

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, August 18, 2009
Commerce Township Hall
2009 Township Drive
Commerce, MI 48390, 12:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Gotts called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Downtown Development Authority

Present: E. Wynn Berry, DDA Director
Jim Gotts, Chairperson
Randall Thomas, Vice-Chairperson
Daniel Lublin, Member
Thomas Zoner, Member
Paul R. Kirkwood, Member
Jose A. Mirkin, Member
Sandra Motz, Member
David P. Smith, Member
Frank Marotta, Member
E. Christen Skikun, Member
Pat Dohany, Member

Quorum of DDA Members determined

Absent: Doug Lanni, Member
Wendy Anderson, Member

Also Present:

Deb Kirkwood, DDA Administrative Assistant
Patricia Paruch, DDA Attorney
Thomas Rauch, DDA Attorney
Susan Gross, DDA Treasurer
Phillip Adkison, Township Attorney

Approval of the Minutes: July 21, 2009, **Minutes** as presented.

MOTION by Thomas, second by Mirkin, to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2009, Meeting Minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chairman Gotts made the following statement to the public.

Due to the tone, tenor and nature of the public comments received at last months meeting, I feel compelled to clarify important facts and issues as relates to the Commerce Township Downtown Development Authority. I would encourage each of you to visit the DDA website. In 1975 the Michigan Legislature created Act 197 which allows communities to establish a Downtown Development Authority for the express purpose of creating and preventing the deterioration of business districts, while encouraging historic preservation and creating and implementing development plans to promote the economic growth of the districts. All of this was to be accomplished by the creation of a Downtown Development Board. The Charter Township of Commerce formed the Commerce Township Downtown Development Authority in 1985. We are authorized to raise revenues through tax incremental financing and revenue capture, revenue

bonds, tax levy's, and the sale of property. In 1985, the DDA established the township water system which has been expanded to serve the entire township. In 1990, the DDA established a sanitary sewer system, which in addition to serving the entire township provides contractual services to Wolverine Lake Village, parts of the City of Novi and White Lake Township. In 1998, we focused on relieving traffic congestion in the area around Pontiac Trail, Haggerty Road, 14 Mile Road, Maple Road and Richardson Roads. In 2003, traffic studies requested and funded by the DDA determined the need and potential solutions for the severe traffic congestion in those areas. Again in 2003 the DDA purchased Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority lands adjacent to El Dorado Golf Course which provided the funds necessary for the Township to purchase the 70± acres of Dodge Park 5 from the Michigan Department of Transportation. Later in 2003 the DDA purchased the El Dorado Golf Course and the Links at Pinewood Golf Course in 2004. These acquisitions facilitated our plans for the extension of Martin Parkway, our first Township Library in 2005 and the plans for the new Township Hall. As the new Township Library opened in 2005 plans for Martin Parkway were submitted to the Road Commission for Oakland County. Additionally engineering plans for the widening of Haggerty Road from Crumb Road to Pontiac Trail were nearly completed. Later in 2005 the DDA acquired several strategic parcels of land in the Development Area. In 2006 the DDA continued extensive research with environmental, engineering, traffic and transportation firms, the Township Board, the Planning Commission, RCOC, MDOT and the FHWA to develop methods and systems to improve traffic conditions. In 2007, a public hearing on the environmental assessment was conducted by RCOC and the DDA regarding Martin Parkway from Oakley Park to Pontiac Trail at M-5. That same year the DDA funded the upgrade to Pontiac Trail from M-5 to Welch Road which was widened to five lanes to better accommodate the traffic flow. In December 2007, the Federal Highway Administration and the Michigan Department of Transportation granted approval for the DDA to officially begin construction on the development of Martin Parkway. In 2008 construction began on Martin Parkway near M-5 at Pontiac Trail. When complete, Martin Parkway will be a four lane 35 mph boulevard providing ingress and egress to the Development property with a bridge over Glengary Creek. This showpiece property will facilitate a true Commerce Town Center complete with a lifestyle center shopping area, habilitation units, situated in park like settings while accenting more than 125 acres of open space and six miles of recreational pathways. In 2009 we now occupy our beautiful new Township Hall. It was mentioned at the last meeting that the interest of the public would have best been served if the golf courses of El Dorado and Links at Pinewood had continued to operate. The reality is that both properties were under contract to private developers. If we had allowed the courts, creditors and private interests to facilitate the sale and disposition of the property the resultant fragmented development would have occurred with NO public advantage and limited tax revenue generated. Due to the intervention of the DDA, we now enjoy a soon to be expanded Township Library and the present Township Hall you see here. I believe that a great majority of township citizens agree that both facilities were sorely needed. It should be noted that there are currently only three paid positions within the DDA, one full time Director and two part time Administrative Assistants. These staff personnel coordinate and manage in excess of \$500,000,000 of new properties and ongoing services. It is my opinion that it would be nearly impossible to replace the time, talent and effectiveness of these individuals in consideration of the limited payroll involved. All other members of the DDA are voluntary appointees, each of whom brings specific skills, experience and abilities to the management process of numerous DDA projects. Personally, I have been involved for 35 of my thus far allotted 65 years in service to the residents of the Charter Township of Commerce. As we are currently operating in our Fifth Amended Plan, it should be noted that there has been no Tax Incremental Financing Capture since the Second Amended Plan. That is to say we have simply expanded our service area as required by statute and that the beneficiaries have paid NO taxes to the Authority. While we embarked on an aggressive course of action four years ago for the development of Martin Parkway, the municipal facilities, recreational enhancements and

