

**City of Ithaca**  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 11, 2022; 12:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Co-Chair Kim Hodge.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer. Janet Strong arrived subsequently.

**Members Absent:** Shelly Betancourt and Kevin Collison.

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

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

**Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Schafer, second by Browne to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from December 13, 2021; motion carried.

**Public Comment:** Ithaca Promotional Committee Chair Josh Strand was in attendance. He wanted to let everyone know about the Easter Egg Hunt at Woodland Park and the Easter Hop/Craft Show downtown. There are going to be many activities that will involve the community and businesses. He feels that the DDA and IPC should collaborate and offered IPC's help with DDA events.

**Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business.

**New Business**

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 12/9/22 – 4/8/22, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 3/31/22. After discussion, motion by Browne, second by Vusich to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. Proposed 2021-2022 DDA Budget Amendments. After review and discussion, motion by Macha, second by Browne to approve the 2021-2022 Budget Amendments as presented; motion carried.
- c. Proposed 2022-2023 DDA Budget. Revenue and expenditure line items were discussed including billboard advertising, downtown lamppost sponsorship, downtown flowers, training and education for Moffit, new businesses, directional signage for downtown businesses, Farmers Market sponsorships and expenses, US-27 Car Cruise and a Halloween event. After review and discussion, motion by Schafer, second by Macha to approve the 2022-2023 proposed budget as presented; motion carried.
- d. DDA Dollar Expiration. After discussion, motion by Vusich, second by Macha to extend the expiration date of the DDA Dollars from three months to six months; motion carried.
- e. Board Terms Expiring. There are two board seat terms that expire on June 30, 2022 and a vacancy for a DDA District Resident. An Application for Appointment can be filed with the City Clerk.

- f. Farmers Market Sponsorship. Emails were sent to all Ithaca businesses for Farmers Market sponsorship. Eight businesses initially responded with various sponsorship amounts totaling \$1600. Three additional sponsors also stepped forward bringing our sponsorship amount to \$1900. This will help offset the cost for annual expenses including the porta john rental and new sandwich board.
- g. Downtown Flowers. In the past, the flowers for the downtown pots were ordered from Abele's in Saginaw. Moffit called Alma and St. Louis and they both get their flowers from Twin City Landscape. Twin City's quote was \$120 higher than Abele's, however, we wouldn't have to take our pots to Saginaw and we would be keeping our business locally. After discussion everyone was in agreement and advised to get bids for next year.

Manager Conn revisited the topic of the Farmers Market sponsorship banner. Alley T also produces banners and signs. Once the dimensions for the banner are determined, Moffit will get quotes from both E&S Graphics and Alley T.

Last year's method of decorating of the downtown lampposts for fall was discussed. The process of sponsorship will be modified for this year and will become one of our fundraisers.

#### Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report and highlighted communications with Arby's Restaurant, the realtor for Burger King and Biggby Coffee.

#### Roundtable Discussion

Vusich encouraged support and patronage to our newer downtown business such as Healthy Horizons and The Pink Cactus. Hodge expressed concern for the lack of foot traffic in the downtown and commended the Ithaca Promotional Committee for including the downtown with the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Browne mention the pickleball courts that will be constructed at the Senior Activity Building this summer. Strong expressed her disappointment when local residents are unaware of her business.

#### Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

#### Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Strong adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for June 13, 2022\* at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

*\*A portion of the agenda will be dedicated for public information as required by the State of Michigan, which allows the public to be informed and provide input on the goals and direction of the DDA, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.*

City of Ithaca  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Informational Meeting Minutes**  
**June 13, 2022; 12:00 PM**

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

**Members Absent:** Jared Macha, Shelly Betancourt and Kevin Collison,

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

**Public Present:** Kasey Zehner.

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.

**Review of DDA Goals, Direction and Projects**

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit reviewed the DDA Goals & Insights. Several topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were revised and updated for the current year.

**Programs & Activities for 2022**

Each of the programs and activities were reviewed. We also discussed potential activities for the upcoming season and goals to pursue.

**Public Comment**

Kasey Zehner of Greater Gratiot Development was in attendance to present information for the Millage Renewal that will be on the upcoming ballot.

