

Final
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, February 18, 2025
Commerce Township Hall
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390

CALL TO ORDER: The Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Hoy at 12:03pm.

Downtown Development Authority:

Present: Debbie Watson, DDA Director
Tim Hoy, Vice Chairperson
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor
Brian Winkler, Member
David Smith, Member
Susan Spelker, Member
Derek Tuck, Member
Spencer Schafer, Member (*arrived 12:06pm*)

Absent: Steve Matta, Chairperson (excused)
Jose Mirkin (excused)
Lt. Wendy Reyes, OCSO Substation Commander
Sgt. Matt Leggat, Oakland County Sheriff

Also Present: Sandy Allard, DDA Assistant
Molly Phillips, DDA Treasurer
Melissa Creech, DDA Secretary
Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Chris Martella, Dawda Mann, DDA Attorney
Jason Mayer, Township Engineer, Giffels-Webster
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

MOTION by Spelker, seconded by Winkler, to approve the DDA Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item 2: Public Comments

Ray Golota, 1595 Vanstone Dr., Commerce Township – Just a general question. I'm curious because I've been to the meetings regarding Kroger on Haggerty. I heard about their tax base and what they can do, or not do. I'm curious; is commercial and business property taxed the same way as residential? With all of the items in there, like the school district, parks, et cetera.

Treasurer Phillips – Yes.

Dave Campbell – They like to appeal though.

Ray Golota – I know, that's what brought that up.

Item 3: OCSO Update

No report.

Item 4: Insite Commercial Report

Randy Thomas provided an overview of the Insite report submitted in the agenda packet.

- 5 & Main:
 - I'm still waiting for confirmation from Bruce as to when he's going to come here for an update. We have him scheduled for the April 8th meeting with the Township Board. I'm assuming it will be close to that time, and I'll let you know.
 - I spoke with Bruce this week. We've got a meeting set up with the original market that we've talked to because all the economics have changed. He has changed his plan slightly. Another market expressed interest in the site, but we don't think anything will happen with that.
 - He's gearing toward getting the outlots and the market portion developed.
 - Bruce is starting to focus on plans for Phase II. Nothing really to talk about yet.
- Parcel M: Last month, I reported that we received a Letter of Intent for Parcel M, which is next to Walmart. We told them that before we can respond, we want to know who the user is. I haven't heard from them since. I can't say that's unusual for the business.

[Schafer arrived 12:06]

Derek Tuck initiated discussion regarding the purchase and development of Phase II. Randy noted that Bruce has the option to purchase the property until October, and he has relinquished his right of first refusal. Director Watson added that whoever develops Phase II, we just want to see it cohesive with Phase I. Randy explained that costs per square foot have gone up about 40% in the last three years, and the lending environment is tough for these larger projects. Discussion continued regarding tenant leasing and financing. Schafer inquired about the acreages of Phase I and II, which are approximately 34 acres and 13 acres respectively.

Item 5: Attorney's Report

Attorney Martella – We have no LOI and there's nothing new to report. It has been very quiet.

Item 6: Director's Report

Director Watson – Everything was in my written report (*included below*). Spring is only a month away! Erica Francis from Fox 2 should be airing a story this week on the 5 & Main development. She interviewed Bruce sometime last week.

I. Updates on Developments – Please refer to the Insite Report and the Planning Director's Report for additional information.

- 5 & Main – Bruce Aikens will be looking to attend meetings in either March or April to provide updates to the DDA Board and the Trustees.
 - Continental is working on the damaged sewer, and dewatering continues until repairs are done. Site work should be complete by Spring so they can start paving.
 - Continental has replenished their escrow account with CTP.
- Merrill Park – Nothing new to report.
- The Avalon of Commerce Twp. – Nothing new to report.
- Barrington – Nothing new to report.
- Wycliff – Nothing new to report.
- Public Storage – Nothing new to report.
- The Space Shop, Self-Storage – Nothing new to report.
- Higher Ground, Guidepost Montessori – Nothing new to report.

- *LaFontaine Automotive Group Dealerships (LAG) – At the corner of Pontiac Trail & Haggerty; site work is nearly complete.*
- *Parcel F / Unit 7, in front of the Township Hall – Nothing new to report.*
- *Parcel J1, Haggerty & Oakley Park – Nothing new to report.*
- *Parcels M & N – An offer was received from an unidentified food user.*

