

Meeting Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors
January 19, 2010
7:00 p.m.
Cascade Library Wisner Center
2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE

ATTENDEES: Rob Beahan, David Huhn, Diana Kingsland, Tom McDonald , Kirt Ojala, Rick Siegel.

Absences: Ron Clark (excused), Julie Johnson (unexcused), Joann Noto (excused).

Others Attending: Assistant to the Manager Sandra Otey, Tim Haagsma from Kent County Road Commission (KCRC), Tony Kultz from Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber (FTCH) and Recording Secretary Lisa Hern

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 January 19, 2010 DDA Agenda. No revisions, corrections to the agenda and Member Beahan motioned to accept the minutes as presented, supported by Member Siegel. The agenda of the January 19, 2010 was approved as submitted.

Chairman Huhn welcomed new DDA Board Member, Tom McDonald, who is very active within the Township. Member McDonald has served on the Planning Commission, Parks Committee and assisted with the Master Plan.

ARTICLE 3: Approval of the Minutes of November 17, 2009 Meeting.

Chairman Huhn requested a motion of approval of the November 17, 2009 minutes.

Member Ojala motioned for approval of the minutes as presented, supported by Member Beahan. All in favor of the November 17, 2009 DDA Minutes as presented; none opposed. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 4: Update of the 2010 Streetscape Project – Sidewalk through I-96 Interchange.

Assistant to the Manager Otey said that this project was approved by the Township Board at their December 2009 Meeting. With that, FTC&H is continuing their work on the project.

FTC&H is currently working on the structural design of the wall under I-96 and is completed. MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation) will review the design.

MDOT is moving forward with their signal design on the ramps at 28th Street and I-96. The Township has been asking them about this since September and they are finally moving forward after working things out in Lansing and with the City of Grand Rapids, who maintains the signals.

This item will require some coordination but MDOT has what they need from the Township for approximately a month, and at least is moving forward again. MDOT will have the City of Grand Rapids construct and modernize the signals. They will incorporate the pedestrian signals and pushbuttons in their plan from the sidewalk locations and elevations the Township provided.

There will be some cost sharing with the Township on the pedestrian signals since these items would not have been needed if the Township were not constructing the sidewalk. The Township will work with MDOT to figure out an equitable share on these items.

As of right now, the Township plans to put this out to bid in early March and receive bids in early April with the hope that it would go before the Township Board at the April 14, 2010 Meeting for contract approval. This requires that the Township get reviews and permits to MDOT and the Road Commission in the next week so they can review. If the Township can maintain this schedule, the contractor could start work in late April or early May.

Tony Kuhtz from FTC&H is present tonight with a couple of the LED light fixtures for your review. The LED fixtures will be installed west of the interchange.

Mr. Kuhtz showed the Board two (2) examples of the shoebox LED lighting. He noted that LED lights love cold weather since the heat needs to be pulled away from the circuit board. He also noted that LED lights do not just fail suddenly they degrade over time.

Both of the examples shown tonight have five-year warranty, some come with two (2) or three (3) year warranties.

He also noted that there is not one (1) lamp in the fixture and showed the multiple LED bars. He noted the BETA design has three (3) light bars that can be replaced.

There are not any standards for LED and the luminae keep changing, currently they are 100 luminae per watt. In fifteen (15) to twenty (20) years down the road, the Township could have to replace the fixture or light bars by then and possibly the entire fixture.

LED's are very directional and need to spread the light out and do so with a lens; some fixtures use reflectors.

Member Beahan asked if rain or snow effects the BETA design when the service door is opened and Mr. Kuhtz said no.

Member Ojala asked what is the number of luminaires per each sample design being shown and what are the costs? Mr. Kuhtz noted that the one example is too large for the Township's needs and can be downscaled. He also said that his supervisor noted that the new LED's might be improved by bid time for the job and any examples shown tonight could change.

Mr. Kuhtz noted that the LED's are a bit more expensive but they run on 1/3 less energy and offsets the cost of the fixtures but he does not have the costs with him this evening.

He noted that Consumers Energy would meter the lights separately.

Member Ojala asked if the fixture had more light bars would it be more expensive and Mr. Kuhtz said not necessarily and he is anxious to see what new lighting might become available when it comes time for the bids.

Member Kingsland asked if the spacing would remain the same and Assistant to the Manager Otey said the lights would be 150-feet apart and go as far down as Thornhills Dr.

Member Beahan said he favors the LED lighting.

Mr. Kuhtz noted that the school on Kraft Avenue and Leffingwell have the BETA lighting fixture installed if the Board wanted to see them.

Chairman Huhn said that the smaller fixture that is one of the examples seems sufficient, as the fixtures would sit behind the sidewalk.

Member Siegel asked if LED lighting would be placed on the pedestrian sidewalk under the highway and Mr. Kuhtz said they will be installed as wall-pole mounts and are not shown on the plans.

The Board openly discussed the lighting and would like to review examples of fixtures that are comparable and review costs.

ARTICLE 5: Discussion of Roundabout.

Assistant to the Manager Otey said the KCRC Board gave the Township the green light to continue to pursue the roundabout project, however, does not mean the project is a 'done deal'.

At the November Meeting, the Board began a discussion on the roundabout and how to introduce the idea to business owners and Staff would like to continue this discussion.

Tim Haagsma from KCRC is present tonight to discuss his experience with roundabouts and to answer any questions of the Board.

Assistant to the Manager Otey distributed conceptual drawings to the Board.

