

## **Manchester Downtown Development**

**May 27, 2020**

### **Approved Minutes**

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

**Members present:** Ray Berg, Denise Collins, Susan Fielder, Leslie Kiesel, Sue LaRocque, and Pat Vaillencourt were in attendance. Julie Marvin-Manders was unavailable to attend.

**Approval of February 19, 2020 minutes:** LaRocque moved and Kiesel seconded a motion to approve minutes as amended. Roll call vote: LaRocque, yes; Kiesel, yes; Berg, abstained; Collins, yes; Fielder, yes; Pat Vaillencourt, yes. Motion passed.

**Public Participation:** Vaillencourt hearing none, closed public participation.

**Approval of Agenda:** Collins moved; Berg seconded the motion to accept the agenda as presented. Roll call vote: Collins, yes; Berg, yes; Fielder, yes; LaRocque, yes; Kiesel, yes; Pat Vaillencourt, yes. Motion passed.

### **CTAP Outstanding Projects**

Berg reported that Amy Karbo of Destination Ann Arbor, has been furloughed until October due to budget constraints caused by the COVID 19 virus. CTAP 2020-2021 project applications have been canceled. Berg met with Julie Schaible at the Village office and confirmed \$30K for the projects approved between 2018 – 2020 has been received. A proposed revision of planned projects would need to be reapproved by CTAP. Berg will send revised projects to Dennis Doyle. He also shared a CTAP financial report (attached) indicating a balance of \$16,928.27.

Berg suggested postponing the river front seating area project south of the Main Street Bridge. The 2020-2021 grant revenue of \$2500 was part of an anticipated three-year grant. Future grant revenue has been compromised. Opening Dutch Dairy is unlikely as the building permit has expired and walkable access to the proposed park extension is less defined. Current revenue could be redirected to complete the Shared Use Trail seating, Kiosks, and mile markers. Public use of the shared use trail has dramatically increased because of Stay-At-Home requirements. Anticipated support from Fr. Bosco at the Catholic Church could complete the 240 feet of trail behind the Parish Center Hall connecting it to Madison Street.

Berg also suggested continued financial support for the Barn Tour brochure that Katy Hughes has been preparing. Berg expects final delivery to Sue Maher soon, and \$2100 for printing has been approved.

Vaillencourt suggested diverting \$7100 budgeted for Water Tourism projects, including canoe storage, Raisin River brochure and a promotional video. Video tapping the 2019 canoe race was negatively impacted by inclement weather, and the 2020 event has temporarily been canceled due to the COVID 19 epidemic.

LaRocque shared recent discussions with Steve Alber, of Alber's Mill. He would donate his time and equipment to refurbish the park extension south of the Main Street Bridge. An estimate cost of \$5000 could complete the project. LaRocque emphasized the value of investing in the downtown business district and the potential benefit to local businesses.

Following discussion Berg moved and LaRocque supported the motion to cancel proposed river tourism projects, and divert remaining revenue to provide up to \$8000 for Riverfront Park extension and up to \$4500 for completing Shared Use Trail amenities including benches and mile markers, etc. Completing the pre-budgeted Kiosks may not require full amount of \$2100.

Further discussion: Proposed expenditures will require Village Council approval. Fielder asked if competing contractor bids would be required. LaRocque confirmed the Alber bid, with donated labor and equipment costs, would be difficult to undercut by competing contractors. It was also decided that written details of the Alber/LaRocque proposed plan for improving the Riverfront Park south of Main Street would be presented to Council for approval. After Council approval, Berg will send revised CTAP plans to Destination Ann Arbor.

Roll call vote: Berg, yes; LaRocque, yes; Collins, yes; Fielder, yes; Kiesel, yes; Pat Vaillencourt, yes.  
Motion passed.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Events**

LaRocque reported that 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday events have been put on hold due to the COVID constraints. Alber's Mill is planning some pop-up market activities separate from the Chamber events, but even these have been canceled through June, waiting for Governor's updates on the Stay-at-Home regulations. LaRocque confirmed anticipated revenue from the Michigan Realtors grant will be reserved for next year. Currently, we have no funding for the pumpkin fest originally planned for this year. Vaillencourt reported the Chi Broil Disc Golf project, funded by a 5healhty towns grant is also on hold.

Vaillencourt reported features for the Kaboom Grant were ordered in January, but delivery has been delayed. Community engagement may be limited now, but the DPW and Parks Commissioners are still planning installation this summer.

The Canoe race has been delayed. The committee may downsize original plans and are considering an August event, but the river may be too low. They don't have a sponsor to cover for insurance costs. Band boosters are not available now. One suggestion was to combine 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday and the canoe race on a Saturday. Amcor was mentioned as a possible sponsor, given their generous community support in the past.

#### **Michigan Restaurant Association – Franks Place**

Vaillencourt congratulated the Collins family for recently being featured in MRA publication. They produced a video webinar – art of hospitality, “What’s Working”. In addition to bringing a positive impact for our community, Franks Place also provided a much appreciated “Community Groceries” resource.

Vaillencourt suggested our next combined DDA/Chamber meeting might focus on the use of social media in promoting local businesses. She also announced the RV Park has been approved and is expected to open in the spring of 2021. River activities and the Shared Use Trail will enhance the RV park usage and visitors are expected to provide a positive impact on local businesses.

**Adjournment:** LaRocque moved, Kiesel seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12pm. All in favor. The meeting adjourned.

**Next Meeting:** Following discussion the next meeting has been scheduled for June 24, 2020.

Respectively Submitted,  
Susan Fielder, secretary