

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Safety Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, March 9, 2005

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:18 AM with Chair Keith Logsdon presiding.

II. **DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:**

Present: Dr. Jeff Allyn
John Barbuscak
Daniel Cherrin
Jane Bais-DiSessa
Jim Esshaki
Keith Logsdon
Stephen McCrumb
Timothy Murad

Absent: Lawrence Gallagher – *Excused*
John McGovern – *Excused*
Matthew Gross

Also Present: Valerie McDonald, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Ron Meyer
Joe Novitsky, Planning Commission Liaison
Rob Pliskow

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

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

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

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

A. **Communications: Keith Logsdon** – Logsdon reported receiving numerous e-mails and letters, mostly from residents interested in helping the DDA, and he would like to take advantage of their support. He noted that Pliskow Insurance was one of the businesses visited on the B.B.A.T. tour.

B. **Introduction of First Time Visitors:** Valerie McDonald of National City and current president of the Berkley Chamber was attending for the first time as Chamber liaison.

VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE:**

A. **Master Plan:** Logsdon urged all Board members to attend the Planning Commission work session on April 12 when the master plan consultants will be interviewed. He indicated it would be good background for deciding on a downtown master plan consultant.

B. **Business Liaisons** – Logsdon said that McCrumb is helping get the mailing list in order and divided up among the Board members who will be business liaisons. Logsdon also reported that several Board members met with Downtown Management Strategies, the consulting firm set up by Gerry Dettloff, former Royal Oak downtown manager. The firm's staff all have experience with the Main Street program, and the DDA might engage their services as an interim step until a full time director can be hired. Logsdon said they might help the DDA with the four-point approach of Main Street: organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. He indicated they would be having more discussions with the firm.

VII. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

A. **Treasury/Budget: John McGovern** – Absent – no report.

B. **Finance: Larry Gallagher** – Absent – no report.

- C. Citizens Committee: Larry Gallagher** – Absent. DiSessa reported that due to bad weather, the meeting had been rescheduled to 3/15, and Public Safety would be the focus.
- D. Development: Jane Bais-DiSessa** – Nothing new to report. Murad said that the new 12 Mile sports bar construction was underway. DiSessa didn't know when they were scheduled to open.
- E. Intersection: Jane Bais-DiSessa** – Nothing new to report.
- F. Build Berkley/B.B.A.T.: Keith Logsdon** – Logsdon reported that the February tour had been a great success. Five businesses took part. He said it was exciting to discuss the various issues with the businesses and an energizing experience. Six more businesses would be toured on March 15. Press coverage was good, and a lot of interest was generated in the business community.
- G. Business Recruitment: Jeff Allyn, Matthew Gross** – Allyn reported that he'd been unable to get Peter Allen, program contact at U-M, to return his phone calls.
- H. Cool Cities Committee: Dan Cherrin** – DiSessa reported that attendance at committee meetings has been sparse. Due to changes in the Cool Cities grant program, Berkley won't be able to apply for the \$100,000 grant as she'd hoped because the grant criteria have changed, and only certain types of communities can apply for those grants. Logsdon asked her about applying for a grant to help communities become a part of the Main Street program, but she said the current committee will probably not be interested in doing that. She's looking to recruit new committee members. Cherrin asked if the DDA could apply for a Cool Cities grant, and she responded that it must come from a Cool Cities committee. Logsdon suggested that some of the citizens who've indicated interest in helping with downtown development might want to join the Cool Cities committee. DiSessa noted that the cities of Clawson and Ferndale had set aside some funds for business development and suggested that Berkley might be able to budget some money to make small matching grants to businesses in the city, such as grants of @\$1,000.
- I. Public Relations: Dan Cherrin** – Nothing to report.
- J. Banners/Appearance: John Barbuscak** – Barbuscak reported getting another banner advertiser and also getting an inquiry from a Royal Oak business. He has been charting where the banners are hung and what additional pole locations are available, and notes there is room for about six more banners; 32 banners were sold this year. He thanked McDonald for National City's purchase of two banners. Logsdon would like the banner application posted on the DDA Web site. Barbuscak noted that the "slogans" for the banner purchasers need to be added to the site. The lettering on the new business banners is black rather than blue and the type size is proportional. He noted more poles would be available if some tree trimming were done. He reported that the first regular banners were put up in 1996, and although some have stretched a little, they're still in relatively good condition. He estimated that it might cost \$4,000 to buy new banners.
- K. Newsletter: John Barbuscak** – As soon as Barbuscak gets articles from Board members, the newsletter can be put together. Logsdon suggested having a specific Web page for banner advertisers. Allyn suggested putting a link to the businesses that have their own Web sites on the page where the banner buyers are listed, and Logsdon will contact them to get their Web addresses. Murad asked Barbuscak to get the business banner information to him. Logsdon set a target of the end of May for the next newsletter. Eshaki gave McCrumb his card so he can be added to the newsletter mailing list. DiSessa and Logsdon encouraged him to write something for it.
- L. Web Site: Tim Murad** – Murad reported that he is checking on costs and would call DiSessa the following week to discuss the City's provider and review their fees. Then he would report back at the April Board meeting. The current contract with BizNet expires in June. Regardless of whether the provider is changed, Murad would like to have the site totally redesigned, and he asked for input on changes. Logsdon suggested having a map of the City showing existing businesses and available business property. Cherrin suggested also having information about how the DDA is funded. Logsdon asked for opinions about opening up the mailing list to residents, perhaps using the City's voter list. Murad suggested Web site subscribers could be e-mailed a link to the electronic newsletter, like the City does when something of interest happens. Logsdon asked if the DDA could have a link from the City to the DDA's newsletter, which it can. Allyn suggested the DDA Web address should be printed on new business banners, but DiSessa thought that would look too cluttered. Cherrin proposed that the DDA and Chamber have a joint weekly column about Berkley in the local paper. DiSessa asked if they were planning to send a newsletter to residents and wondered why, because she feels they will just be thrown out. Pliskow said that perhaps a short Web site

