

Kochville Township Downtown Development Authority
Board Meeting Minutes: January 15, 2010
8:30 a.m. at Kochville Township Hall
Draft - Not yet approved

Board members present: Lyle Davis (Chair); Vern Weber (Vice-Chair); Jim Loiacano (Supervisor); Tom Basil; Don Jackson; Scott LaDouce; Jon Howell

Board members absent: Dave Abbs, Andrew Forester; Dave Maine

Others Present: Steve King (Director); Kevin Kilby, Rob Eggers; Deb Brown; Edward Meisel; Stephen J. Yanca; Judy Fath Jackson; John Leuenberger

Proceedings:

I. Opening

Lyle Davis called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

II. Agenda:

Mr. Loiacano noted that the DDA should approve an annual meetings calendar for the 2010 year. Mr. Davis suggested adding the item "Calendar" to the agenda as item E under New Business.

- Moved by Loiacano to approve the agenda as amended, second by Weber. Motion approved unanimously

III. Minutes:

- Moved by Weber to approved minutes as presented, second by Basil. Motion approved unanimously

IV. Public Comment

Steve Yanca commended the Authority for work it is conducting around the community. He asked the DDA to maintain a focus filling "dark stores" in Kochville Township.

V. Communications - None

VI. Reports

a. Financials

Mr. King gave the financials report. After formalizing some details on the DDA's new Wildfire Credit Union account, \$250,000 was transferred to this account from Citizens Bank, utilizing FDIC protections.

January 15, 2010

Mr. Davis noted that the DDA still has more than \$400,000 with Citizens Bank. The DDA needs to figure out where it can move additional funds to insure those. Mr. Weber concurred and mentioned that if necessary, these funds could be securitized.

b. Police Subcommittee

Mr. Weber noted that a meeting between the DDA and Saginaw County had been rescheduled for a later date in January.

VII. Unfinished Business

a. Kochville Road

Mr. Eggers said that a meeting had been held with the Township earlier in the month, during which the Township had opted to replace the roughly 1,100 feet of water line on the east end of project area on Kochville Road that would have been at highest risk for damage directly or indirectly from road and drainage improvements. Because the water line is involved in the project, a DEQ permit will be needed, which DEQ is aware of.

Mr. Weber asked for clarification that the Township would be paying the cost of this water line replacement. Mr. Loiacano replied that he still needed to bring the issue to the Township Board for approval, but that he had agreed with the Township paying this expense.

Mr. Davis asked how these changes affected the project's timeline in 2010. Mr. Eggers responded that more pressure would be placed on wrapping up the bonding proceedings, and about two extra weeks would be needed for MDEQ permitting, but the construction itself shouldn't be greatly affected.

Mr. Howell asked how far the existing sewer currently runs down Kochville Road. Mr. Eggers said that the line runs just past the VFW hall. He added that because the water line will be relocated to the north side of the road, a ten-foot construction easement from the Pikeville storage facility would be very helpful during this work.

a. Bay Road (M-84) Sewer District

Mr. Eggers said the topographic survey had been completed. Spicer Group had scheduled a kickoff meeting with all involved parties on the project for Wednesday, January 20.

b. DDA Project Signs – Eggers

Mr. Eggers recalled that during the previous month, a concern was brought forward regarding the readability of the project signs. The font on the signs would be modified slightly; an example of the signs will be at the DDA open house on January 21. People reading the signs will likely have multiple opportunities to see them, given repetitive routes in the district.

Mr. Eggers noted that the MDOT permit for the wayfinding signs had come in. The mockup sign will be ready for the DDA open house as well. The signs will need to be set by road locations to ensure the

January 15, 2010

design is sufficient. The lettering is four and a half inches tall and meets AASHTO and Road Commission regulations.

c. Entry Point Beautification / Gateway

Mr. King said he was seeking feedback from the board to follow up on comments from the previous meeting regarding reducing maintenance in the district. The existing conceptual design for at least one gateway sign looks quite nice, but incorporates tree and shrub landscaping elements that might require regular maintenance. He distributed printed copies of the existing conceptual design, as well as a photograph of the Vienna Township gateway sign, which requires little or no regular landscaping maintenance.

Mr. Davis noted that the DDA had earlier discussed maintenance cost concerns. The Vienna Township sign requires very little maintenance.

Mr. Kilby said that the Vienna Township sign was a DDA project.

Mr. Jackson asked where the proposed gateway signs might be located. Mr. King replied that there are five spots being considered right now: at Tittabawassee and Mackinaw; at Tittabawassee and Bay; at Tittabawassee and Fashion Square Boulevard; near Tittabawassee and Davis Road; and at Freeland Road and Bay Road.

Mr. Weber asked if the existing conceptual design called for an irrigation system, noting the tiers of vegetation on the picture. Mr. Eggers replied that the sign in question would involve tiered planting beds. The project actually calls for two styles of signs, one more complex than the other, which was being discussed here.

Mr. Davis asked about the cost of this overall project. Mr. King noted that initially \$75,000 had been budgeted for the total project.

Mr. Loiacano noted that he had received comments from a professional sign designer concerned with the proposed wayfinding signs. The designer had also submitted conceptual designs for another project elsewhere in Michigan.

Mr. Weber noted that he liked both designs that had been distributed. He was concerned with the visibility of the text on the initial concept.

Mr. Kilby asked if right-of-ways had been obtained for these signs. Mr. Eggers replied that a number of inquiries had been made to property owners, but with minimal or no response from some. The gas station property owner at Mackinaw and Tittabawassee seemed receptive to the idea.

Mr. Davis asked if there had been progress in working with the former Alltel building property owner. Mr. King replied that he needed to start “knocking on doors” there and at Toys ‘R’ Us.

d. Charter School

January 15, 2010

Mr. King said that the DDA had sent a letter formally requesting action on proposed improvements to the Saginaw County Road Commission, per the board's request from the previous meeting. The Road Commission is tentatively agreeable to the proposed improvements, though it needs to wait for the Michigan State Police traffic study.

Mr. Eggers said he had recently spoken with Brian Wendling at the Road Commission. At the moment, the Road Commission believes the only part of the DDA's proposed improvements that can proceed immediately would be laying a crosswalk, as the other work would need to wait for warmer weather. It would likely be better to wait and do the entire project more comprehensively at once.

Mr. Loiacano noted that there is already no parking legally allowed on Trautner Drive, regardless of whether signs are posted at the charter school or not.

4. New Business

a. Budget amendments – King

Mr. King noted that he, Mr. Abbs and Heather Thomas had sat down recently to work on a restructured and amended DDA budget. Currently the DDA's budget uses a line item format in which every single project and activity is budgeted for; they recommend moving to a functional budget, which would group those line items into four different functional categories: capital outlay; economic development; administration; and contributions to other governments. In addition, the current fiscal year's budget would be revised to accommodate the new director position for the Authority. Mr. King distributed copies of the budget amendment draft, and noted that Heather Thomas had offered to speak to the board at its next meeting to clarify the structure and process, if desired.

b. Non-Conforming Signs – King

Mr. King noted that the DDA does not govern anything regarding the Township's sign ordinance; however, the Township's new sign ordinance requires that all signs conform effective August 1, 2010, and many of the assumed non-conforming signs stand within the DDA. A "rough guess" is that there are around 45 or more non-conforming commercial signs in the Township right now, and probably 40 of these are within the DDA. Mr. King asked whether he should proactively approach or communicate with sign owners of concern.

Mr. Kilby discussed the DDA's ability to assist sign owners in complying with the ordinance. DDA financial assistance for sign compliance is generally tied to a uniform sign program in a district that includes multiple or all businesses in that area. DDAs can offer zero- or no-interest loans for these programs, for example. Another option is for owners to seek a variance to extend the useful life of their signs, for which the application must be submitted 45 days before the compliance date.

Mr. Davis expressed concern regarding communication with local businesses; namely, that all businesses are aware of the sign ordinance.

Mr. Kilby noted that Saginaw Township needs to be made aware of any actions that Kochville Township takes with the sign ordinance, since Saginaw Township and Kochville Township share the sign ordinance as part of the Cardinal Square language.

January 15, 2010

Mr. Weber expressed concerns with using DDA money toward compliance with the sign ordinance, noting that many businesses have already brought themselves into compliance with their own money.

Mr. Howell said he has owned a Kochville business for 15 years and was wondering if he is in compliance with the ordinance. He requested a letter from the Township to businesses to inform those that may not be compliant. Mr. Loiacano noted that the Township's code enforcement officer is already working on this. He said he would have Mr. Jerome send out a letter.

Mr. Davis suggested that after the Township first send out a letter to businesses, and the DDA can then send a reminder a couple of months later if it decides to offer a program to assist.

Mr. Weber suggested that this is a Township issue, not a DDA issue.

c. University District – King

Mr. King noted that this is another “not DDA” issue that the Authority may eventually become involved with if the proposal ends up moving forward. A proposed university district was brought forward to the master plan committee to consider late in 2009, which was outlined on a map as across Pierce Road from SVSU. This district, he believes, is conceived as a “live/work” area. He wanted to be proactive in figuring out the DDA's stance on the issue, in case it is raised in the future. This is an area that would potentially connect SVSU with the existing business community.

Mr. Davis said that DDA discussion took place several years ago regarding this issue. Everyone is comfortable with controlled growth. The plan that was discussed a few years ago could really enhance the area and make it beautiful. If the community is going to grow in that direction, the Township should make sure it is nice. Growth is definitely going to occur, so it might as well enhance the entire area and make Kochville a better place to live.