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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 13, 2022**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order following the Public Informational Meeting at 12:52 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

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

**Members Absent:** Shelly Betancourt, Kevin Collison and Jared Macha.

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

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

**Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Schafer, second by Browne to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from June 13, 2022; motion carried.

**Public Comment:** Kasey Zehner of Greater Gratiot Development (GGD) spoke about the four Gratiot County Essential Services Millage Renewals that will be on the ballot August 2, 2022. She highlighted the Commission on Aging, Agriculture and Economic Development Services (MSU Extension & 4-H Youth Services), Greater Gratiot Development and Gratiot Countywide Libraries. Each of these entities rely on the millage for funding and she relayed the importance each of them brings to our communities. She also talked about GGD's purpose and highlighted some of their most rewarding accomplishments including ZFS.

**Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business.

**New Business**

- a. **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 4/9/22 – 6/9/22, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 4/30/22. After discussion, motion by Browne, second by Schafer to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
  
- b. **Update on New Businesses.** Jessica Williams owner of Rusted Roses Antique Boutique setbacks with grant funding from MEDC. They are still moving forward with renovations; however, it will take more time for the funding to be available. Ashley Vancourt owner of Bigby Coffee is still waiting on the civil work to come back so they can move forward. Lisette Smith and Samantha Packard opened The Verbena Farmhouse, a boutique & wellness spa, in the front of the Dicks Studio building. Bob Fall, the realtor for the Burger King building thought that a closing date would be coming up within the next couple weeks. The new owner is planning on opening up a family style restaurant. Joe and Victoria Padilla owners of Creative Moments celebrated their grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony. They are in the old Jerky Man's Shack building and feature craft vendors and their unique handmade/homemade merchandise. Hair stylist Rocky Ballard is operating her business from It's All About You salon. She is hoping to purchase the building from Tina Castillo. Paula Ellsworth owner of Realistic Rejuvenation is now open specializing in aesthetic medicine. Cindy Taylor of The Dream Works Resale Shoppe is in contact with a potential purchaser of

the Anderson Carpet building. Cindy is planning on renovating the building and moving from the Village Shoppes across the road to a bigger space. The owner may also renovate the upstairs into apartments. Wend-Tree Investments who owns the Wendy's Building is not responding to phone calls or emails and no information is available as to any potential new business.

- c. DDA Billboard. Letters will go out in August to business for the opportunity to advertise on the DDA billboard.

Motion by Vusich, second by Schafer for Moffit to contact new business owners for the opportunity to advertise on the DDA billboard. If no new businesses are interested, the opportunity will be extended to all existing businesses in the DDA district with the selected businesses chosen randomly; motion carried.

- d. Downtown Flowers. In the past, the flowers for the downtown pots were ordered from Abele's in Saginaw. Moffit called Alma and St. Louis and they both get their flowers from Twin City Landscape. Twin City's quote was \$120 higher than Abele's, however, we wouldn't have to take our pots to Saginaw and we would be keeping our business locally. After discussion everyone was in agreement and advised to get bids for next year.

Manager Conn revisited the topic of the Farmers Market sponsorship banner. Alley T also produces banners and signs. Once the dimensions for the banner are determined, Moffit will get quotes from both E&S Graphics and Alley T.

Last year's method of decorating of the downtown lampposts for fall was discussed. The process of sponsorship will be modified for this year and will become one of our fundraisers.

#### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted opening day for the Farmers Market and updates on many of the new businesses that have opened or coming soon.

#### **Roundtable Discussion**

There were many compliments on the downtown flower pots and how pretty they were this year. Browne voiced concern for our car dealership Betten Baker and if they were going out of business.

#### **Public Comments**

No public comment was offered.

#### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Schafer, second by Vusich to adjourned the meeting at 1:33 p.m.; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for December 12, 2022 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**  
**September 12, 2022; 12:00 PM**

**DDA Members Present:** Shelly Betancourt, Marci Browne, Kevin Collison, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha and Deb Vusich.

**Members Absent:** Janet Strong.

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

**Public Present:** None.

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.

