

MINUTES

Allen Park Downtown Development Authority

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, May 27, 2021

6:30 p.m.

The Allen Park Downtown Development Authority met in regular session on Thursday, May 27, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairperson Frank called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed new director Jeff Holden.
2. **ROLL CALL** Vice-chair Riviera called the roll. A quorum was present.

Present:	Fred Frank	Chairperson	Allen Park
	Jeff Holden	Director	Canton
	Gail McLeod	Mayor	Allen Park
	Kurt Mazag	Director	Allen Park
	Ron Mistor	Treasurer	Allen Park
	Cynthia Riviera	Vice chair/Secretary	Allen Park
	Dan Smith	Director	Allen Park
	Tom Strobl	Director	Bloomfield Hills
	Pete Zingas	Director	Detroit

Excused:	Tracy Fressel	Director
	Tom Gunderson	Director

Others Present:	Trevor Daniel	DDA Legal Counsel
	Jennifer Kibby	DDA Executive Director

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by K. Mazag, supported by R. Mistor

Resolved to approve the agenda.

Motion carried

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by K. Mazag, supported G. McLeod

Resolved to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting.

Motion carried.

5. DISTRICT ISSUES AND UPDATES.

6. CITY UPDATE ON DISTRICT ISSUES.

Allen Park Downtown Development Authority Minutes

- Allen Rd. is again open at the Thunderbowl where the parking lot is now under repair.
- Wayne County will be working on the bridge at Moran June 6 through November.
- Wayne County will be installing a left-turn signal and updating signage and pavement markings at Ecorse/Pelham. Work should be complete by the fall.
- St. Fair is happening.
- Council is working on appointing a new fire chief after Doug LaFond's retirement in July.
- Legal Affairs members toured the showmobile.
- DPS will be moving into the new building this summer. It will include a Styrofoam recycling bin.
- The due diligence time will close soon on the sale of the last property at the former city hall site.

7. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS.

8. ATTORNEY'S REPORT.

Motion by G. McLeod, supported K. Mazag
Resolved to approve the DDA office lease renewal.
Motion carried.

9. FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion by C. Riviera, supported by K. Mazag
Resolved to accept the March 2021 financial report.
Motion carried.

Motion by K. Mazag, supported by C. Riviera
Resolved to accept the April 2021 financial report.
Motion carried

10. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Motion by K. Mazag, supported by C. Riviera
Resolved to approve the FY22 budget.
Motion carried

Motion by R. Mistor, supported by T. Strobl
Resolved to approve the Miller and Miller contract renewal.
Motion carried

Laura Kozlowski. A unanimous resolution was made thanking Laura Kozlowski for her services on both the Board and Marketing Committee.

American Express Award. F. Frank thanked J. Kibby for her work that won the American Express award.

DTE Grant. DTE awarded the DDA a \$1,000 grant. F. Frank thanked G. McLeod for recommending the DDA when DTE approached her about making a grant to the city.

TIF Plan. F. Frank reported the plan is still in process. A list of 10-12 proposed projects will be sent to the stakeholders for their input. He hopes the plan will be presented to Council for a public hearing in September.

11. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Motion by C. Riviera, supported by K. Mazag

Resolved to reimburse the City \$15,500 towards the cost of re-asphalting the Community Center parking lot.

Motion carried

Food Truck Park.

