



**CANTON TOWNSHIP  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Minutes of the  
February 17, 2021 Meeting**

The meeting was held via videoconference due to Covid-19. It was called to order at 8:01 A.M. by Chair Person, Bart Patterson

**Present:** Steven Brock, Dianne Cojei, Laura Giove, Andy Hargreaves, Anne Marie Graham-Hudak, Seth Kleinglass, Kurt Olson, Bart Patterson, Wedad Suleiman, Mark Waldbauer, Janet Volante

**Absent:** N/A

**Staff:** Amy Hamilton, Kerri Romanko

**Guests:** Kim Rivera of New Moon Visions

**ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

MOTION: by Mark Waldbauer, supported by Dianne Cojei, to accept the agenda.

AYES: All present

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 20, 2021 MINUTES**

Minutes approved with requested changes to the Coordinator's Report discussion.

MOTION: by Mark Waldbauer, supported by Dianne Cojei, to approve the January 20, 2021 meeting minutes.

AYES: All present

**CITIZENS' NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

NONE

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Mark Walbauer asked about a check to DTE that had not cleared yet. He was concerned about late fees being applied. Amy Hamilton said that government entities don't get charged late fees. She said sometimes the payment gets to them after the next bill is issued so it will still reflect as unpaid. Amy assured the board that we do not have any unpaid bills to DTE. Seth Kleinglass commented that if the bills are mailed in there may be a delay since the Post Office is behind due to Covid.

MOTION: by Mark Waldbauer, supported by Dianne Cojei, to accept payment of bills.

AYES: All present

**DISCUSSION: DDA 2021 GOALS**

Amy Hamilton opened the conversation to discuss the DDA's goals for 2021. She felt that helping the businesses' recover from the effects of the pandemic should be a priority. Since marketing is a big part of that, she introduced Kim Rivera of New Moon Visions to recap things the DDA has been doing to help and to go over some ideas for the future.

Kim Rivera said that New Moon has been reaching out to each business so they can keep our website updated with services individual businesses are offering, since this is everchanging during the pandemic. They also offered businesses to advertise coupons on the ShopCanton mobile app at not charge if they chose to do so.

Another idea that New Moon had was to do a digital version of the ShopCanton Guide, allowing every business to place an ad for free. The only cost to the DDA would be putting it together. Bart Patterson asked what the cost and timeframe would be for something like that. Kim said it would be the same timeframe as the Guide. To develop it, put it together and do the outreach would be \$25,000, the same as before. This is already in the marketing plan, but we wouldn't have the additional printing, publishing and mailing fees.

Kim Rivera said they are looking at this idea as a type of Covid relief plan for the DDA businesses.

Seth Kleinglass said that he hasn't been a fan of the app or digital ads because he doesn't believe it has the reach we think it does. He feels that people often go right to Google and feels that \$25,000 is a lot of money to get what we want. Seth went on to say, on the other hand, we aren't spending anything else and we've already earmarked money for this. Maybe we try it and see how it works.

Seth Kleinglass also asked if the ads in the digital Guide could be revisited monthly so they can be updated or modified. Kim said yes, but that is where a lot of the outreach work comes in. They would have to reach out regularly to get updates because the businesses don't always reach out to them.

Amy Hamilton said that we currently budget about \$55,000 for the ShopCanton Guide, \$25,000 of this being the outreach, creating the ads and putting it together. The rest is used for printing, sorting and mailing. She said we typically count on \$25,000 in revenue to offset those costs. If we went this route we would still be under what we typically budget for the Guide.

Bart Patterson asked if we could also create a series of videos to teach the merchants how to promote themselves. For instance, how they can promote their business on Facebook, Instagram, Google etc. as some of them don't know how. Bart said this could also get them to jump on the bandwagon of everything we are doing digitally.

Seth Kleinglass asked if everything went well and all business actively participated could there be an overload of work for New Moon making the bill for the DDA higher. Kim Rivera said based on previous experience she doesn't think they would be bombarded. Some businesses have to check with corporate before placing ads and have to get back with them which provides some balance in the process. But if it did happen, they would make it work.

Mark Walbauer asked if there was connection between the app and the ShopCanton website. Kim Rivera said yes, there is a link to the social media channels from the app as well.

Andy Hargreaves said, speaking for a lot of small business owners, we don't have the wherewithal or knowledge about how to make our own ads. He feels the biggest value to them would be having you share tips, tricks or how-to instructionals so we can also help ourselves.

