

Manchester Downtown Development
February 20, 2019
Approved Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Ray Berg, Denise Collins, Susan Fielder, Jason Heinrich, Leslie Kiesel, Julie Marvin-Manders and Sue LaRocque were in attendance. Aaron LaRock and Pat Vaillencourt were not available.

Public Participation: Seth Kinker from the Sun Times, Michael Pomorski with the Boy Scouts, and Amy Karbo and Chad Wiebesick from Destination Ann Arbor were in attendance. Attendees were invited to contribute to discussion as the agenda items were discussed.

Approval of January 2019 minutes

Kiesel moved, and Heinrich supported a motion to approve minutes as amended. A vote indicated all in favor.

Approval of Agenda

Agenda items were reviewed. Collins moved and Kiesel second the motion to approve the agenda.

Public Participation

Michael Pomorski offered Boy Scout assistance for numerous community events. Scouts range between 10 and 18 years of age. Pomorski will leave his contact information. DDA Board members expressed their appreciation and stated the additional volunteer assistance is greatly needed. Following discussion, public participation was closed.

AGENDA

1) Presentation by Destination Ann Arbor

Amy Karbo, the newest CTAP representative, and Chad Wiebesick, Destination Ann Arbor representative, described numerous efforts to promote tourism and economic development through Washtenaw County and in Manchester specifically. For more than 40 years AACVB (now called Destination Ann Arbor) has been encouraging day

and overnight visitors. A paid partnership with PURE MICHIGAN resulted in a promotional TV commercial. A recent *Under the Radar* video, is on U-TUBE. Destination Ann Arbor estimates 50K monthly blog visitors and 110K area residents learn about destinations and events featured in the monthly newsletter. Wiebesick is our contact to submit or update information. One example of a needed update is the Manchester Antiques Mall which has not been open for business for several years.

Wiebesick discussed the CTAP grant and TMS program, which are designed to help support events and encourage economic growth. Grant applications are available on the website and range from \$250 to \$5000 dollars. Additional financial and marketing assistance is available. Manchester's 3rd Thursday Events qualify for financial support, even though other grant sources are being utilized. The 2019 CTAP grants now include projects that would be completed over three years.

Berg described Manchester's 2018-2019 CTAP projects promoting water sport tourism: constructing canoe/kayak storage units, promotional video, and River Raisin Brochure. Design for the new Riverfront Park was unexpectedly delayed but eventually approved by the State DNR. Adding canoe/kayak storage plans now, would further delay the park implementation. Berg asked Karbo, if our grant status would be negatively affected, if we delayed the storage units and substituted other projects. We discussed the Historical Museum as a potential tourist attraction. Karbo will confirm, but thought under the circumstances, our request would be approved.

Wiebesick discussed changes in the 2019-2020 CTAP grant approval process. The application deadline is March 29. Projects will be reviewed at the annual luncheon in April with more open, interactive discussions. A CTAP training program is scheduled for April 9. DDA Board members thanked Karbo and Wiebesick for their efforts in promoting Manchester's events and for providing the CTAP grants as we enhance our tourism-based projects.

Following discussion, members decided to appropriate \$5300 of the 2018-2019 CTAP grant to provide \$4000 for Historical Museum improvements and \$1300 (based on contractor quote) to enhance and provide a protective finish on the Ally Mural. The remaining grant of \$4700 would be used as originally allocated, to design and print the River Raisin brochure, complete the promotional video, and provide additional marketing revenue.

2) 2019-2020 CTAP Proposal

Following discussion members decided to focus on three projects:

- The construction of a canoe/kayak storage unit: location, design and contractor to be determined, but to be completed in one year.
- Design and print a Barn Quilt/Historical Barn Brochure and develop a Barn Tour package that can be marketed to travel groups. Project to be completed in one year.
- What we are calling the “Dairy Queen” Project. A three-year project that would connect the Riverfront Park with village-owned, river-edge property south of the Dairy Queen and provide seating and recreation amenities.

3) KaBOOM Grant Proposal

Berg and Wallace recently met with 5 Healthy Towns representatives and KaBOOM representative, Casey Paskus. Casey, a Manchester native, offered to provide additional assistance with our grant application, which is due March 22. The grant will now be filed from the Village instead of the DDA, which will give us a more flexibility and not limit funding to the DDA geographical area. The grant is limited to contractors and design elements listed in the grant application.

Wallace asked Village employees to suggest locations for KaBoom sponsored features on a Manchester map, copies of which were distributed to DDA members for consideration.

After a general review, Heinrich expressed concern for the elements that were suggested for the “Ally”. He thought current, spontaneous play activities in the ally were sufficient and that proposed additions would detract from future plans for the area. Fielder expressed desire to maintain the “historical” appearance of the Village Green. The pictures of KaBoom seating, didn’t look historical, and previous experience with DPW workers and mowing grass around picnic tables might present a problem.

Discussion also included other possible “downtown” locations for play features. Suggested play areas at Carr Park were eliminated by the Village, because the Parks Commission’s Five-Year Plan is detailing extensive improvements there. One suggestion, that is not be available through a KaBOOM grant, is a “sponsored” brick

patio. Fielder did support a giant, outdoor chess set, and suggested working with the Parks Commission, so some of this year's KaBoom revenue might benefit Park Commission's plans for Carr Park. Berg asked members to respond via email to the Village map and suggested KaBoom features.

4) Grocery Store Replacement Project

Berg met with Wallace and Paula Holtz, the MEDC representative. After reviewing proposed options discussed at last month's meeting, Berg is preparing an article for the Manchester Mirror. It was suggested that recruiting Whole Foods would be less desirable, based on expecting pricing. Wallace knows the managers at Jerry's Market, and their previous market expansions were less successful than expected. Busch's chain is also less likely to expand to Manchester, since another Busch's is located less than 10 miles away in Clinton.

Recruiting a "mini" Kroger to Manchester might be feasible, given available grant incentives. With support of DDA Members, Berg will complete the Kroger application and is planning to present an economic and marketing analysis to Kroger executives during the week of March 4th.

Recruiting a "grocery only" Meijers – mini food market would be another option. Similar Mini Meijers have been successful in the Grand Rapids' Bridge Street Project, and also in Downtown Detroit. Meijers has responded to other "Food Desert" areas. MEDC recommended a Spartan Store chain as another possibility. The Cattleman's Meat Market was also suggested as a possible market for our area.

One challenge to recruiting a major mini-market is the Village Council's preference for a rebuild facility in the same location. They do not support relocation to a more marketable site on M52, which might be a prerequisite of a major market provider.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

The next meeting is scheduled for March 20th at 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fielder, secretary