

**City of Ithaca**  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 8, 2019; 12:00 PM**

Called to order at 12:12 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Kevin Collison, Rhonda Endter, Kim Hodge & Janet Strong. Shelly Betancourt arrived subsequently.

**Members Absent:** Kristyn Roethlisberger, Lilly Smith and Mayor Alice Schafer

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Chris Yonker and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter and Rob Endter

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Browne, second by Collison to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Collison, second by Browne to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on December 10, 2018; motion carried.

**Old Business**

- a. DDA Development Plan. City Manager Yonker is continuing to work on the updated DDA Development Plan.

Manager Yonker met with Jim Wheeler of Greater Gratiot Development and Ryan Smith of Gemni Capital Management to discussed the possibility of allowing ground floor rental apartments at the rear of large retail spaces downtown. Yonker will present 3 options to the Planning Commission at its next meeting: use allowed by right, special use permit and conditional zoning permit. Collison suggested that at least 51% of the ground floor area be used for business purposes. Browne questioned the rules regarding the PRE (principal resident exemption) for someone who owned and lived in a building with a business. Other concerns included whether a rear access to the public parking lots could be retained, and the limited amount of retail shops in the downtown area.

**New Business**

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 12/14/18 – 4/5/19, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 3/31/19. After discussion, motion by Collison, second by Betancourt to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. 2019-2020 Budget. After review and discussion, motion by Collison, second by Betancourt to approve the 2019-2020 Budget as presented; motion carried. The budget will now be presented to the Council for its approval.
- c. Board Member Appointment Applications. Applications were available to Collison and Smith as their terms will be ending June 30, 2019.

- d. Farmers Market Signs. Motion by Browne, second by Collison to approve the expenditure to purchase two new farmers market signs; motion carried.
- e. Welcome Packet for New Businesses. DDA Coordinator Moffit presented the new welcome packets she will be distributing to new businesses/owners. The packets include: welcome letter; City Hall, government officials and municipal services summary; info for the online business directory & website enhanced listing; how to promote their business on our Constant Contact newsletter; schedule for DDA meetings; info on the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce and Ithaca Promotional Committee; Gratiot County map; and a 2019 Chamber Community Guide. Info on the Small Business Development Center and MEDC will be added to the packet.
- f. Activities/Events Brainstorming. DDA Coordinator asked the board members for any ideas they had for activities or events for 2019. The challenge is a lack of retail businesses in the downtown. Several suggestions were discussed including music and pop-up vendors. Different options for events will be looked into.

### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report to the board, which highlighted the new welcome packets, the constant contact newsletter, promoting the website enhanced listing, the Gratiot Downtown Art Expo banners, replacement of the Farmers Market signs and letters welcoming vendors back for the 2019 season.

City Manager Yonker highlighted several items on his most recent City Manager Activity Reports to the City Council dated March 17<sup>th</sup> and March 29<sup>th</sup>, which included: the purchase of the Sav-A-Lot store, which will now be Ellen's Equipment, a family owned business headquartered out of McBain; Town & Country Group has purchased the old Monroe Trucking building on the northwest corner of Industrial Parkway & Center Street & they intend to tear down that structure and build a new facility; and the O'Brien building located at 1326 E. Center St. is being renovated and will possibly be occupied in the near future.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Browne informed the board that the car wash has new owners and they have updated some of the equipment.

The Endters are still doing renovations at The County Seat Coffeehouse and Gifts and are missed by the locals.

### **Public Comments**

Lexi Endter added to the idea of having pop-up vendors one evening a month as an event, possibly the first Thursday of the month during the summer. Strong added that having Michigan-Made products available is very popular right now.

### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Strong adjourned the meeting at 1:17 p.m. The next DDA meeting will be June 10, 2019.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca**  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**June 10, 2019; 12:00 PM**

Called to order at 12:01 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Kevin Collison, Rhonda Endter, Kim Hodge, Kristyn Roethlisberger, Janet Strong and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**Members Absent:** Shelly Betancourt and Lilly Smith.

**City Staff Present:** DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Collison, second by Endter to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Collison, second by Schafer to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on April 8, 2019; motion carried.

**Old Business**

- a. DDA Development Plan. City Manager Yonker is continuing to work on the updated DDA Development Plan.
- b. 2019-2020 DDA Budget. The 2019-2020 DDA Budget was approved and passed at the June 4, 2019 council meeting.

