

**Meeting Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors
May 20, 2008
Cascade Library Wisner Center
2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE**

ATTENDEES: Ron Clark, David Huhn, Mike Julien, Kirt Ojala, Dan Wallace

Absences: Ray James (excused), Julie Johnson (excused), Diana Kingsland, Joann Noto (excused)

Others Attending: Members Tom McDonald and Brian Logue from the Planning Commission; Assistant to the Manager Sandra Otey; Planning Director Peterson; Admin. Assistant Lisa Hern.

Guests: None.

ARTICLE 1: Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Huhn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 2: Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Huhn requested a motion of approval of the May 20, 2008 DDA Agenda. No revisions, corrections to the agenda. The agenda of the May 20, 2008 was approved as submitted.

ARTICLE 3: Approval of the Minutes of March 18, 2008

Chairman Clark requested a motion of approval of the March 18, 2008 minutes.

Member Julien motioned for approval of the minutes as presented, supported by Member Clark.

All in favor of the March 18, 2008 DDA Minutes as presented; none opposed. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 4: Presentation and Discussion of the Centennial Park Master Plan.

Assistant to the Manager Otey said the Centennial Park Land Use and Design Plan has wrapped up and will be presented by the consultant, Beckett & Raeder along with engineers from Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber (FTCH). The Cascade Township Planning Commission and Centennial Park Business Association have been invited to tonight's meeting to sit in on the presentation of the plan. The Business Association members have been instrumental in the development of this plan and support its adoption.

As the DDA is aware, the plan was developed at the request of the Centennial Park Business Association. They asked the Township for help in funding the plan (50/50 split) and the Township created a Special Assessment District to allow the business association to pay for their portion of the plan.

The plan was put together in order to establish a clear and regulated direction for new development and renovations within the business portion of Centennial Park.

Beckett & Raeder will present the final draft of the plan this evening. This plan is strictly for the business portion of Centennial Park, not the entire DDA District as a whole. If this plan is approved by the Township Board the DDA, the Township and Business Association will have a hand in implementing this plan. The DDA will be asked to amend their Development Plan in order to incorporate some of the Centennial Park study into their existing plan. The Township will begin work on the development of an overlay zoning district for the business portion of the park and funding portions of the plan will involve the Business Association. In short, all three (3) groups will need to work together on the implementation and funding of this plan.

Once recommended by the DDA, the plan will be presented to the Township Board for approval. Staff recommends that the DDA forward a favorable recommendation of the plan to the Township Board.

Representatives from Beckett & Rader and FTCH presented their presentation noting the areas of the plan: History, New Direction, Process and Preamble.

Analysis of the properties has been determined categorizing the properties into three (3) categories: OK, Needs Help, Help. Traffic counts have been reviewed along with the parking ratio and vacancy rates studied.

The Master Plan shows boulevard entrances into the park off of 28th Street. The plan addresses pedestrian usage and pathways along with open space and community focal points.

Signage identity has been addressed and the association would like cohesive signage at 28th Street and Kraft Avenue.

Lawn terraces and street trees have been studied along with sidewalks and pathways for multi-use.

The streets inside the park would be narrowed to help encourage pedestrian traffic and to slow vehicle traffic. The park's interior would have lower lighting levels.

The park would have crisp landscaped treatments along the exterior signage and landmark corners. Examples were provided of the park's interior furnishings such as benches, tables, chairs, etc.

Currently 58% of the park could use some improvements that include technology needs, green standards and amenities. Examples were provided of facade enhancements and building renovations

A storm water analysis would need to be done for any new developments within the park.

The Centennial Park Business Association believes the priorities for this project is to have the DDA Development Plan amended; Township Zoning Ordinance to include the overlay district of Centennial Park; Building requirements/standards; Site requirements/standards; and establish a Centennial Park Review Board.

Chairman Huhn asked if the Business Association is looking for advisement with the plan and help manage the projects. FTCH's representative said the business association is looking to the DDA to help fund some of their projects. The business association realizes that the DDA has a time line project plan and they are looking to see if the DDA can realign some of their projects in accordance with the business park and their progress.

Member Clark asked if this project has been cohesive between the business owners and the developers and FTCH's representative said the owners have been very cohesive in developing the plan and is impressed with the owners.

Business owner, George Wanty said that this has been a constructive process and is bringing the owners together. Beckett & Raeder have been very cooperative along with the Township's Staff. It is a new beginning for the park and acknowledged that the DDA cannot solely fund the project.

Chairman Huhn asked if all the owners have been cohesive since some have vacant properties, some are investors, etc. The consultants noted that they have an active mix of investors and owners involved in the process. Not everyone agrees on everything but all want improvements made to the park.

Chairman Huhn asked if the project would be funded through the Township's budget or the DDA and Assistant to the Manager Otey said that it could be a combination of funds from the DDA budget. Planning Director Peterson also noted there might be a potential of receiving additional funds through other governmental entities such as Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) for the roads. Member Julien noted that KCRC might not financially support road repair and does not believe the Township Board would provide any funding. Funding might be provided through a DDA Tax Assessment or an additional tax to the properties but he cannot think of any other funding avenues. Member Julien suggested the business association develop a compromise of projects between the nice-to-have and the need-to-have.

Chairman Huhn noted that the DDA should reconsider its budgeted projects involving Centennial Park, noting that in 2013 and 2014, the DDA has new

street lights projected and he believes the park would like to have the new lights before 2013.

Mr. Dan Wiersma, business owner of 2900 Charlevoix Drive, said he is excited about the plan and encouraged the DDA to leave all financing options open.

Member Julien noted that Township improvements such as paths and parks have been done through taxes and community support. This project is different due to being an extensive project and if the project were to be passed, it would be difficult to finance. Member Julien noted that if the plan is recommended to the Township Board, Staff's cover letter to the board should include information regarding project financing.

Member Clark asked if the DDA's role for now is to approve the concept and review priorities of its upcoming business park projects and Assistant to the Manager Otey said that is correct.

Member Julien asked if it is time for the DDA to review their most recent DDA Master Plan since it is dated back to 2004. This plan for Centennial Park has some great things included in it that should be incorporated into the DDA's Master Plan.

Member Julien also supported reviewing the DDA's financial priorities prior to the plan being presented to the Township Board.

Member Ojala questioned if the DDA's priorities were needed for the concept approval and Member Clark said it would strengthen the DDA's position of support to the Township Board. Member Julien asked Staff to work with the Business Association to develop a list of priorities otherwise it is a \$9-million project without any financial support.

Planning Director Peterson asked if the DDA was comfortable with the general concept of the plan and Chairman Huhn said he is, personally, comfortable with the concept but would like to see some financial details.

Member Ojala asked if the Business Association is to develop its set of priorities first and the representative from Beckett & Raeder said he understands the project's budget is high, but they are seeking the DDA's support with the Business Association in establishing priorities.

Member Clark asked how much the DDA is planning on spending in the upcoming years in the Business Park and Member Julien noted approximately \$10-million by 2024.

Member Julien motioned for a favorable recommendation to the Township Board of the Centennial Park Master Plan, seconded by

Member Ojala. Chairman Huhn called the motion to question will all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Member Julien encouraged the business association members to continue working with Staff. He also advised Staff to call a special meeting(s) of the DDA if needed to review its budget.

Chairman Huhn asked if any of the Planning Commission members had any comments regarding the project.

Tom McDonald, Planning Commission Chairman, said that he agrees with identifying the project's priorities and the financial sourcing. The project has some beautiful renovations.

Brian Logue, Planning Commission, said the project looks wonderful and has great value and concept.

ARTICLE 5: Any Other Business

There was no other business.

ARTICLE 6: Adjournment

Chairman Huhn requested a motion for adjournment. At 8:26 p.m. Member Clark motioned for adjournment, supported by Member Wallace.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary

Approved as to form by:

Sandra Otey, Assistant to the Manager