Mr. Loiacano said he agreed with Mr. Davis, though he didn't agree with everything in the university district proposal. He said that a researched concern is the number of problems brought on by condensing many student residences in a small area. Right now there are only three or four students living in a house, as opposed to three or four hundred living in a facility. Condensing that many students in an area could require additional police and other services. A weekend party with 12 people is much easier to break up than a party with several hundred. There is much that the Township will have to look at.

Mr. Davis agreed that from a planning perspective, the Township probably doesn't want “apartment complex after apartment complex after apartment complex.” A mixed-use type of development can allow many enhancements not just to that area near the college, but to the entire community.

Mr. Howell commented that Pierce Road is eventually going to be much busier than it currently is. It's important to be visionary in working with that area because of the student traffic there. Because of the university's presence, property owners will want to build in that area, and it's important for the Township to plan with a vision to guide this future development.

January 15, 2010

Mr. Weber said he assumed that the Township was collecting feedback from nearby citizens and land owners in the area. Mr. Loiacano replied that while some such as Jon Howell attend the master plan committee meetings, few or no people bring comments to that group.

Mr. Davis agreed that everyone needs to work together. The DDA needs to be on the same page as the Township and vice versa. Developers need to be familiar with what the Township's vision is for that area. It's important to put the best interests of the Township first.

Mr. Jackson stated that the university district item was brought up at the master plan committee, which he sits on. That committee works on crafting the long-term plan for the Township. The master plan committee decided that it is the planning commission's duty to consider the university district proposal, and they will undoubtedly eventually take the issue up. The Township has experienced a number of problems with the mixed use district that led to the recall of Township officials and many other troubles. The planning commission is treading very lightly and is looking for input from all affected individuals.

Mr. Howell commented that the Township needs to take care of the students in the area. There needs to be a way to create a campus community area to prevent a number of problems. He is the father of two college students and knows how SVSU has grown. The community needs to open our eyes as to how to take care of this area.

Mr. Jackson said that the master plan committee is there to create a forward-looking vision that will include this area. Because the infrastructure to support development is being extended to this area, the master plan committee is looking at this area.

Mr. LaDouce said it is very important for the master plan committee to find the areas that the community expects to see growth in and work with these.

Mr. Jackson said that something that he and others are concerned with is whether building a store near SVSU might cause an existing store in the DDA to fail. He wonders if a store that only attracts people for nine months out of the year will be able to survive. He feels that putting a big district near SVSU could kill the existing business district.

Judy Fath Jackson commented that the master plan decided it couldn't include in the master plan a district for which there is no existing language for from the planning commission. The planning commission needs to first approve zoning language which can then be included in the master plan.

Mr. Davis asked who was working on this language. Mrs. Jackson replied that the planning commission is working on this.

- d. Sub-committee Meetings – None
- e. Calendar

Mr. King said that he had planned on the DDA continuing to meet the third Friday of every month in 2010, but needed DDA board approval for this.

January 15, 2010

Mr. Weber noted that there are times where the board knows a quorum won't be present and that the meeting needs to be rescheduled.

Mr. Kilby said that the DDA should schedule regular meetings and can then reschedule as needed.

- Moved by Weber, second by Basil to approve the 2010 Kochville Township DDA meetings calendar with regular meetings the third Friday of every month at 8:30 a.m. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Planning Commission Report – Don Jackson

Mr. Jackson said the planning commission has received a request from a Township resident to install a wind energy system. The commission is working on generating a wind energy ordinance to accommodate this and other requests. Currently there is a moratorium on such systems in Kochville Township. He didn't realize that Kochville shared a sign ordinance with Saginaw Township, but this is something the planning commission will need to consider and address.

6. Township Supervisor's Report – Supervisor Loiacano(10 min)

Mr. Loiacano said that the Township had held an end-of-the-year meeting to make some department changes. The Township's closure policy during bad weather now follows that of Saginaw County. The Township Board of Trustees will now be meeting the fourth Tuesday of every month. Work on the interceptor sewer has begun on Venoy Road.

7. Director's Report(5 min)

Mr. King noted that the SVSU marketing program had begun work on the DDA's market study. The DDA needs data to work with in attracting businesses to the community, which this study will help with. Based on what he has heard at seminars and events, the DDA is working on important tasks related to "looking inward" right now, such as promoting available vacant storefronts. The DDA's open house event was set for January 21, 2010.

Mr. Davis asked if the Wal-Mart bus stop is done yet. Mr. King replied that all work is complete at the site except for the cart corral, which he assumes will be done when the weather warms.

8. Board Member Comments (15-20 min)

9. Other Business

a. Payment of the Regular Bills(5 min)

Mr. King noted that as of January the DDA was on a twice-monthly bill paying cycle. He will begin sending check detail lists to the board after both cycles.

- Motion by Basil, second by Weber, to pay the regular bills. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (See Attached Itemized Report)

b. **NEXT BOARD MEETING – Friday, February 19, 2010 at 8:30 a.m.**

January 15, 2010

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Steve King

Lyle Davis, Jr. – Chairman

Stephen M. King - Director