**New Business**

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 4/9/19 – 6/6/19, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 4/30/19. After discussion, the financial reports were approved by consensus.
- b. DDA Billboard. The current billboard ads will expire on October 3, 2019. New businesses are given the opportunity first to advertise on the billboard. Potential businesses were discussed. Since new businesses do not have to register with the City, it is difficult to recognize new businesses. The DDA Board Members agreed to communicate with each other when they see a new business within the City. Schafer had heard that NAPA has new ownership. Brown suggested to contact Dan Dinsmore the owner of the building downtown where Grahams Locksmith is advertising but no business is taking place there.
- c. Board Member Appointment. Kevin Collison was appointed by council at their June 4, 2019 meeting and with a term ending June 30, 2023. Clerk/Treasurer Barb Fandell administered the oath of office. Lilly Smith did not apply for reappointment and her

term will end June 30, 2019. A potential business owner was contacted and expressed interest in the open seat.

### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report. The art banners are up in the downtown area. There were 20 banners chosen this year from our own local artists. Travis Jeffreys, the new owner of the car wash and oil change property, is excited to be a part of the community. A special newsletter promoting and advertising 4 to 5 businesses is now being sent out every two weeks. Updating business contact information is continuing. We have 2 seasonal vendors for the farmers market this year, however, it has been slow so far and the weather has not been very cooperative. Wendy's has closed its doors. It has been heard that Arby's may have purchased it. Preparations for the 2019 US 127 Motor Tour will be starting very soon and it will be in downtown Ithaca Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Chris, Barb and myself met with Chamber Director Brenden Kelly and discussed IPC and the possibility of the DDA and IPC working together.

Mayor Alice Schafer highlighted several items on his most recent City Manager Activity Reports to the City Council dated May 17<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> which included police service for the City. The SAW Grant for the drainage problems. A ramp has been constructed in the back of the library. The MDOT Pine River Project which includes restriping lanes to convert to three lanes between Emerson and Barber Streets and converting back to two lanes but with wider shoulders to the US 127 interchange. The art banners downtown. The Dust Off Car Show was a success and Rural Urban day is coming up July 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Browne reported that the closing for the Downtown Bakery building has been set for June 24<sup>th</sup> and the real-estate business is strong in the Ithaca area.

### **Public Comments**

No public comments were offered

### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board, Motion by Collison, second by Schafer to adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m.; motion carried. The next DDA meeting will be September 9, 2019.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca  
Downtown Development Authority  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 9, 2019; 12:00 PM**

Called to order at 12:06 p.m. by Vice Chair Kim Hodge.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Shelly Betancourt, Rhonda Endter, Kim Hodge, Kristyn Roethlisberger and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**Members Absent:** Kevin Collison and Janet Strong

**City Staff Present:** Interim Manager Barb Fandell and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter and Deb Vusich

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Browne, second by Schafer to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Browne, second by Endter to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on June 10, 2019; motion carried.

**Old Business**

- a. DDA Development Plan. Moffit explained that the State passed new legislation which created reporting requirements for all DDA's. Fandell reported that our current DDA Development Plan is very old and still needs to be updated and filed with the State. A copy of the old plan will be provided for the Board to review and begin coming up with ideas and suggestions for the updated plan. They will be scheduling public informational meetings to take comments and discuss the goals and direction of the DDA to develop this new plan. Browne stated concern that since the plan is so old that we include wording that makes us eligible for future funding. Bay City's DDA Director Steve King may be a valuable resource for information and insight.

**New Business**

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 6/11/19 – 9/5/19, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 6/30/19. After discussion, motion by Browne, second by Betancourt to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. Sirius/XM Radio. The speaker system for the Sirius/XM radio in the downtown is not working correctly and therefore is not being utilized. The cost for this service is \$359.40 a year. Moffit will call to inquire if we are able to receive credit if the

- service is terminated early. Other issues were discussed regarding the music downtown including tenants' complaints of the volume of the music. Moffit will look into updated systems and the cost. After discussion, motion by Schafer, second by Betancourt to cancel the Sirius/XM service if credit will be given for the remainder of the months not used; motion carried.
- c. DDA Billboard. Two letters of interest were submitted to advertise on the DDA billboard from Ellens Equipment and Los Hermanos Mexican Restaurant. E & S Graphics has a solution to keep the banner wrinkle free and will do the production and installation of the new banner this year. Motion by Betancourt; second by Roethlisberger to approve Ellens Equipment and Los Hermanos Mexican Restaurant to advertise on the DDA Billboard; motion carried.
- d. New DDA Reporting Requirements/schedule informational meetings. The State has passed legislature for new reporting requirements for DDA's as discussed earlier in the meeting. Two public informational meetings need to be held prior to December 31, 2019. October 21, 2019 at 12:00 p.m. and November 11, 2019 at 12:30 p.m. were agreed upon and will be posted on the website 14 days prior to the meeting. Moffit will be updating our website to meet the requirements by the State.

### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which included letters sent to new businesses for the opportunity to advertise on the DDA billboard, contacting DDA Directors from Alma, St. Louis and Mt. Pleasant regarding their procedures for identifying new businesses, promoting the Website Enhanced Listing feature on our website directory, meeting with and promoting businesses and a update on the Farmers Market. Browne inquired if we should consider asking the farmers market vendors what day would work best for them. Moving the day of market may be considered for next year. I was involved this year in assisting IPC with the planning and coordination of the Ithaca golf outing. This years US 127 Motor Tour was a great success and several of our local businesses sponsored and donated gifts to give a way for the cruisers. The City has offered my DDA services to help with the restructuring of the IPC. Work has begun on becoming compliant with the States new requirements for DDA's. Finally, I am working with Shannon Belles and Shelby Shankel to decorate the downtown poles and the cheerleaders to decorate downtown windows for homecoming.

Chris Yonker has retired as of September 6<sup>th</sup> and Barb Fandell has been appointed as the Interim Manager. She highlighted several items on Chris Yonker's City Manager Reports to the Council dated August 16<sup>th</sup> and August 30<sup>th</sup> which included the bakery that was anticipated to open downtown has decided not to open. A public hearing will be held at the September 17<sup>th</sup> council meeting to discuss the OPRAH on 148 & 156 E. Center Street owned by Ryan Smith which will include 10 residential apartments and a \$1.5 million-dollar investment. Approval has already been made for 5 units at 105 E. Center and is approximately a \$80,000 investment. Our engineering firm is looking at concrete work on Newark Street which has to be completed before

paving can done in the famers market parking lot and behind the library. It will be determined if that project can be fit into the budget.

Cathy Timmons contacted Fandell about replacing the flowers in the pots downtown. The cost to replace them with mums for the fall would be \$449. IPC normally covers this cost but does not have the funds this year. It was asked if the DDA would like to cover the cost this year. It was also suggested that if there was any credit from the cancellation of the Sirius/XM radio that it could be used towards the cost. After discussion, motion by Browne, second by Schafer that the DDA provide the funds to purchase the fall flowers and amend the budget accordingly; motion carried.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Mayor Alice Shafer shared that there is a need for another person on the Planning Commission and 2 more for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Moffit shared that Deb Vusich of Burford Plumbing and Heating was here to observe and is interested in applying for the vacant seat on the DDA Board.

### **Public Comments**

Lexi Endter commented that she had attended the St. Louis Farmers Market and talked with Market Manager Linda Bader about the successes of their market and opportunities for classes for the Farmers Market Certification Manager Program through the Michigan Farmers Market Association. These classes offer insight on market management, promoting, networking and programs such as SNAP and Bridge Card and suggested that the DDA send Moffit to the program. Moffit explained that she is only budgeted 15 hours a week for the DDA. The DDA does not have it in their budget to have a designated Market Manager. The SNAP program has previously been looked into and requires a lot of accounting and processing which is done through the Chamber for St. Louis. This program could be reevaluated in the future as to whether it would be worth implementing at our market.

### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board, Motion by Schafer, second by Endter to adjourn the meeting at 1:18 p.m.; motion carried. The next DDA Public Informational Meeting will be October 21, 2019 at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca  
Downtown Development Authority  
Informational Meeting Minutes  
October 21, 2019; 12:00 PM**

Called to order at 12:04 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Shelly Betancourt, Janet Strong, Deb Vusich, Kim Hodge, and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**Members Absent:** Kevin Collison, Rhonda Endter and Kristyn Roethlisberger.

**City Staff Present:** Interim Manager Barb Fandell and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter and Cindy Taylor.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Betancourt, second by Schafer to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Oath of Office**

Clerk/Treasurer Barb Fandell administered the Oath of Office to Deborah Vusich for the DDA Board seat and welcomed her to the new position.

**Discussion of Goals and Direction of the DDA (including public input)**

City Manager Interim Barb Fandell reviewed the last known documented DDA Goals including what the DDA felt was its threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses with the Board and Public. With input from the Board, Staff, and public comment, each topic was discussed and updated with new suggestions and ideas for the future. The revised copy is attached for viewing. This information will be used to set goals, direction and projects for the DDA and to update the Downtown Development Authority Development Plan.

**Public Comment**

Lexi stated concern for the lack of Ithaca's identity and who we are as a community. Cindy Taylor suggested programs that could be utilized for funding downtown improvements.

**Adjournment**

Being no further comments or discussion to come before the Board, motion by Schafer, second by Vusich to adjourn the meeting at 1:21 p.m.; motion carried. The next DDA Informational Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 11, 2019 at 12:30 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

City of Ithaca  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Informational Meeting Minutes**  
**November 11, 2019; 12:30 PM**

Called to order at 12:35 p.m. by Vice Chair Kim Hodge.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Rhonda Endter and Kristyn Roethlisberger.

**Members Absent:** Kevin Collison, Shelly Betancourt, Janet Strong, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Jamey Conn, Clerk/Treasurer Barb Fandell and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter and Rob Endter.

