

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Safety Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, April 13, 2005

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:14 AM with Chair Keith Logsdon presiding.

II. **DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:**

Present: Dr. Jeff Allyn
John Barbuscak
Daniel Cherrin
Jane Bais-DiSessa
Matthew Gross
Keith Logsdon
John McGovern
Timothy Murad

Absent: Jim Eshshaki – *Excused*
Lawrence Gallagher
Stephen McCrumb – *Excused*

Also Present: Fred Collins, City Council Liaison
Valerie Jackett
Ron Meyer
Joe Morgan

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved unanimously upon a motion by Allyn and a second by Gross.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Regular Meeting of March 9, 2005: On motion by Cherrin and a second by Allyn, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Ron Meyer, whose business was visited on the second B.B.A.T. tour, noted support for putting parking back on Edgewood (as well as Beverly), where the island currently stands and where there used to be parking until 1977, when the City took the property. He noted lack of parking in that area of Coolidge impacts the kinds of businesses that can locate there. He added that nearby residents have complained about the amount of street parking at night. He thought it was a good time for the DDA to address the issue. Meyer said there is a perception among some Coolidge business owners that the City and DDA are favoring 12 Mile over Coolidge. He also noted that he has put his name forward many times for appointment to the DDA Board. Logsdon answered that the parking study encourages bringing on-street parking back to an expanded area on Coolidge. Murad also noted that the issue was timely as the master plan is being revised. He said elimination of the turn lanes on Coolidge was one possibility. Logsdon encouraged Meyer to be part of the public sessions that will be held on the master plan.

A. Communications: Keith Logsdon – Logsdon reported receiving a flyer from the Tri-Community Coalition about their June 3 golf outing at Sylvan Glen in Troy and invited others interested to let him know. Allyn signed on and Barbuscak would check his calendar. The fee for one golfer is \$125, \$500 per team, \$65 of which is tax deductible per golfer.

B. Introduction of First Time Visitors: Valerie Jackett of Party Cakes had attended a prior meeting and noted she had sent a letter to DiSessa putting her name up for consideration as a DDA Board member.

VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE:**

A. Master Plan: Logsdon reported that four Board members attended the prior evening's Planning Commission work session where three of the consulting firms that submitted master plan proposals

were interviewed. He was particularly impressed with one of the firms. A decision by the Planning Commission is expected at their next regular meeting in April. The entire planning process will probably take from 12 to 14 months. The visioning study will be updated, and specific projects targeted.

B. DDA Director – Logsdon reported that there had been much discussion among Board members about how to approach the issue of hiring a director, and in pursuit of an interim solution, they have spoken with the firm of Downtown Management Strategies (Gerry Dettloff), which submitted a proposal outlining steps that could be taken and services they could offer. Logsdon passed around copies of their proposal for review. Costs were not included in the proposal. He was unsure if a formal bidding process was needed to hire a firm like DMS. He noted the DDA needed a way to measure their effectiveness, but he thought they could be a valuable resource and might also help when the time was right to hire a permanent director. Murad added that they could address certain needs now, especially marketing and business recruitment. Logsdon proposed that it would additionally give the DDA more autonomy and presence than it now has. Cherrin asked about retaining legal counsel to create a process for the legal and autonomous role of director, and Logsdon answered that DMS could help there as well. Dettloff met with Logsdon and DiSessa to discuss DDA funds and how they can legally be used. DiSessa then spoke with John Sarnacki of MEDC, who wrote the DDA act, and he basically said, “Use your money — it’s operations.” Logsdon said there were still some hurdles to get past, but he felt Sarnacki was saying the DDA can use its funds for the programs it wants to. Other cities do it. DiSessa wrote a letter to Sarnacki about some additional questions she had, and she suggested that problems arose in the past because the question wasn’t worded right. Rather than ask, “Can we use our funds for something without a vote?” the question should be worded, “Can we use our funds for this type of operations?”