local road improvements, we are constantly evaluating strategic options and costs attendant thereto, fully cognizant that the economic terms and conditions which existed in 2005 and 2006, when our plans commenced no longer exist. It is my sincere hope that the citizens of Commerce will realize that “we are not the enemy” but rather concerned, committed, involved citizen servants who find ourselves in the “right place” at the “wrong time”. We are simply trying to make lemonade out of lemons. We appreciate your concerns and we enlist your support, understanding and assistance in the attainment of our common goals and objectives.

Item 1: Public Comments

Public Comments accepted from Mark Stacey, he thanked the DDA for the landscape in front of his neighbor’s house, they were happy with the results.

Item 2: Consent Agenda

- A. Treasurer’s Report for July 2009;**
- B. Approval of Warrants with additions**
- C. Budget Amendments**

MOTION by Dohany, second by Thomas to approve the Consent Agenda containing the Treasurer’s Report for July 2009 and the Warrants including additions as presented as well as the Budget Amendments.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 3: Director’s Report

- A. Update on Martin Parkway**
 - **Bridge** – Backfill on the bridge to be completed this week and the masonry work will start next week.
 - **Update on Construction** - Work is continuing on the Roundabout at Oakley Park and Martin, they are on schedule and it should be open September 4th before school opens.
 - **Lighting** – Lighting plans have been submitted to the RCOC for Oakley Park and Martin Road. Lighting bids are being reviewed.
 - **Landscaping** – Tree placement is ongoing. Irrigation bids are being reviewed.
- B. Update on Interest in DDA Properties** – Ongoing meetings with Galbraith and Aikens on the commercial site. There was an inquiry from a medical center for the Haggerty Road and Pontiac Trail. The Walled Lake Consolidated School District has been in contact regarding a purchase of additional property.
- C. Rental Home on Welch Road** – A lease agreement has been written for the house on Welch Road, we do have a tenant. The carpet will be replaced and additional repairs made before occupied. Rent to be \$800 per month.

Item 4: Attorney’s update: None

Item 5: Engineers Update: None

Item 6: Planning Director’s update – Deb Kirkwood gave the report for Kathleen Cassidy. The Planning Director and the DDA Director are still working with the MEDC, Oakland County Economic Development and Beaumont Hospitals representatives relative to the possibility of tax credits and economic incentives that could be available for the Beaumont Hospital site. The Planning Commission approved an extension for the Commerce Gateway site for on year. Sonic

is up and running, staff is continuing to monitor traffic. We have a temporary use of the Rite Aid site on Pontiac Trail for a Halloween store. The Planning Commission also recommended approval of an amendment to the existing consent agreement for the parcel at 14 Mile and Decker. Amendment concerns the removal of the required masonry screen wall around the perimeter of the property.

Item 7: Tentative Executive Session – None

Item 8: Other Matters

Mr. Lublin stated that we should look at other alternatives rather than just a commercial outlet for the DDA area. Mrs. Skikun agreed. Mr. Marotta offered some suggestions. Mr. Mirkin stated the DDA was always open to constructive criticism.

As there were no other issues,

MOTION by Motz, second by Kirkwood to adjourn, Motion carried unanimously, meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Thomas Zoner, Acting Secretary
Clerk, Charter Township of Commerce