Kim Rivera said someone in the group, or from her team, could put together a short video or we could share some excellent how-to videos that are already out there. Amy Hamilton suggested adding a resource page to the website that the businesses could log into if they wanted.

Kim said if we want to do the digital ShopCanton Guide she would have to know now as they are already behind in getting the ads. They usually begin that part in January. The board collectively agreed to move forward with the digital ShopCanton Guide containing complimentary ads for the merchants.

Steve Brock wanted to recap exactly how this will roll out. First, New Moon will reach out to each business to offer a free ad in the digital ShopCanton Guide. Then, we will introduce some kind of self-help training material so they can promote their own businesses. Kim Rivera said yes.

Amy Hamilton also noted, in regards to the DDA's 2021 goals, we are moving forward with the paving of Brookline, Elmhurst and Marlowe. The permits have been pulled and approved, the bidding will start within a couple of weeks.

MOTION: by Mark Waldbauer, supported by Bart Patterson, to move forward with digital marketing.

AYES: All present

### **DISCUSSION: FORD ROAD BOULEVARD**

Amy Hamilton said she sent the board a link to MDOT's February 2<sup>nd</sup> update meeting. They gave an overview targeting the Haggerty Road portion to start next year and the Ford Road portion starting in 2023. However, Amy said, there are sixty-one parcels of land that need to be acquired in the right-of-way before they can move forward with the boulevard. The MDOT representative that is leading that portion of the project said it will take at least two years to acquire it, although it is an optimistic estimate and realistically it could be three years. MDOT said these dates are based on everything running smoothly.

Amy said the board needs to start thinking about boulevard aesthetics such as the lighting, irrigation, sidewalk, walls and landscaping. The funding to replace all of that is coming from the DDA, Canton Township and MDOT. The decisions on how it will look will be a collaborative effort between these three entities with MDOT having the final say. Amy said it is a good idea for the DDA to start the discussion about what we want it to look like. She feels the main focus now should be the lighting. The DDA previously decided replace the current poles with an LED stock pole. Amy asked if the board would be opposed to a black or bronze colored pole because sticking with green customizes them and those are more expensive and time consuming to replace.

Mark Waldbauer suggested the bronze type of pole, he believes is off-the-shelf. He said they have them at Bickford of Canton Senior Living. Other members that have seen them said they are very aesthetically pleasing and not complicated. Amy Hamilton said she has requested information on various standard poles and different lighting options for the DDA to consider.

Mark Waldbauer suggested glass fixtures since the polycarbonates fog up before too long. Bart Patterson said he isn't thinking of a color or type, he is more concerned about the technology and availability. Bart also asked if there is a way to recoup some of the money from our current poles whether it be selling them to another municipality or scrapping the metal. Amy Hamilton pointed out that with a mass construction project like this there will be a cost involved for removing them carefully, preserving them and storing them. There may not be a return on that investment.

Seth Kleinglass asked if it might be a good time to revisit the idea of DTE taking over the whole lighting system. Amy Hamilton recapped our previous interactions with DTE in regards to that for the new members of the board.

Board members also discussed plantings and walls at intersections and easy to maintain grass along other areas.

Amy Hamilton said we may have to forgo the art program during construction as well. She is going to find out what the policy is and whether or not we might be able to skip a year or two during construction. Another option would be to see if we could move the art to other areas of the DDA that won't be disturbed during construction.

### **DDA COORDINATOR'S REPORT – March 12, 2021**

- **Public Art Jury** – The 2021-2022 selections have been made! I've attached a flyer of the new pieces along with their locations to this report. Thank you all for participating!
- **Open signs** – Now that the closures have been lifted, I've asked Frank's Landscaping to collect the "we're open" signs. We are going to store these for future use.
- **Fall Shred Event** – We have received a lot of calls asking about the next shred event. Now that the vaccine is starting to become more available, is the board comfortable with planning one for the fall?
- **Brookline, Elmhurst and Marlowe** – Bids are open! They open on March 11 with a closer date of March 25. Once the bids have been submitted, I will share them with the board.
- **New Business Update** – First the sad news, as I'm sure you've heard, JC Penney and Love's Furniture are both closing. Now some good news, French Toast Bistro is going into former Scrambler Marie's, Culver's is moving forward in Meijer's parking lot, Chik-Fil-A is looking to build next to Buffalo Wild Wing and there is talk of a hotel project on Lilley just north of Ford.

### **ADDITIONAL CITIZENS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

N/A

### **ADJOURN**

MEETING CALLED TO ADJOURN at 9:28 A.M.