**Review of DDA Goals, Direction and Projects**

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit reviewed the revised DDA Goals & Insights from the June 13, 2022 meeting. Updated topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were discussed. The request to MDOT to install signage for downtown business near US-127 was denied. New pickleball courts, new turf football field at the high school along with McNabb Park that bring the G.A.S. Fair and various events were listed as strengths bringing people to town to patronage our businesses.

**Programs & Activities for 2022**

The updated list of programs and activities were reviewed and discussion was held. Two Ithaca Businesses will be chosen to be on the DDA Billboard beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Farmers Market struggled this year with only two seasonal and an occasional weekly vendor. Discussion to remove the \$10 vendor fee again for next year. Twenty Art Banners were displayed and beautified our downtown this year. Ithaca Promotional Committee is still working on a light canopy over Memorial Park in downtown. Downtown will be decorated for fall by offering businesses the opportunity to sponsor a lamppost for \$50. This fundraiser will also raise money to purchase mums for the downtown flowerpots. The US-127 Motor Tour was a huge success with 248 vehicles in attendance. Several of our downtown businesses participate in the event and/or donated items for give-a-ways. Continue to welcome new businesses and help to promote them within the community. We continue to partner with the Ithaca Promotional Committee for community events such as Rock the Block, the City-Wide Garage Sales etc.

**Public Comment**

No public comment offered.

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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 12, 2022**

Prior to the regular meeting, Marci Browne and Kim Hodge took Oath of Office for another 4-year term as DDA Board members.

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order following the Public Informational Meeting at 12:43 p.m. by Co-Chair Kim Hodge.

**Members Present:** Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Deb Vusich, Shelly Betancourt, Kevin Collison and Jared Macha.

**Members Absent:** Janet Strong

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

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

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

**Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Browne, second by Betancourt to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from June 13, 2022; motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None

**Unfinished Business**

Moffit recounted MDOT's denial of a downtown sign on their property.

**New Business**

- a. **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 6/9/22 – 8/31/22, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 5/31/22. After review, motion by Browne, second by Collison to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. **Update on New Businesses.** Moffit met with the new owner of the Burger King property. This new food establishment will be called Great Lakes Family Restaurant. Renovations are on the way and they hope to be open for business in October. Lisette Smith of the Verbena Farmhouse informed me that Dick's Studio is listing their building for sale and they will have to move out from their leased space. She has spoken with the owner of The Pink Cactus and is hopeful that she can relocate her business in one of their spaces. The Anderson Carpet building has been cleared out and renovations have begun. Once completed The Dream Works Resale Shoppe will relocate there from the Village Shoppes. This will leave the Village Shoppes vacant except for Gratiot Plumbing Supply and Alec & Jenkins Law Firm. Browne stated that a financial firm had interest in the Ithaca area but locations were limited. Moffit reached out to the owner of Biggby's and they are still waiting on the civil work to be completed.

- c. DDA Billboard. Moffit presented the list of businesses who submitted interest in the billboard for the coming year. The criteria set by the DDA Board in 2014 was reviewed. After discussion, motion by Collison, second by Browne to select Law Office of Kathryn Bollinger and Ellens Equipment to be on the billboard for 2022-2023; motion carried. It was agreed to revisit, reestablish and update the criteria in selecting businesses for the billboard.
- d. Farmers Market Solicitation Requests. Recently there have been several organizations who want to set up at the Farmers Market. These organizations are nonprofit and request that the vendor fee be waived. Criteria for nonprofit organizations will be revisited and added to the Farmers Market Guidelines.

The fundraiser for the downtown lamppost this year will be a \$50 sponsorship. This should allow for the \$624 purchase of the mums for the downtown flower pots for Fall and the expense for decorations.

#### **Staff Updates**

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted and updates on businesses, the US-27 Motor Tour, the DDA Billboard and the Connection Entrepreneurial Communities Conference in Alma.

#### **Roundtable Discussion**

Browne reported on the real estate business in the Ithaca area.

#### **Public Comments**

No public comment was offered.

#### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Vusich, second by Collison to adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for April 10, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary