

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Safety Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, August 10, 2005

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:40 AM with Chair Keith Logsdon presiding.

II. **DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:**

Present: Dr. Jeff Allyn
John Barbuscak
Daniel Cherrin
Jane Bais-DiSessa
Allen Dyer
James Esshaki
Lawrence Gallagher
Matthew Gross
Keith Logsdon
John McGovern
Lisa Peasley

Absent: Timothy Murad – *Excused*
Alan Semonian – *Excused*

Also Present: Craig Astrein, Famous Flavors
Ron Meyer
Joe Novitsky, Planning Commission Liaison

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

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. **Regular Meeting of July 13, 2005:** On motion by Allyn and a second by Peasley, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

A. **Communications: Keith Logsdon** – None received.

B. **Introduction of First Time Visitors:** None.

VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE:**

A. **Election of Officers:** Logsdon deferred election of officers to the September Board meeting to give him an opportunity to discuss the position of Treasurer with Alan Semonian.

B. **Master Plan:** Nothing to report.

C. **Grand Opening Program** – Barbuscak reviewed the plan for the DDA to make a presentation when a new business opens in the district. He brought a sample plaque that will be presented to the business and passed around copy and format suggestions for the plaque and banner. The banner will be displayed at the business for a month. Logsdon suggested the Dairy Queen be the first event, followed by Alex's restaurant. Barbuscak contacted 10 event coordinators and most were more public relations oriented. Allyn related speaking to a coordinator who would work for \$25.00 per hour. She reviewed his proposal and wanted to meet with the executive committee. Total time needed for coordination was estimated at about 5 hours for each event. A standard press release could also be prepared, with the coordinator responsible for getting personalized information. Peasley suggested that the new business might want to offer a special discount at that time to help build up camaraderie in the community. Allyn said the DDA might be able to persuade other existing businesses to tie in, such as doing printing or creating a specialized cake, as a way of welcoming the business. Logsdon thought it was a good idea to get the Chamber involved as well, and he asked Peasley to follow up. The committee would set up a meeting with Allyn's coordinator contact for the

following week. Regarding other costs, Barbuscak said each plaque would cost @\$55, with an initial set up fee, and the banner had a one-time cost of @\$150. The Board agreed to set a budget of \$250 per event. The banner will be 2'x10' with 10' streamers. DiSessa voiced her concern about the use of DDA funds for such a purpose because it was not operations and suggested that it was a Chamber of Commerce function. Barbuscak and Logsdon countered that the events would be promotion of the DDA and the growth of the downtown, and should therefore be considered part of DDA day-to-day operations. McGovern noted it was a judgment call and could be considered as "operations." Logsdon stated that other cities seem to find a way to use their DDA funds for similar purposes. Gross said that perhaps the excess banner funds could be tapped. Allyn asked DiSessa what she was afraid of, and she was firm that the rules are the rules and that other DDAs are ignoring them. McGovern said that promoting the DDA could be considered "operations," and that this was a gray area needing clarification. Barbuscak then moved to budget \$250 per promotion for the grand opening program, Dyer seconded, and the motion was approved by the Board with DiSessa opposed. McGovern suggest that interest earned is not locked in to operations and could be tapped, but he was unsure how much it amounted to. DiSessa then moved to take money from the interest on the banner fund for the promotion for one month until clarification can be obtained about legality, but there was no support for the motion.

D. 12 Mile Road Improvements – DiSessa reported that one of the bond issues presented on the November ballot will address re-doing a portion of 12 Mile Road in the DDA district at an estimated cost of a little over \$1 million. If the bond passes, the City of Berkley will pay 50% of the cost and 50% will be paid by the Road Commission, which would not otherwise have the road on its schedule until @2010. Drainage issues and lowering the roadway in order to fix the curbs would be addressed. Property owners will be assessed for sidewalk repairs/improvements. City Council separated the bond into three separate portions: 12 Mile Road, 11 Mile Road, and other local and some major road repair. DiSessa said that Rep. Knollenberg had been able to get \$1.25 million allocated for 11 Mile repair and Congressman Levin an additional \$2 million, with a total project cost estimated at \$8-\$9 million. Town meetings will be held in the fall to inform the voters about the bond proposals. Cherrin suggested the DDA pass a resolution soon in support of the bonds. DiSessa said the Road Commission received a grant to put new light fixtures on some 12 Mile intersections. Council approved using Tri-Party funds to allow the engineers to begin plans. Logsdon asked her when she expected to see the engineering plans, as he was concerned about how the 12 Mile bump-outs get done, and DiSessa responded that the bump-outs would be done in accordance with the Wade Trim plan, which she had given to the engineers. Logsdon asked if the Board would get a chance to see the plan at some point. DiSessa said that City Council will be reviewing it and she said she would provide the Board with information about it. Barbuscak asked if the plan included streetscaping, and DiSessa responded that only roadwork, curbs, and maybe signs would be involved. Barbuscak noted that the streetscaping plan the DDA had commissioned from Beckett & Raeder included bump-out design. He also thought the Board should have an opportunity to look at the Wade Trim plan and compare it with the B&R design. Logsdon said he hoped the engineers would take the B&R design into consideration when they did their engineering plan. Barbuscak then asked how the DDA Board would be involved. DiSessa responded that they should attend the City Council meeting when they reviewed the plan. She said she was trying to let the Board know about the project and get their input, and she asked them to tell her what they wanted her to do. Barbuscak stated he thinks the Board needs to be more than just an advisory group to the City Manager and should be part of the team involved with any design for 12 Mile improvements. DiSessa said she and the Public Works Director are working with the City engineers. When Logsdon asked how the Wade Trim study compared with the B&R plan as it relates to the bump-outs, she said she didn't know. He said if the two plans were comparable, there was no issue, but if they weren't, the Board needed to know why they weren't and asked when she expected a preliminary plan. She said the biggest hurdle was getting voter approval. Curb issues on certain parts of 12 Mile will still need to be addressed even if the bond fails. Logsdon said it would be good to see how far the curb money in hand will go and what the total cost of the curb repair will be. Barbuscak noted that if the DDA was going to support the program, they had to be more than just advisory. DDA support of the plan is essential if the bond is to be approved. Logsdon asked DiSessa if work sessions were planned with Council and the City engineers. She said work sessions had taken place and Council had received a report from the City engineers. She reiterated

that she would bring as much information as she could to the Board about the plan and solicit their input. Logsdon said once the plan was done, it wouldn't be cost-effective to re-do it, so it was important for the Board to be involved at the beginning. DiSessa said she would ask the engineers to come to the next Board meeting and make their presentation about the road project. Logsdon asked if that was the same presentation they gave to the Board previously, because he wanted the engineer to tell the Board how the proposed plan differs from the conceptual plan that the Board had for downtown, and if it does, why. McGovern stated he didn't see the need to have the engineers make the full presentation again, his concern was only that their current plan was compatible with the B&R design. DiSessa said she would ask Biehl to restrict his presentation to 12 Mile.

E. Committee Assignments – Logsdon proposed changing committee assignments and asked the Board to indicate their interest in the separate committees. He suggested moving McGovern to Finance with Gallagher and asking Semonian (who was absent) if he would assume the Treasury/Budget assignment, as well as the position of Treasurer. Because he hadn't had an opportunity to discuss it with Semonian, he proposed delaying a vote on officers to the September meeting. Allyn proposed a slate of Logsdon, chair; Allyn, vice-chair, Semonian, treasurer, and DiSessa, secretary. On motion by Allyn and second by Barbuscak, the proposed slate of officers was approved unanimously.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Treasury/Budget: John McGovern – Dolan e-mailed past cash reports to McGovern in July, which he still had to review because he had some questions. He noted the format was easier to follow. In response to Barbuscak's question if the special funds were probably earmarked, McGovern said that the banner funds seemed to be broken out properly. Logsdon said he hoped financial reports would be available for the September Board meeting.

B. Finance: Larry Gallagher – Nothing to report.

C. Citizens Committee: Larry Gallagher – Barbuscak attended the meeting at Gallagher's request, which focused on the 45-A District Court. The judge, the magistrate, and three clerks represented the court and talked about the number of cases and amount of money brought in. Court income increased substantially from the previous year. Guilty offenders are given community service where appropriate, and Barbuscak suggested it might be a way to have talented people put to work in service to the DDA. DiSessa noted that the Court is a separate entity from the City, other than the City approving their budget. The City Attorney also explained his function at the meeting.

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

E. Intersection: Jane Bais-DiSessa – Nothing to report. McGovern asked DiSessa if the defendants had responded to the intersection complaint, as time was up for them to answer. She said they had not.

F. Build Berkley/B.B.A.T.: Keith Logsdon – Logsdon reported another tour was planned for the Fall and they were starting the process, looking to get funding for a façade improvement program. National City has offered to provide 3-year loans, and DiSessa said she was also working with Flagstar Bank. Barbuscak suggested the DDA work with the Planning Commission and put together a package of what a business would need to get approvals, as well as a list of resources.

