

## CITY OF HUDSONVILLE

### CITY COMMISSION AND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY JOINT MEETING MINUTES October 26, 2015

Dale Sall called the Special Session of the Downtown Development Authority to order at 6:00 P.M., October 26, 2015.

DDA Members Present: Ken Jipping, Dale Sall, Larry Gemmen, Joel Keegstra, Doug Butterworth, Phil Koning and Steve Guikema

Absent: Brad Dykstra and Greg Slater

Commissioner Leerar called the Special Session of the Hudsonville City Commission to order at 6:00 P.M., October 26, 2015.

Commissioners Present: Bolhuis, Leerar, Northrup, O'Brien and Raterink

Absent: Mayor Van Doeselaar & Commissioner Brandsen

Non-Voting Attendees: City Manager Patrick Waterman, Finance Director Jan Sal, DDA Executive Director Michelle Fare, Planning & Zoning Director Dan Strikwerda, City Attorney Richard Wendt, City Clerk Jan Wiersum and Amanda Edmunds, Executive Director of Growing Hope

1. Farmer's Market Feasibility Study.

Amanda Edmunds introduced herself and gave background information on her responsibilities as Executive Director of Growing Hope, a non-profit organization in Ypsilanti, Michigan that supports healthy food systems including farmer's markets.

She reviewed her findings on a feasibility study she completed for the City of Hudsonville on a year-round farmer's market in a property located at 3380 Chicago Drive in Hudsonville. Some of her main points and recommendations include:

- Funding a market manager position to promote the market to help the market grow and sustain growth. At a minimum, this person would need to devote 12 to 15 hours per week to fill this role.
- The market needs to grow customers and vendors to remain viable in the current outdoor season. For a year-round market to be viable, the market must attract new vendors and those that have product for an extended season.

- They are not recommending expanding to non-local products at this time, but keeping the market focus on local production.
- Based on the number of large markets available in the area, it is recommended that the focus stay on growing the base of local residents as customers. They are not recommending moving the market day to Saturday due to the number of large markets in the area that are available on Saturday. Adjusting hours to be available to more of the community was also suggested.
- The farmers market itself will not sustain the cost of investing in or operating the proposed facility. The market should be considered one of a multiple users of the space. The space could be used as an event and community venue with the market as one of the activities that take place in the facility.

City Manager Patrick Waterman reviewed with the DDA and Commission a proposed budget for this project. The budget includes a part time staff person as a market manager. The budget also includes income generated from tenant spaces. The building layout was reviewed along with possible uses for different spaces in the building as well as rental rates for events. Waterman stated that he feels that this building is a valuable resource in the heart of what we are doing in the downtown re-development plan.

#### Comments from City Commissioners & DDA Members:

- Do we still see the market as being one day a week? Amanda stated that at this point one day would be advised. Maybe in the future you could attract vendors for more than one day a week.
- Would like to have the market on Saturday to attract more people in the work force. Amanda recommended that changing the hours of the market to an afternoon/evening market would help.
- We need good vendors to draw people and people to come and spend money to draw vendors.
- We need a market master, someone who has vision. Amanda stated that the State of Michigan Farmers Market Association has market manager training in order to become certified and to then become part of a supportive community.
- What needs to be done to this building? Does it have good water and power? Waterman stated that the resources are there. There is work that needs to be done to the building. He feels that this building is an investment. If this project doesn't work out, we just put money into property that is in the heart of our downtown that could be used for something else.
- Where do you see this farmer's market fall within the development stage of what we are trying to do as it relates to the Village Green? I like the design and the layout, but if the rest of the village green project can't happen for another 15 years, are we better off focusing on the village green. Also concerned with parking issues. Waterman stated that we now have an

opportunity and a willing seller at this time. The village green is not going away, we are just re-prioritizing. All of these things are ingredients in the mix. As opportunities come up we should move forward. Strikwerda stated that the planning process can take quite a while. It is important to move forward and have successes along the way.

- Concerned with the amount of money set aside for the market manager. Feels it is too low.
- We need to grow our community and we need to show some initiative and demonstrate to the public that we are willing to take some steps as business leaders and community leaders. If this doesn't work, we still have this property that we can sell.
- Is there any concerns with what could be found when the slab is removed? Waterman indicated that a Phase I Environmental Study would be completed before purchased. Fare indicated that there may be grant funds available for this study.

City Manager Waterman discussed the financing options for purchasing and remodeling these properties.

After discussion, the following motion was made by the DDA:

Motion by Koning, seconded by Guikema, to authorize the City Manager to negotiate the price and terms for the purchase of those properties related to the development of a City Farmer's Market/Community Center. As a condition of this motion, the final terms of sale must be approved by the City Commission and DDA, and a Phase I and if necessary a Phase II Environmental Study must be completed.

All aye, motion carried.

The City Commission offered the following motion:

Motion by Leerar, seconded by Raterink, to authorize the City Manager to negotiate the price and terms for the purchase of those properties related to the development of a City Farmer's Market/Community Center. As a condition of this motion, the final terms of sale must be approved by the City Commission and DDA, and a Phase I and if necessary a Phase II Environmental Study must be completed.

All aye, motion carried.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

2. Motion was made and supported to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jan Wiersum, City Clerk