

City of Charlevoix
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD

Monday, January 24, 2011 – 5:30 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, Michigan

MINUTES

A) CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mason at 5:34 p.m.

Members Present: Dan Barron, Norman Carlson Jr., Fred DiMartino, Kirby Dipert, Hugh Mason, Jeannine Wallace and Gina Whitney
Members Absent: John Yaroch (excused) and John Taylor (excused)
Staff Present: DDA Executive Director Keith Carey, City Planner Mike Spencer

B) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board approved the agenda as presented.

C) INQUIRY INTO POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST None.

D) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 20, 2010 DDA Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the December 20, 2010 minutes.

Motion made by Mayor Carlson and seconded by Member Barron to approve the minutes of December 20, 2010 as submitted. Motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote.

E) PUBLIC INPUT, NOT RELATED TO OTHER AGENDA ITEMS None

F) OLD BUSINESS

1. DDA Work Plan

Executive Director Carey presented the revised DDA Work Plan to the Board. The Work Plan was discussed and modified at the October 25th, November 22nd and December 20th meeting. The Plan is working to-do list for the DDA. The Board was asked to approve the Work Plan as a 3-5 year extension of the Charlevoix Downtown Blueprint 2007.

Motion made by Mayor Carlson and seconded by Member Whitney to accept the Charlevoix Downtown Development Authority Work Plan as presented. Motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

G) NEW BUSINESS

1. First Floor Retail Ordinance Review

Executive Director Carey reviewed the current City Code language that requires all uses in the Central Business District having their front entrance on Bridge Street to be strictly retail. This applies to the first floor only and does not extend to the second floor or to other uses sharing the same building. The City will be updating the zoning ordinance in the near future and the City Planner/Zoning Administrator is seeking the DDA's input on whether this section should be modified.

City Planner/Zoning Administrator Mike Spencer advised the Board that the Planning Commission and City Council are in the process of updating the City's Master Plan. The next step is to update the City's Zoning Ordinance. The ordinance does not define "retail". He is seeking the Board's input on if the provision should be changed. There is no intent to change the section for a specific business or entity.

Mayor Carlson asked that input be received from the merchants and the property owners.

Member Dipert feels that "retail" is defined that the customer should be able to carry merchandise out in a bag.

The Board discussed the ordinance provision. The Board discussed whether professional offices should be in the downtown area. Bridge Street should have retail and service businesses that supply a product. If the use is not listed, a special use permit will be required. The Board concurred that professional offices should not be located in first floor spaces on Bridge Street.

The Planner will draft a proposed amendment to this section and present it to the Planning Commission for their review. Staff will contact retail businesses to obtain their input on the proposed amendment.

2. Possible Downtown Parking Fund Exemption for Restaurants Offering Outdoor Seating

Executive Director Carey reviewed the Downtown Parking Fund with the Board. Currently, if a business expands, it is required to provide additional on-site parking. Presently, if the business does not have the ability to provide parking, the business pays just under \$5,000 for each required parking space into the Downtown Parking Fund. The fund was established to provide funds to pay for the development to new parking areas. The Downtown Blueprint encourages the expansion of outdoor dining in the DDA. The Executive Director asked the Board if it would be willing to exempt downtown eateries who expand their outdoor dining area from paying into the Parking Fund. The Board discussed the proposal.

City Planner/Zoning Administrator Mike Spencer reviewed various options with the Board. Logical parking requirements are needed.

Member Dipert asked if a short term moratorium could be enacted to allow the parking fees to be waived. Mr. Spencer stated normally a moratorium is to prevent the decline of property values, while the City studies the issue, but that he would check with the City Attorney.

The Board also discussed the downtown parking permits and adding additional spaces to the program.

3. Future Free Parking Lot Resolution

Executive Director Carey reviewed with the Board its desire for the DeWitt Parking Lot to remain a free parking area. The expansion of the DeWitt Lot has removed business owners and employee vehicles from Park Avenue and the north end of the downtown area. The Board recommended that similar expansion and improvements be made on the White Parking Lot (108 Clinton Street).

Member DiMartino voiced support to develop the White Parking Lot and that the parking area remain a free lot for downtown employees. Member Whitney suggested that a portion of the lot be reserved for downtown employees.

The City Council will be holding the budget public hearing on February 21st. The City's parking fines are low. Parking revenues are used to pay for maintenance of the lots and enforcement. The DDA

concluded that, regardless of possible future improvements, the White Parking Lot should continue to be a free-of-charge parking lot.

H) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director asked the Board if it had an opinion on redevelopment liquor licenses. Staff has researched the program and reviewed the hand out information with the Board. The Board discussed the program and may pursue the option in the future.

I) MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Member Dipert asked for an update on the placement of the post cards in the Visitor's Guide. Director Carey is looking for a sponsor. If a sponsor is not available, the DDA will eliminate the post cards this year.

Member Whitney asked that the snow banks in the downtown area be removed in a timely fashion. The Board discussed snow removal operations.

J) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

K) ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Member Wallace and seconded by Member Whitney to adjourn. Motion adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Hugh Mason, Chairman

Linda Jo A. Weller, Recording Secretary

Carol A. Ochs, City Clerk