**Public Comment:** No public comment was offered.

**Review of Updated DDA Goals & Insight**

Fandell reviewed the updated list of Goals & Insight from the October 21, 2019 informational meeting and took comments. This list will be utilized in updating the DDA Plan.

**2020 Programs and Activities**

Fandell reported that the State requirements for the DDA Plan may differ from what we had originally thought. We will continue to set new goals for programs and activities and this information will be the base for developing an updated DDA Plan. Current programs and activities were identified. Comments and suggestions were taken to revise and discuss potential programs, activities and downtown development goals for future purposes. A revised list is attached for viewing purposes.

**Public Comment**

No public comment was offered.

**Adjournment**

Being no further comments or discussion to come before the board Vice Chair Hodge adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

The next Regular DDA Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 9, 2019 at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca**  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**December 9, 2019; 12:00 PM**

Called to order at 12:07 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Shelly Betancourt, Rhonda Endter, Kim Hodge, Janet Strong, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**Members Absent:** Kevin Collison and Kristyn Roethlisberger

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Jamey Conn, Clerk/Treasurer Barbara Fandell and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit

**Public Present:** Lexi Endter

**Public Comment:** No public comment was offered.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Browne, second by Vusich to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Schafer, second by Browne to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on September 9, 2019; motion carried.

**Old Business**

- a. Informational Meetings. Clerk/Treasurer Fandell highlighted the details from the informational meetings held on October 21<sup>st</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>. The October meeting identified the goals, threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses. The November meeting identified the current programs and activities, potential activities and downtown development goals. Two informational meetings will be scheduled for 2020. The purpose of these meetings is to inform, discuss and take comments from the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.

**New Business**

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 9/6/19 – 12/6/19, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 11/30/19. After discussion, motion by Browne, second by Endter to approve the financial reports; motion carried. The Independent Auditor’s Report was provided for the Boards review.
- b. DDA Meeting Dates for 2020. The proposed DDA meeting dates for the 2020 calendar year were reviewed. Board member Vusich was concerned about the Board only meeting on a quarterly basis. Clerk Fandell spoke of instances that had led up to quarterly meetings being established and assured the Board that special meetings can be held at any time to address matters that arise or to plan for events.

- A “Meet the Merchants” event was discussed at length. City Manager Conn will check on what date the Lions hold their pancake supper that coincides with the high school basketball game. After discussion motioned by Betancourt, second by Schafer to approve the DDA meeting dates for the 2020 calendar year with the amendment to add a special meeting on January 13, 2020 for the purpose of project planning.
- c. Downtown Speaker System. The quotes from Airtetix, LLC for a wireless speaker system were reviewed and discussed. The cost of the system is not within the budget, however, there may be an opportunity to apply for a grant through the Gratiot County Community Foundation to cover the cost if it is decided to pursue a new system.

### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report and highlighted several items which included receiving a credit of \$149.75 for cancelling the Sirius subscription. That money went towards the purchase of the mums for the downtown flower pots. Brian Godley was presented with a certificate of appreciation for 35 years in business on behalf of the City and the DDA. Due to the cost and funds available in the budget, Skyline Outdoor Advertising did the production and installation for the DDA billboard. The new advertising was installed last week and both businesses are very happy with the results. Finally, City Manager Conn and myself attended ribbon cuttings for The Dream Works Resale Shoppe and J Lube Services. DDA Coordinator Moffit encouraged the Board to attend ribbon cuttings to represent the DDA when possible.

City Manager Jamey Conn highlighted several topics from his Manager’s Report to the City Council dated 11/19/19 & 12/3/19 which included what opportunities there may be to advertise and showcase the vacant buildings downtown. Browne gave some insight on the real estate aspect. Several ideas for types of businesses that would benefit the downtown were discussed and considered. DDA Coordinator Moffit stated that advertising opportunities are also available on the city website and through the constant contact newsletter.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Mayor Alice Schafer commented how nice the ribbon cutting was for The Dream Works Resale Shoppe and encouraged everyone to stop by and take a look at their new business. She also noted that City Manager Conn is adjusting to his position very well. She thanked the board members for their attendance at the meeting.

Board member Browne stated the real estate business is strong right now. She also reported that the Hometown Christmas and Santa Parade was great and highlighted several activities that were successful. There was concern of no barricades being put up and all the traffic with the pedestrians downtown. She thanked the City for the use of the Community Center.

Manager Conn reported that the senior class pancake supper at the school this year was January 17<sup>th</sup>. It was agreed that there was not enough time to organize a “Meet the Merchants” for that date. This will be an opportunity to plan for an alternative fundraiser. Vusich spoke about her experiences of fundraisers that were not successful which led to discussions of various successful and potential fundraisers and what time of year would be best.

**Public Comments**

No public comment was offered.

**Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 1:19 p.m. The next DDA Special Meeting will be scheduled for January 13, 2019 at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary