

**MEETING MINUTES**

Cascade Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors  
Tuesday, May 21, 2013  
5:30 P.M.  
Cascade Library - Wisner Center  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1. Call the Meeting to Order**

Chairman Huhn called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.  
Members Present: Rob Beahan, David Huhn, Tom McDonald, Joann Noto, Kurt Ojala, Jennifer Puplava, Paula Rowland, Rick Siegle  
Members Absent: Diana Kingsland  
Others Present: Assistant to the Manager Sandra Korhorn

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the Agenda**

**Motion was made by Member Ojala to approve the Agenda. Support by Member Beahan. Motion carried, 7-0.**

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2013 Meeting**

**Motion was made by Member McDonald to approve the Minutes. Support by Member Siegle. Motion carried, 7-0.**

**ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.**

No visitors present.

**ARTICLE 5. Presentation and discussion of projects from the Community Enhancement Committee meeting.**

Pat Cornelisse presented the Gateway Project. Cascade Road/Thornapple River/Tassell Park is the area we have been asked to consider for a Gateway Entry. We looked at a museum park, a bike path and crosswalks. We looked at lights on the bridge, an island and crosswalks. Tim Haagsma from Kent County looked at our plans for the bridge, which belongs to Kent County and we are able to do a gateway structure behind the guardrails. Lights were also approved.

Tim measured for a curb and gutter on Thornapple River by Peace Street and an 8 ft. path is possible as long as we did not touch the current gutter that is in place by the museum.

A Painted or stamped concrete crosswalk along Thornapple River was discussed. At this point we feel a painted crosswalk would be more economical and we will evaluate it down the road and possibly change it to stamped concrete in the future.

In looking at the area by the bridge abutment for a gateway structure, the drive is wider than is necessary and exceeds all requirements. We could claim this area as a public space and incorporate the gateway structure with the bridge. Large columns with a wave treatment overhead which will allude to the river and mimics the design that is already on the dock and within the township. Floodlights will be used to up-light the structure. Landscaping will be included in the project.

The area by the Gathering place is a difficult area to navigate. Crosswalks would help as would a re-design of the sidewalk that is currently in place.

The Gateway project by the museum has a parking space that may have to be reclaimed to get a bike path in. This path would connect to the one that is already in place. Landscaping would be incorporated in keeping with the plants that are already in place. Seating would be incorporated that would encourage interaction with the space by using different types of seating options. Sound would be an option to make it more interactive. Examples would be Thunder drums, vertical pipes, etc. Temporary sculptures could be rotated to add interest and to encourage interaction with the art community. The children's portion will be as far from the roadway as possible for safety reasons.

Concern for the tree lighting ceremony was addressed by offering several options. Options included the following: planting a smaller tree, lighting the museum structure itself, a small tree on the porch, or using sculpture's instead of live trees.

Member Noto arrived.

Member McDonald stated that he was in favor of all the different pieces that were presented. Several of these areas need updating and the crosswalks will improve the sight line and increase safety. All projects will be an asset to the DDA.

Member Puplava stated that the crosswalks should be addressed first for safety reasons. Sandra, Assistant to the Manager, stated that the crosswalk project would start this spring as per Tom Haagsma.

Members questioned whether it was possible to put a No Turn on Red sign at the intersection of Cascade and Thornapple River. This is not an option as per Kent County Road Commission.

Chairman Huhn requested a motion to move forward on the project to enable the collection of cost estimates on the project. Motion was made by Member McDonald to move forward with these plans as they stand to get cost estimates. Support by Member Siegle. Motion carried 8-0.

**ARTICLE 6. Presentation and discussion of Thornapple Center**

Tom Tooley presented the different concepts that have been created for re-developing the location. We are looking for a way to increase pedestrian traffic and auto traffic in the area. We decided a public structure was needed to make the location a destination to visit. He presented a public structure that can be used as a farmers market in the summer and an ice rink in the winter. Improvements would be made at the entrance in keeping with the Gateway project to make it easier and safer for pedestrian traffic. A fountain with a roundabout is also an option.

The concept is favorable, however, the Township needs to look into the management of the public space and explore the options and the financial outlays that would be required to maintain the public areas.

The DDA Board requested more site information and a solid plan regarding tenants, maintenance, and a time-line for the project.

**ARTICLE 7. Discuss the Complete Streets RFP**

Assistant to the Manager Korhorn presented. Six RFP's were sent out, we received two back from Progressive and the Greenway Collaborative. We had a committee made up of staff members, DDA members, planning commission members, and township board members that reviewed the proposals. The majority of the committee felt that Progressive was the better proposal. They seemed to understand the scope of the work. We are looking for a recommendation from the DDA to move forward on this project to the Township Board. The plan should be in place in a three month time frame. The cost will be split between the Planning Department and the DDA.

**Chairman Huhn requested a motion to approve the plan. Motion was made by Member McDonald to recommend the project move forward to the Board. Support by Member Siegle. Motion carried 8-0.**

**ARTICLE 8. Discuss Commercial Rehabilitation Act**

Township Manager, Ben Swayze, presented the proposal. Based on the feedback from the previous meeting we created a draft policy. Highlights of the changes are more strategic goals, more public support, and planning documents that show that the Rehabilitation Project supports the overall vision of the district as outlined in Cascade Township Planning documents.

In the application guidelines, I did increase the value of the outdoor rehab project to \$150,000 or more. I did change the commercial rehabilitation tax abatement review committee. The review committee would consist of the Township Manager, Assistant to

the Manager, an Assessor, and Township Board member (appointed by the Supervisor) as well as 2 Board members from the DDA. The purpose of the review committee would be to review the applications and compare them to our intended purpose. The Board would ultimately make a recommendation as to how long the tax abatement should occur – from denial to up to ten years. It would be up to the Township Board to determine the length of the abatement. The state tax commission makes the final approval for the tax abatement. The first step is to set up the Commercial Rehabilitation District and then projects can be decided on a project by project basis.

**Chairman Huhn requested a motion to approve the plan. Motion was made by Member McDonald to approve the guidelines for the Commercial Rehabilitation Act for the whole DDA and recommend the project move forward to the Board. Support by Member Siegle. Motion carried 8-0.**

**ARTICLE 9. Any Other Business**

Paula Rowland presented on behalf of the Friends of the Library, a request for an informational electronic sign at the corner of Jacksmith and Cascade Road. The Friends of the Library would share in the cost of the sign with the DDA and the Township.

Korhorn presented the Centennial Park Streetlight issues. Some of the lights are currently not working due to water getting into the fixtures. The Vendor is looking into the problem.

Member Noto asked if was possible to mow the property at the library could be mowed more often and dandelions need to be addressed.

**ARTICLE 10. Adjournment**

**Member Beahan made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Support by Member McDonald. Motion carried, 8-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Kingsland, Secretary

Ann Seykora, Planning Administrative Assistant