II. MTT Judgments – *As updates are available, reports are given at the DDA meeting.*

III. Commerce Towne Place HOA Items –

- Budget – The 2025 budget has been approved.*
- Dues – Invoices were sent out in January.*
- Tax Forms & Reports – The tax form is complete.*
- Lighting/Electrical – Shaw Elec., Eric Peterson, Adam Dornton*
 - *We have one pending insurance claim.*
 - *We are placing a small order for lighting supplies.*
- Landscaping & Maintenance – United Lawnscape, Jose Medina; Bob Rousseaux's Excavating, Mark Rousseaux*
 - *CTP has renewed the United contract for 2025-26.*
 - *There were some flooding issues on the west side trails last month due to Continental's dewatering. Rousseaux has been monitoring. Water tables are high, but the situation appears stable at the moment.*
- Irrigation – Michigan Automatic Sprinkler, Mike Rennie, Mike Toro*
 - *CTP has executed our 2025 irrigation contract.*

IV. Other

- *The upcoming DDA cash advance request will go before the Township Board on Feb. 11th, and the DDA Board on Feb. 18th. This works best for Treasurer Phillips' schedule.*

Township Board Report

Supervisor Gray –

- At the last Township Board meeting, we reappointed Robert Mistele to the ZBA.
- We awarded a contract to UFS to do studies of water and wastewater treatment this year.
- We approved the site condominium for Townes at 42 North, which will be right there by Meijer off Crumb Road. It will be 39 units with 8 buildings.
- We reviewed our sidewalk repair program that we put in place about two years ago for sidewalk ordinances.
- We discussed improvements for the Richardson Center adding bathrooms and a storage unit by the pickleball courts, and adding an additional 50+ parking spaces.
- We gave the DDA the cash advance.
- We purchased a new truck for our Ordinance Department. We hired a full-time Ordinance Officer Manager; Mario Gibbons, who comes from Novi, and was in ordinance enforcement over there.
- We discussed a letter we received from Jim Nash from the WRC that they're going to cancel our water contract effective June 1st. We have had a contract with WRC since 1987. It was renegotiated back in 90's. In 2021, they came to us with a new contract with ridiculous terms in it. There were two things that we said we did not want in the contract and we would not change. They want us to take responsibility for their staff for any incidents, whether it's on purpose or an accident. We don't think we should take that. And, they want an open checkbook. They want to be able to spend whatever they need to spend without approval. We told them "no" in 2021 and we got the letter two weeks ago. This gives us an opportunity to go out and look at other vendors. They said that another cancellation notice will soon come for the sewer and the wastewater treatment.

Director Watson – Have you talked to other communities about that?

Supervisor Gray – We have talked to other communities, and we've talked to two other companies that do this type of business. We'll see where it goes.

Spencer Schafer – I'm curious, who are the other two operators?

Supervisor Gray – We spoke with F&V Water Operations and with Highland Treatment. There are some others, but those are the first two we dealt with.

Ray Golota – Deb, are you going to post the Fox 2 update on the website?

Director Watson – I can email it to you, and we can post some links on the website. We have had some other press coverage, and we should get those on there too.

Ray Golota – Do you know that date and time?

Director Watson – No, but she will keep me updated. Erica said it would be this week. I'll let you know. She lives nearby and she was very excited. She had a lot of positive energy about the development. Dave can attest to that from his interview.

Dave Campbell – I think there was only one question about traffic. Everything else was positive.

Item 7: Engineer's Report

Engineer Mayer discussed the following with the Board:

- Springs at Five & Main –
 - They have fixed the sewer issue. WRC and everybody was good with that.
 - It's a slow week and I think they're taking a couple days off.
 - As far as the water main onsite, we had a meeting with the engineer yesterday. He wants to split up the phasing due to the fact that the fill pile they have is 20% moisture content. They can't use it as fill on the site until it dries out, which will probably be sometime in the summer. They want to revise the phasing so that they can get the buildings connected. We're working with WRC on that.
- LaFontaine – Basically they're just doing final testing. There's not much site work left for utilities. They're still building the buildings.
- We are wrapping up the bid package for the Haggerty pump station abandonment that will connect to that Springs deep sewer. We will probably get that out this month and then hopefully get that done this summer.

Item 8: Planning Director's Report

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director –

- I think Deb sent out the site plan that was submitted for Dort Federal Credit Union within 5 & Main. That would be the first non-residential site plan submitted for 5 & Main. They want to get on the agenda for the March 3rd Planning Commission to hopefully get site plan approval.
- Larry mentioned the condos, on the north side of Crumb Road by Meijer, got approved.
- The other project down that way is Midtown on Haggerty, which Spencer can tell you all about. This is where Kroger wants to go in with a new Kroger and a fuel center. We continue to work with them on amending the PUD to see if that can happen.

- Another significant piece of property down that way that we continue to get tire-kicking about is the United Artist Regal Theater property. I think the theater is still operating, although it feels marginal. We continue to get calls from prospective buyers and developers on what could be done if that property were to be redeveloped.

Supervisor Gray – Are people calling about apartments?

Dave Campbell – Every call I’ve had on it, the question has been about apartments. I had a guy call from Texas and I have to call him back. If he has a different idea in mind, I’ll let you know.

Vice Chairperson Hoy – I heard on the news this morning that the average age of a first time home buyer used to be 24 and now it’s 36 years old.

Dave Campbell – We have the developers telling us that you can’t build a house in Commerce Township for less than half a million dollars. So, a “starter home” is half a million dollars.

Supervisor Gray – Well, you can, but they just want to charge the going rate.

Dave Campbell – They would say they can’t make money if they charge less.

Director Watson – And they call it “attainable” now instead of affordable. Dave, at a glance of the plans for Dort, I think it looks pretty attractive, but I was trying to figure out if the drive-through for the bank will actually be visible from Pontiac Trail. Is that how that’s laid out?

Dave Campbell – The drive-through, at least on the PUD plan, which is really more of a concept plan, they were showing the drive-through lanes on the south side of the credit union, so right along the Pontiac Trail side. Now, everything is rotated to where the drive-throughs are on the east side of the building. I will admit that the plans came in late last week and I have not looked at them yet in much detail. I know that they’re showing a significant landscape plan that is meant to screen the drive-through lanes, and there is also an elevation change, so there is effectively a berm and the credit union will sit down in a valley almost. That might serve to screen the drive-through lanes as well, but we will look at it.

Director Watson – Okay, great. Thank you. And I thought the south side could use something more but I’m sure our architects will take care of that.

Dave Campbell – I know before the plans even made it to the Township, the credit union had to work with the Aikens team. What they originally showed the Aikens team was their standard prototype for a Dort Federal Credit Union. The Aikens team had them provide better materials, better architecture and landscaping. They kind of went through the ringer with the Aikens team before submittal.

Director Watson – Well, thank you.

Vice Chairperson Hoy – Has there been any more activity on the Beaumont property?

Randy Thomas – Beaumont, Corewell; I couldn’t tell you. We have an offer in front of them. They’ve sat on the offer for six months without a response.

Item 9: Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee – Cash Advance

Susan Spelker – This one is easy. The 2025 budget was approved, and we got our cash advance.

Director Watson – Chris, a question for you. For the cash advance, we put the cart before the horse. The Township Board already approved the cash advance at their February meeting, but do we still need a motion from this board to request the cash advance, even though it is preapproved?

Attorney Martella – We should have it as a request, so someone would have to make a motion.

Director Watson – Thank you. So, we do need a motion to request the cash advance of \$2.1 million from the Township Board, which has been preapproved.

MOTION by Spelker, supported by Schafer, to request a cash advance of \$2.1 million from the Township. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. Public Relations Committee – Director Watson – Jose apologized that he would miss our meeting, but he is out of town. He said that the only issue to report is that the K-12 Art Exhibition will take place one week earlier than previous years. He will have more information for us next month. I would speculate that maybe they're trying to avoid the Memorial Day holiday.

C. Marketing Committee – David Smith – It has been a rousing month for Marketing. Our decisions are changing the skyline here in Commerce and I have mixed opinions about that. We will see what Spring brings in the way of landscaping around the new amenities that are being built.

Item 10: Approval of Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons, Revenue & Expenditure

MOTION by Spelker, seconded by Tuck, to approve the Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons and the Revenue & Expenditure Report. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Item 11: Other Matters

None.

Item 12: Adjournment

- Next meeting is March 18, 2025.

MOTION by Spelker, seconded by Schafer, to adjourn the meeting at 12:28pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech
DDA Secretary

INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

EXP CHECK RUN DATES 02/18/2025 - 02/18/2025
 POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID
 BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
COMM TOWNE COMMERCE TOWNE PLACE ASSOCIATION 2025 CPTA DUES	DDA	2025 CPTA DUES	9,764.70
Total For: COMMERCE TOWNE PLACE ASSOCIATION			<u>9,764.70</u>
DAWDA DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW 611307	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH JAN 31, 2025	560.00
Total For: DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW			<u>560.00</u>
WATSON DEBORAH WATSON JAN/FEB 2025	DDA	DDA DIRECTOR	3,206.00
Total For: DEBORAH WATSON			<u>3,206.00</u>
DTE DETROIT EDISON 03/06 2579 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1100 5	22.38
03/06 2581 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1086 6	1,020.22
03/06 2660 OAKLEY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1065 0	188.84
03/06 3106 MARTIN	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1076 7	206.75
Total For: DETROIT EDISON			<u>1,438.19</u>
SANDYB SANDY ALLARD JAN/FEB 2025	DDA	DDA ASSISTANT 1/16/25 - 2/12/25	904.88
Total For: SANDY ALLARD			<u>904.88</u>
Report Total:			<u>15,873.77</u>