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Treasury/Budget: John McGovern – McGovern passed out a draft of the proposed DDA budget. Logsdon said several Board members had met to go over it. One of the questions that needs to be resolved is that the TIF projection for 2004-2005 had been @\$120,000, yet the year-to-date was actually @\$210,000. If the figure is accurate, it gives the DDA more money than anticipated. McGovern and Gallagher were to meet with the new City Finance Director, Lisa Dolan, and Logsdon hoped that cash reports from previous months would be available. McGovern had received hard copies of the reports for September through December, but supposedly the new format can’t be e-mailed. Logsdon also planned to meet with Dolan right after the Board meeting. McGovern had given a list of questions about the accounts to DiSessa. Barbuscak noted earlier discussion about formulating a longer term budget, such as five years or more. McGovern responded that earlier projections had left little available funds beyond the debt service and so the questions need to be resolved first. Barbuscak added that the downtown plan will need to project farther than a year into the future. Logsdon said he thought they may not have to wait until the master plan was complete before starting the downtown plan process. The preliminary budget needs to go to Council within the next few weeks but can be amended if necessary. Murad suggested discussing the downtown plan with the master plan consultant and perhaps starting the downtown plan at some point before the master plan is completely done. Logsdon said that the DDA’s role may be more in the implementation phase of the master plan. One of the consulting firms interviewed at the Planning Commission work session was very inclusive of the DDA in its presentation. Regarding the budget, Logsdon pointed out some items for review. The figure under Operations, Administrative Services, was intended to cover services like those offered by Downtown Management Strategies. Under Special Events, \$250.00 was added for stationery. Professional Services, for market development, included Berkley Breakfast funding and matching grants or loans (3-year no interest loans for renovation projects). The remaining items mimic the previous year’s budget. Funds are also allocated for the downtown master plan. McGovern suggested that before a vote to approve the proposed budget was taken, the column that reads “2005-06 Actual Budget” should be eliminated, at least until it’s adopted. He would also cut off the last two entries, “fund balance beginning of year” and “fund balance end of year,” since those entries need to be verified. Logsdon suggested putting asterisks by those items, adding “estimates to be verified.” Barbuscak asked about public relations and wondered if it was covered in the budget. Logsdon said it would be covered under “Operations” if a firm like DMS were hired. Logsdon reiterated for DiSessa (since she arrived after the discussion)

the question about the projected TIF and actual year-to-date TIF. She said there was a problem changing from one software program to the new program that was still being resolved. Logsdon said the DDA would like to try to put the budget into the form of the 4-point Main Street approach. McGovern stated again that he wasn't comfortable calling the balances "estimated" because the actual numbers will be coming from the City shortly. Allyn moved to approve the proposed budget with the addition of the two asterisked fund balance items as "estimates" (with the understanding that the budget can be revisited at the May meeting after questions are resolved), Murad seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. Cherrin asked Logsdon if an RFP was needed before they could vote on the DMS proposal, and Logsdon said he would check into it. When asked, DiSessa noted that services exceeding \$3000 need to be bid competitively and advertised in the newspaper. She also said it was possible to do a targeted RFP for professional services from certain companies.

B. Finance: Larry Gallagher – Absent. No report.

C. Citizens Committee: Larry Gallagher – In Gallagher's absence, Barbuscak had attended the meeting, which focused on Public Safety. Chief Eshman and the top officers were introduced. Barbuscak noted that all Public Safety officers are cross-trained to deal with both police and fire situations. Berkley ranks in the top five safest cities per capita. At least four officers are on the road at all times, in single cars. Half of the 28 sworn officers live in Berkley. Barbuscak said he was very impressed with Chief Eshman, and he was particularly pleased that the department targets drunk driving so effectively.

D. Development: Jane Bais-DiSessa – Nothing to report.

E. Intersection: Jane Bais-DiSessa – DiSessa reported that Attorney Hampton is trying to meet with all parties, and she will know soon whether he recommends proceeding with a lawsuit. They need to meet with the insurance bond agent, who requested and was provided with more information after their last meeting. The agent also asked to meet with Beckett & Raeder, and if B&R refuses, they will be showing bad faith. Barbuscak asked what direction negotiations would be taking, and Logsdon answered that the City/DDA wants what they paid for and nothing less. Barbuscak asked what would happen if the other side comes back with a different proposal, and DiSessa said the attorney would come back to her with it. That would then be presented to Council and the DDA Board in closed session.

F. Build Berkley/B.B.A.T.: Keith Logsdon – Logsdon reported that the second part of the B.B.A.T. tour took place on March 15, and it was very successful. Another tour will be conducted in the fall. Applications have already been received, and they will advertise for more businesses prior to that. Barbuscak suggested newspaper publicity about the businesses visited and what was covered because he hadn't seen anything about the second tour in the paper. There was an article about the first tour. Murad asked about follow up, and Logsdon said the team would contact the businesses putting on paper the issues discussed and steps they could take. They would also be advised that B.B.A.T. is available for ongoing help, and there would be a follow-up survey on their experience and what actions they take as a result. DiSessa wants to have Logsdon report at a Council work session that would be televised. Logsdon reported that the Berkley Front, one of the businesses visited, would be doing interior renovations. When the B.B.A.T. visited them, one of their suggestions was to hire a publicist to help with marketing. Barbuscak noted that the DDA was instrumental in getting approvals for the Front when they first opened.

G. Business Recruitment: Jeff Allyn, Matthew Gross – Allyn recalled one of the master plan presenters at the Planning Commission work session discussing the idea of one catalytic project having a galvanizing effect. The Board members at the meeting all agreed that project should be bringing back the Berkley Theater, or a facsimile on a different site. That firm also presented a graphic of where Berkley falls in relationship to other communities in the metro area in the arts, eats, and entertainment areas. Berkley was halfway down the scale. Barbuscak suggested using that firm's idea of drawing a walking distance circle from a central point and zoning for entertainment/restaurant within that area. Logsdon said it was important to bring in appropriate developers for desired types of business (such as a theater) and also to become more proactive with Beaumont Hospital.

H. Cool Cities Committee: Dan Cherrin – Absent (left). DiSessa said that she needed to recruit new committee members. She was disappointed in the changes to the Cool Cities program that eliminated cities like Berkley from contention. However, there may be funds to help with the master plan, in-kind/matching grants, or Main Street efforts. DiSessa said she was concerned because the

Cool Cities grants were supposed to be something community residents could apply for, but there was no way that could be done, in her opinion, because of the complexity of the application process.

I. Public Relations: Dan Cherrin – Absent (left).

J. Banners/Appearance: John Barbuscak – Barbuscak suggested adding “Banner Advertising” to this agenda item. Spring banners are up. He prepared a profit/loss statement for the previous year and the current year to date that he asked McGovern and/or Gallagher to audit. There were 31 banner sales, 9 new subscribers, and 1 banner was free. That yielded income of \$5,050 against expenses of \$162 to date. The cost of putting up winter banners was \$330. Total expenses came to \$985, leaving a balance of \$4,065. Profit from 2004 was \$3879, leaving a total balance of \$7944, and an ending profit of @\$6854. Barbuscak asked that a committee be formed to decide what to do with the profit. The flags won't be replaced this year. He got a quotation of @\$4000-5000 to buy new banners. After surveying locations, he believes 12 more poles are available for banners and said that he was sure making personal contact with certain businesses would bring more advertising banner sales. He asked the Board to consider what to charge for business banners next year. Several bills for banner expenses were submitted for approval and signatures. He has also made a chart of each banner's location. The name, phone number, and short “slogans” for the banner advertisers will be posted on the DDA's Web site, and he gave Murad the list. Allyn suggested the banner application also be posted on the Web site.

K. Newsletter: John Barbuscak – Barbuscak reported that he had discussed preparing the newsletter with Penelope Morris, who currently produces the DDA minutes. Polly Koenigsnecht has moved out of state, and printing can be done by the Print Stop in Berkley with writing, formatting, and mailing being handled by Penelope. She will submit a quotation to Barbuscak within a week. Barbuscak and McCrumb are working on the database.

L. Web Site: Tim Murad – Murad said that he needed to meet with DiSessa to get more information on the Web host for the City and hasn't talked to BizNet. DiSessa would call the provider and get pricing. Murad would like to change the site name (BerkleyDDA.com) but also re-register the current name. He will get pricing from BizNet so that comparisons can be made at the next Board meeting. There was question about having to put out an RFP for the work.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Logsdon announced that the terms for Board members Allyn and Murad, as well as his own, would be expiring June 30. All agreed to renew. One position on the Board remains open, and DiSessa will interview candidates and make a recommendation.

IX. NEW BUSINESS: None.

X. LIAISON REPORTS:

A. City Council Liaison: Collins reported that the budget process is underway. DiSessa's contract was renewed for four years. Logsdon asked about the tennis court dome project near the Community Center. Collins said DNR approval is required. The structure will be temporary, only for fall and winter, and will be removed for spring and summer.

B. Planning Commission Liaison: Absent – no report.

C. Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison: Absent – no report.

D. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Absent. May 4 Grub Crawl flyers would be circulated.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 AM on a motion by Murad and a second by Barbuscak.