G. Business Recruitment: Jeff Allyn, Matthew Gross – Gross gave more details about his adopt-a-block idea floated at the previous meeting. He proposed a sign, easily installed in the areas where trees are planted, that could list multiple sponsors who had adopted the block, and funds could be used for clean-up, banner installation, and similar purposes. The cost to have your name on the sign would be lower than sponsoring a business banner and could supplant that program if problems with Edison prevent that program from continuing. The signs would be at eye level and easy to read. Gross had talked to Hunt Sign and got a preliminary quotation of @\$134. He was looking into a fairly standard aluminum, maintenance-free sign and showed a mock-up of how the sign copy would look. DiSessa said they needed to check the building code to make sure it was allowed. There are currently 38 banner sponsors, and Allyn suggested the sign program could generate more revenue and more sponsors because the cost to take part would be much lower. Logsdon asked Gross to fax a copy of the design to DiSessa so she could follow up with the Building Department. A single estimate would be sufficient. Barbuscak noted he'd gotten feedback that it still might be possible to continue the sponsor banners program, and maybe both programs could be

offered. Allyn reported speaking with one of P.F. Chang's managing partners about their idea to open small take-out restaurants, but Berkley isn't on their list of possible locations.

H. Cool Cities Committee: Dan Cherrin – Cherrin reported the committee is recruiting new members.

I. Public Relations: Dan Cherrin – Logsdon reported to Cherrin that Dyer expressed an interest in being involved with public relations.

J. Banners/Appearance: John Barbuscak – Barbuscak reported that the marquee banner would be put up soon, before the Dream Cruise. Flags need to be replaced and won't be put up again until 2006. McGovern asked Barbuscak about permission from Edison to put up the regular banners, and he said they had given permission when the banners were first installed.

K. Newsletter: John Barbuscak – Barbuscak asked that someone new on the Board head the newsletter committee.

L. Web Site: Tim Murad – Logsdon reported that Murad had finally scheduled a meeting with BizNet to discuss their proposal. McGovern noted he had checked the Web site and it didn't work properly. Several of the buttons didn't work or bring up any information. Logsdon said Murad had another provider in mind but that he needed three proposals to satisfy City bid requirements.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

IX. NEW BUSINESS: DiSessa reported that the League of Women Voters would hold an election forum with the candidates on October 19. Barbuscak stressed that the Board members attend and ask hard questions. Cherrin noted that the DDA had missed an opportunity to use the Dream Cruise to promote Berkley's downtown again and suggested starting early next year. Logsdon asked him to volunteer to lead the effort. Barbuscak reported on a Detroit News article critical of DDAs, implying that the money diverted should be used to bolster cash-strapped municipal treasuries instead. He thought it was important to set the record straight. Logsdon suggested someone on the Board write a response and asked Cherrin to work on it. Eshaki announced that Incredible Edibles had signed a lease for space in his 12 Mile-Coolidge shopping center.

X. LIAISON REPORTS:

A. City Council Liaison: Absent – no report.

B. Planning Commission Liaison: Novitsky reported the Commission made recommendation to Council to approve the first PUD for Berkley on the Burger King site on 12 Mile Road. He also reported on the difficulty Craig Astrein of Famous Flavors had getting approval from the Commission to put tables outside his shop on Coolidge. Novitsky disagreed with the other members that it needed further study and said Mr. Astrein should be able to use his tables. He also voiced his opinion that the Board seemed to be questioning the professional ability of those involved in the 12 Mile street design and suggested the Board felt its collective wisdom was stronger than theirs. Logsdon responded that Novitsky had misinterpreted the intent of the discussion. Barbuscak said the DDA paid for the B&R study, and he felt the Board needed to play a role in the current planning. Because of the DDA's efforts, the City was finally seeing progress and cooperation. Then Craig Astrein addressed the Board about his difficulty getting approval to put tables on the side street outside his shop. He said customers weren't being served there. It was merely a place for them to sit and relax while they ate. He had personally appealed to DiSessa about the approval delay, but he said she couldn't make a decision. He said he felt like he was fighting the whole system. The peak summer time for him to get the benefit of outdoor seating was quickly passing. Novitsky noted that an administrative approval process should be initiated in the City. Logsdon offered that if he had known about Astrein's difficulties and the need to pay for architectural drawings, he would have supplied them to him free of charge.

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

D. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Absent – no report.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting ended at 9:39 AM (lost quorum).