Mr. Haagsma said that Kent County has one roundabout in Kent City and another on M-37 and M-46 that the State installed last Fall. Oakland County has several of them and this one is similar to the largest one in Michigan that is

in Oakland County. Cascade Township's is proposing a roundabout with two (2) lanes for peeling off. This design would handle the 2030 traffic projections showing growth in the area.

Mr. Haagsma said that he has spoken with the Oakland County Road Commission and they are happy with the roundabout and are moving forward with installing others in their county.

Member Siegel said that he has reviewed studies of hybrids being a potential hazard for pedestrians crossing a roundabout since hybrids are very quiet. Mr. Haagsma said that there is a concern regarding pedestrians hearing hybrids and are being reviewed. There is a H.A.W.K. system that does stop the pedestrians when vehicles are in the roundabout.

Member Siegel asked if the school bus stops on Cascade Road have been accounted for in the roundabout study? Mr. Haagsma said that the school buss traffic has not been reviewed; the study was done on if a roundabout would work in that location.

Member Siegel noted that there are two lanes of traffic coming from four directions, this will not reduce the number of accidents at that intersection. Mr. Haagsma said that the number of accidents might not be reduced but the severity of the accidents and number of casualties should be greatly reduced. That intersection has one of the highest rates in crashes in the County and has already been redesigned and new signals added.

Member Ojala asked what if the projected 2030 report underestimates the growth rate and Mr. Haagsma noted that the roundabout would still slow traffic and an additional lane could be added to the north and south.

Member Siegel asked about the signage for the roundabout, some have too many directional signs that are distracting. Mr. Haagsma said the signage would be kept to a minimum with signage at the peel-offs and one-way signage. A signage plan can be submitted to the Township for their review.

Mr. Haagsma also noted that if the intersection is left in its current state, the intersection would reach its capacity to handle growth quicker. The roundabout has capacity beyond 2030.

Member Siegel asked how big the roundabout signs would be and Mr. Haagsma said they have 36-inch by 36-inch warning signs the driver is entering the roundabout. The lane assignments are 48 by 30 and there will be signs farther way from the intersection, approximately 150-200 Feet from the roundabout. The main thing is not to block the driveway vision.

Member McDonald noted that he has experienced European roundabouts and Colorado's. He said that the pedestrian crossing has splitter islands that he and his son have used. The biggest issue is cars watching for the pedestrians and bicycles.

Member Beahan asked if snow removal would be an issue and Mr. Haagsma said that roundabouts usually have the snow melted with chemicals. Chairman

Huhn asked if heaters could be installed and Mr. Haagsma suggested removing the snow with chemicals as it works the best.

Member Siegel said he is concerned regarding the pedestrian traffic and the school bus traffic flow standpoint and would like to see consideration used in its placement. He asked if there would be a boulevard by the roundabout and Assistant to the Manager Otey said there would be medians installed.

Member Beahan supported the roundabout as it will greatly slow the traffic down and provide a sense of the 'village feel' to the intersection.

Member Kingsland said she is in support of the roundabout and believes the pedestrians will be safer than they currently are when crossing the intersection.

Member McDonald and Member Ojala also supported the roundabout and Chairman Huhn believes it is a great plan.

Assistant to the Manager Otey said the Township would like to invite the business owners to meetings first inviting the business owners along 28th Street and Cascade Road. A second meeting or open house could be held that would invite the public.

Member Kingsland said that her business is out of the loop in the area but encouraged staff to invite the business owners that surround hers as well.

Member Ojala noted that the less formal the meeting is the better.

Member McDonald supported holding the meeting for the business owners first and then educating the public and the Township needs to promote the benefits.

Chairman Huhn noted that Mr. Haagsma should be present for both meetings to answer questions and share experiences.

Member Siegel said the more he hears about roundabouts, the more he supports the project. In doing his research, he found that people were angry over the spending for installing a roundabout and the taxpayer's dollars going towards the project. The Township needs to educate the public that this is being done with government funds and Chairman Huhn said that the Township should explain the purpose of the DDA to the community.

Assistant to the Manager Otey said that Staff would like to meet with Independent Bank and Walgreen's first and invite them to come to the Township Offices prior to any other meetings. These two (2) businesses will be impacted the most due to their driveways. Staff would like to meet with them in the next two (2) weeks. Staff is targeting the business owners meeting in late February and a public meeting in March. Member Siegel suggested that Green Leaf be invited to the Township Office as well.

Member Beahan suggested holding the meetings between 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Member Siegel also noted that there would be no left turn into the bank based on the drawing. Mr. Haagsma said that can be changed and entry can be provided.

ARTICLE 6. Election of Officers

Assistant to the Manager Otey said that it is time to elect the DDA Officers for 2010. The Board needs to vote on the following positions:

Chair

Vice Chair

Secretary

Currently David Huhn serves as Chairman, Ron Clark as the Vice Chair and Diana Kingsland as the Secretary.

Member Beahan motioned to retain the current DDA Officers for 2010, supported by Member Siegel. All in favor with none opposed. Motion carried.

Assistant to the Manger Otey asked the Board to update their contact information or sign-off on the roster that was being distributed. She would make the updates and distribute the roster once the changes have been received.

ARTICLE 7. Adjournment

Chairman Huhn requested a motion for adjournment. At 8:15 p.m. Member Ojala motioned for adjournment, supported by Member Kingsland. All in favor with none opposed, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary

Approved as to form by:
Sandra Otey, Assistant to the Manager