- J. Kibby introduced the food truck park proposal. She recommends the Board urge Council to instruct the city planner to draft an ordinance revision allowing food truck parks. The food truck park model she is proposing must have a brick-and-mortar bar/restaurant. This model will ensure the owners pay property tax and have the same investment costs as any other restaurant. Additionally, they will have to invest a minimum of \$75,000 to qualify for the DDA liquor license. She believes the food trucks will attract new customers downtown, catalyze reinvestment in more difficult regions of the district, and could turn into future brick-and-mortar restaurants.
- T. Strobl questioned if J. Kibby had asked existing downtown restaurants their opinion about the proposal and if they were concerned the food truck park would pull away their customers. J. Kibby responded she does not ask other businesses their opinion when potential competitors come downtown. Existing businesses cannot block a newcomer just because they will be competition. She sees the food truck park as no different than any other brick-and-mortar restaurant. She stated most restaurants believe more restaurants help everyone's business.
- P. Zingas and J. Holden disagreed, citing this is a bad time to bring in competition for existing restaurants. P. Zingas stated there are a lot of vacancies downtown and if the DDA is going to help anyone out, that is where our focus should be.
- J. Holden says that while Culver's has not been hurt by the pandemic, he thinks bringing in outside competition during this time would send the wrong message.
- C. Riviera disagreed, noting that restaurants are packed during St. Fair, even while there are food trucks on the street. The food trucks are not hurting the restaurants at all. Food trucks will bring more people to the district. People who might patronize other restaurants and businesses too.
- G. McLeod stated she didn't think St. Fair is a good comparison since the audience is very different from the usual situation downtown. We may want to table the idea for a few months to see how things loosen up.
- F. Frank noted if board members believe there are too many restaurants downtown, they might want to attend the next Planning Commission meeting where they are considering a Buffalo Wild Wings application. Restaurants are coming. Moreover, this is not a food truck. Also, it is easily two to three months away before anyone could even make an application. We are actively seeking other restaurants to come downtown.

- J. Kibby noted the majority of downtown Allen Park restaurants are not suffering. While the news is filled with stories of restaurants closing, that is just not the case downtown. Our restaurants' biggest problem right now is staffing, not customers.
- T. Strobl asked if it was fair to a restaurant that invested \$300,000 in their brick-and-mortar business to allow a food truck to pull up and try out the neighborhood. The cost of entry for the food truck is so low, it is unfair competition to the brick-and-mortar restaurants.
- F. Frank noted the DDA proposal requires a brick-and-mortar restaurant be part of the food truck park, with essentially the same cost of entry as any other restaurant. It will simply have a secondary space of outdoor food trucks.
- P. Zingas disagreed, stating it's not a brick-and-mortar business, but just a satellite building the trucks pull up to. They didn't sign a five-year lease or make a commitment to the city. They shut down in the winter.
- F. Frank encouraged the board to visit Detroit Fleet in Ferndale or Little Fleet in Traverse City. They are open year-round. F. Frank suggested the board continue the discussion at a later meeting. F. Frank asked J. Kibby to check with the planner about the estimated timeframe to enact the ordinance.

Recast Leaders. J. Kibby reported she and F. Frank are building a database of home-based businesses and connectors – people who know a lot of home-based business owners. She encouraged board members to share any contacts they have. The DDA is lucky in that it has the Made in Michigan Festival database of over 1,400 crafters and food manufacturers. She posted a call for home-based business on Facebook in the hopes of identifying manufacturers other than crafters. The database should be complete in several weeks, at which time interviews will start.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Design

Motion by R. Mistor, supported by C. Riviera

Resolved to award A Squared Studio a façade grant of \$955.

Motion carried.

Motion by R. Mistor, supported by T. Strobl

Resolved to award Critters a façade grant of \$20,000, contingent upon installation of a dumpster enclosure in addition to the Phase 1 and Phase 2 plans.

Motion carried.

b. Marketing

Motion by K. Mazag, supported by G. McLeod

Resolved to add an additional \$2,500 to the pilot drive-in movie budget.

Motion carried.

Motion by C. Riviera, supported by G. McLeod

Resolved to purchase 125 heavy duty interlocking steel barricades at a cost not to exceed \$12,597.25.

Motion carried.

Motion by J. Holden, supported by C. Riviera
Resolved to budget \$5,000 for the Pumpkin Fest.
Motion carried.

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

14. NEW BUSINESS

15. CITIZEN COMMENTS

16. DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

17. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by C. Riviera, supported by G. McLeod
Resolved to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Frank, Chairperson

Cindy Riviera, Vice-chair/Secretary