need to discuss what the future concerts will look like in the downtown now that all outdoor restrictions have been lifted. Ayers suggested to just continue with the concerts the way they are now but be open and flexible to changing in the future if need be. Riley suggested in the future we use the three weekends the City has secured at Ford Field for larger concerts.

Johnson provided a sponsorship update. The DDA has currently raised \$19,000 with the potential of another \$4,500. Johnson was surprised at how successful fundraising has been given the how difficult the Covid 19 was on the business community. Ward said that given the increase in sponsorship money the DDA will have additional funds for other projects.

**Motion by Starring, seconded by McKindles** to approve the amended contract with JAG Entertainment. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **EV CHARGING STATION UPDATE**

Ward met with Pat Sullivan after our May Board meeting concerning the EV Charging Stations. Sullivan suggested that the City/DDA work with the City's engineers (Fleis & Vandenbrink) to acquire and install the new EV charging stations with a pay feature and apply for the \$2,500 commercial rebate from DTE Energy. The engineering fees would be paid for out of the City's Parking Fund. It was also suggested that the City/DDA and Fleis & Vendenbrink select a vendor for the project that would manage the system for a percentage of the revenue produced through the pay feature, similar to the arrangement that the DDA has been discussing with ERC to replace the City's downtown decorative streetlights. This would provide ongoing management services for existing and future EV charging station.

A meeting between the City, DDA, and Fleis & Vandenbrink has been set up for Thursday, May 20th to discuss the project. Long requested at the meeting that the DDA/City look at pay as you go vendors that would provide income for the City/DDA.

Presley suggested the DDA look at how well the City is electrified for future increased needs in the downtown district. He suggested looking at this at the same time as we look at EV Charging Stations. Ayers said electricity would fall under infrastructure and would be part of the City's responsibility not the DDA's. Long suggested looking at EV providers that would give the City/DDA a percentage of the pay as you go revenue.

Starring expressed a concern about the large cords running behind the Stands creating a tripping hazard. Buckhave suggested using outdoor mats to cover the cords.

## **SOCIAL DISTRICT DISCUSSION**

Ward said several ideas have been floated on how to improve the 4 entrances leading into the Social District.

The ideas centered on these concepts:

- Installing Tivoli lights overhead on N. Center and E. Main Street, similar to what we have in Town Square. Easements would need to be acquired by the property owners to be able to attach to the front façade of the buildings. DDA staff has reached out to the electrician that did the work in Town Square this summer to get an estimate for the work. The work in Town Square was \$11,000 so the lights in the streets would be in the range of \$75,000. Another option would be to line the buildings with Tivoli lights.
- Providing a banner over the orange water barricades that would welcome visitors to the Social District.
- Moving the triple barrels to the entranceways. They will be filled with summer color.
- Replace the damaged barricades and signs with new materials.
- Yet to be determined is what to replace the police cars with. The area needs to be hardened, yet mobile to allow for equipment and emergency vehicles to pass through.

Presley mentioned a low fence was suggested at the Main & Center entrance that would have a gentle curve to define the edges of where a car can pull off and provide some continuity. Presley said the orange barriers are necessary to alert drivers of the road closures so there is only so much the DDA can do to beautify. Presley suggested if the street closures become more permanent in the future the DDA could purchase attractive bollards and possibly build a stage at the north end of Center Street. Presley said right now the priority should be softening the entrances in an economical way to make them look more attractive. Adding some height with trees and bushes would help soften the entrances. McKindle suggested contacting a company like Planterra that rents plants to businesses.

In order to determine what meets codes, DDA staff is meeting with Fleis and Vandenbrink, the City's Engineers next week to get input ahead of any additional design work.

Ward stated that over the past few months the DDA has also been discussing what to do with the Pods and Stands over the summer months. The initial purpose of the structures was to provide alternative dining and food vending opportunities when there were restrictions on the capacity allowed for indoor dining and requirements for social distancing in place. As the restaurants opened back up to 25% and then 50% occupancy, it became harder and harder to fill the stands. The restaurants were busy running both their indoor and outdoor areas and were unable to also vend from Stand. In addition, staffing has been a real challenge for all of the restaurants. Now that summer is almost here, the DDA needs to decide what to do with the structures. The topic has been discussed at several DDA meetings and committee meetings, as well as with the new Social District Committee. Each committee has a different

recommendation on what to do, in fact each member of each committee has a different recommendation.

Recommendations include:

- Removing all of the Pods and Stands for the season and put them in storage (storage location to be determined). They could be reinstalled after Halloween.
- Move all of the Pods and Stands to Center Street and install mid-block. This would form a kind of food court and place to gather. This would require participation of the restaurants downtown or outside food vendors/trucks.
- Keeping 2 of the double Pods for use as a covered area for the Friday and Saturday night music. The remaining 2 Pods and 4 Stands would be move to storage.
- Remove just the Stands and allow the pods to be used for gatherings.

Ward asked all the restaurants their opinion about if they would be using the Stands in the future. Browndog was the only response and said they would not use the Stands since they are now open outside and inside and have no additional staff. Given the current usage the DDA Staff recommends that the Pods and Stands be store for the summer, and reinstalled in the fall (date to be determined).

Riley felt that a band could definitely fit in a Pod and would be a good alternative use of the space. Presley suggested all the Pods and Stands be on Center Street to create more synergy for the vendors. Casey felt if the food Stands are not used, they should be removed. Johnson said there has been a bit more interest from vendors lately in using the Stands but still not a consistent schedule. Ward said we need to be careful moving all the Stands to Center Street because we would be blocking the businesses storefronts. Long feels the two Stands in Town Square should be removed so more people can enjoy that area. Cozart questioned how difficult is it to move the Stands and where would they be stored. Ward said they would need to use a forklift and it is not easy to transport them. The DDA would most likely store them at the DPW yard. Buckhave feels we have not had enough time to test whether the Stands will be utilized more in the summer months. She also suggested moving the Stands to the side wall (near Spice Merchants) in Town Square to get them out of the center of the square. Long agrees moving the Stands in Town Square off to the side would be a good solution.

**Motion by Long, seconded by Cozart** to move the Town Square Stands off to the side (west wall) and leaving the other Stands and Pods where they currently are located.  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES**

a. *Design Committee:*  
None

b. *Marketing Committee:*

Riley said the Committee met and talked about upcoming community events.

*c. Parking Committee:*

None

*d. Organizational Committee:*

None

*e. Economic Development Committee:*

None

*f. Sustainability Committee:*

Gutman said the Sustainability Committee along with the DPW has bolstered its Tree City USA designation by planting 100 trees.

### **BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Beautification Day in downtown Northville is cancelled.

**Motion by Starring, seconded by Casey** to adjourn the DDA Board meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:25 am**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeri Johnson, Marketing and Communications Director  
Northville DDA