notice could be included in the City water bills. Novitsky suggested that the Mirror newspaper was the best vehicle for distributing information and is relatively inexpensive.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

IX. NEW BUSINESS: Barbuscak visited the new packaging store on 12 Mile and noted that they will rent an address box to replace the Post Office Box for \$10 a month or \$100 a year. The Post Office charges about \$50 for a year. DiSessa announced that Sweet Essentials, the new chocolate shop on 12 Mile, is open. Cherrin mentioned discussion at the State of the County meeting about WIFI (wireless fidelity), where County Executive Patterson proposed wireless Internet and free high speed Internet for the entire county. DiSessa said the concept is still controversial. Eshaki asked about Berkley's involvement in wireless, and DiSessa said their IT person will be attending a meeting soon.

X. LIAISON REPORTS:

A. City Council Liaison: Absent. DiSessa reported that Council reviewed the road study in their work session, and the engineers reported on improvements needed and estimated cost. A street bond is one funding option being considered. An abbreviated presentation on the road study will be made at the March 21 Council meeting. DiSessa will also be taking it to the Citizens Committee. The City is considering putting the funding question on the November ballot. Barbuscak asked where 12 Mile fits in as far as curbs and streetscaping. DiSessa said 12 Mile wasn't scheduled for reconstruction by the County until 2008 or 2010, but the Road Commission will move that forward if the City puts up half the cost (like a loan to the County). Barbuscak asked if that will include streetscaping. DiSessa answered that it would but a design is needed. Engineering work (including design) will come up for Council approval at the next meeting. Tri-partite funds would be used for the engineering work. She will bring a copy of the engineers' report to the next DDA meeting. Logsdon asked about the time frame. DiSessa suggested a 3- to 5-year schedule, with 11 Mile and 12 Mile the top priorities. About \$650,000 in Federal funds will be available for 11 Mile for Berkley, but the total needed is \$4 million. Barbuscak suggested having Representative Knollenberg talk up the issues and generate support on local cable. DiSessa said she would ask him. He will be speaking at a Council meeting in April. Eshaki said Knollenberg's office had contacted him regarding opening an office in his 12 Mile-Coolidge shopping center, but hadn't followed up. DiSessa said she would get in touch with Knollenberg about it.

B. Planning Commission Liaison: Novitsky reported that the Planning Commission received six proposals regarding the master plan, of which four were qualified. One firm was slightly over the budget, and the Commission asked them to bring their proposal within the budget. Another of the four qualified firms is based in Ohio, and the Commission thought that travel costs would be prohibitive. Three of the four will be interviewed at the April 12 meeting, and selection may be made shortly after that. Logsdon said he was looking forward to the interviews since the DDA hopes to hire the same firm to do the downtown master plan. Novitsky said he believed one of the firms had done a downtown plan and a master plan for Royal Oak.

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

D. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: McDonald said the B.B.A.T. tour would be repeated on the following Tuesday. A lot of interest had been generated. The Chamber was holding a "Grub Crawl" fundraiser on April 26 with five restaurants. The Art Bash was scheduled for June 11, and the Chamber was asking the Council to close 12 Mile again. They are also meeting with the Cruise Fest committee and working on a membership directory to be out in the summer. National City may help with support. Chamber members will get a free listing, and there will be advertising as well. Other activities coming up that the Chamber is involved in are the Beaumont Hospice 5K Run in September, the Shop Hop in December, and Super Bowl initiatives. McDonald said the Chamber had 80 members at the close of 2004.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 AM on a motion by Murad and a second by Barbuscak.