

**Final**  
**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE**  
**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Tuesday, October 15, 2024**  
**Commerce Township Hall**  
**2009 Township Drive**  
**Commerce Township, MI 48390**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Matta at 12:02pm.

**Downtown Development Authority:**

**Present:** Debbie Watson, DDA Director  
Steve Matta, Chairperson  
Tim Hoy, Vice Chairperson  
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor  
Jose Mirkin, Member  
Brian Winkler, Member  
Derek Tuck, Member  
Susan Spelker, Member  
Spencer Schafer, Member

**Absent:** Melissa Creech, DDA Secretary  
David Smith, Member (excused)

**Also Present:** Molly Phillips, DDA Treasurer  
Sandy Allard, DDA Assistant  
Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director  
Chris Martella, Dawda Mann, DDA Attorney  
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial  
Lt. Wendy Reyes, OCSO Substation Commander (exited 12:18pm)  
Sgt. Matt Leggat, Oakland County Sheriff

**Item 1: Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Hoy, to approve the DDA Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2024.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Item 2: Public Comments**

Chairperson Matta opened to public comments.

Eric Nagler, 31108 Barrington Circle, Commerce Township – In reading last month’s meeting minutes, when Bruce was here, I never saw anything mentioned about the traffic circles. Is anything going to happen to them or are they going to stay as is?

Director Watson – Dave, you may remember this too; the RCOC reviewed the large roundabout initially when we were building it years ago, and they actually reduced the size of it. We had wanted to make it a little larger with more slip lanes, but they reduced it. So, more recently, when the RCOC mentioned that we might have to expand the size of the roundabout, I believe my predecessor, Mark Stacey, went back and forth with them on that topic.

Dave Campbell – We went back and forth with the RCOC about 5 years ago, pre-covid, with respect to the big roundabout. While there is an opportunity to reduce the size of the traffic circle in the middle and add additional lanes, you’re trading one problem for another. The more lanes you add to a roundabout, while you’re increasing the number of vehicles that could get through the roundabout, you’re also increasing the potential for people to change lanes in the middle of

the roundabout, so now you're creating new conflict points. So, what was determined then, and I think it's still the case, that roundabout – it is what it is. That's going to be the design of that roundabout for the next 20 years. That roundabout, and the other roundabouts along the way, were all designed anticipating the level of traffic that Aikens is now finally going to generate. Long story short, Martin Parkway and the roundabouts, they are what they are. Now, in terms of traffic improvements, there is going to be a traffic signal along Pontiac Trail, east of the big roundabout, at what will be the main entrance into Five & Main, what's currently a shared driveway for Walmart.

Eric Nagler – Thank you.

Robin Mifsud, 5298 Baronette Lane, Commerce Township – Last time, I brought up the facilities back here on Dallavo Court. I looked at the two buildings there. One, I wasn't able to go inside, but I did call the number they had posted, and they said they're there and working. The other location is the larger structure at 3160. It does appear to have some manufacturing going on there in at least half of it, Suite A. It looks like Suite B has nothing going on.

Chairperson Matta – Okay, well we appreciate your update.

Robin Mifsud – And there is a sign that looks like they're selling some land there or something. It's just outside Nuspire; it says, "For Sale, 3900 square feet on 4 acres". When I called Nuspire, he didn't know anything about that.

Chairperson Matta – All right, well thank you very much.

Ray Golota, 1595 Vanstone, Commerce Township – I'm just curious, is the company C.A. Hull within the DDA, off Goldie Street and Haggerty?

Dave Campbell – It is within the DDA District, yes.

Ray Golota – How is that zoned?

Randy Thomas – That's light industrial.

Dave Campbell – It's TLM, technology and light manufacturing. Now they existed long before the TLM zoning district was created, so back then it was zoned industrial.

Ray Golota – So if they decided to expand, would they be grandfathered into industrial?

Dave Campbell – They did actually do an expansion; I think it was 2015 or 2016. They put a new office addition onto their building. That was one where the addition itself was meant to comply with the current standards of the TLM zoning district, but as part of that, you try to bring the rest of the site into what we call reasonable compliance. They fenced in their existing yard better, and they added more decorative fencing along Goldie, along with some landscaping improvements. It was a give and take; in exchange for the building addition, they were able to bring their site closer to the standards of today's requirements.

Ray Golota – The reason I'm asking is that rumor has it they bought the vacant lot to the north. It was a rental place.

Dave Campbell – This is the first I've heard of it.

Ray Golota – All right, thank you.

Chairperson Matta closed to public comments.

### **Item 3: OCSO Update**

Lt. Reyes reported on the following items.

- I've connected with TIA, who used to give us traffic reports and information on accidents. Debbie and I are working on getting the downtown area updates; monthly reports, so hopefully we can get that scheduled from here on out.
- A man went missing yesterday. You may have heard about it on Facebook or on the news. He is still missing, and the search continues. He has medical and mental health issues.

Chairperson Matta – How about the young man who ran off the road on a motorcycle?

Lt. Reyes – He passed.

Chairperson Matta – Any alcohol or drugs involved?

Lt. Reyes – I think alcohol was suspected.

Director Watson – Dave, have you talked with the Sheriffs about what you heard from Merrill Park?

Dave Campbell – No, I talked with Larry about it. We had a visitor at our counter this morning who lives in Merrill Park. He said he was walking the trails on Sunday with his kids, and he came across somebody who was hunting; he was carrying a rifle and there was a bait pile out there. I'm not a hunter, but I'm told baiting is also not legal.

Discussion continued regarding the incident, the fact that it is illegal to hunt this area, and reporting matters such as this to the Sheriffs for investigation.

### **Item 4: Insite Commercial Report**

Randy Thomas provided an overview of the Insite report submitted in the DDA Board's packet.

Randy Thomas – Like last month, I don't have a whole lot to report that's new.

- The infrastructure is going in and a lot of dirt is moving on Continental's site. You can see some vertical actually going up.
- As it relates to Five & Main, Bruce is pushing and we're trying to finalize a deal. Costs have gone up 20-25%, and the market is going over those costs so that deal has changed economically versus 5 years ago.
- There is also another market that can co-exist. They're really excited. So, there is potential for two different types of markets.

Director Watson – Are you speaking of gourmet markets?

Randy Thomas – One is gourmet, and the other is a different style of market.

- The entertainment component is scheduled to come in and fly the site. They would be taking up 50,000 square feet.
- Right now, he's focused on anything going in along the Pontiac Trail frontage.
- We have three other groups that have stepped up and are interested in the hotel site. Those are new within the past couple weeks. Those negotiations have started.
- That's really all I have to report on Bruce's development.

Chairperson Matta – Does it feel like, now that there's activity going on out there on the site, that there's more momentum?

Randy Thomas – I'm getting a lot of calls. I get a lot of calls from the community. I get a lot of calls from brokers now, and I just tell them to drive the site. There was a lot of hesitation and doubt beforehand, but once you get dirt moving and some vertical going up, the doubt seems to go away a little bit. There's a lot of tenant interest in the site.

Chairperson Matta – That's good news.

Randy Thomas –

- Parcel F in front of the Township Hall – Nothing to report in the last month.
- Parcel J1, the hard corner of Oakley & Haggerty – There's a group that provides facilities for autistic children. They have looked at that site, and they've called me on a couple other sites. They seem to be coming back to J1. They'll have to talk to Dave because that would be somewhere along the lines of childcare, but I don't think it's the same clientele.

Dave Campbell – Is it like a classroom setting?

Randy Thomas – I don't know much about it yet, just letting you know the activity.

- Parcel M, the outlot at Five & Main – We are getting activity. I'm suggesting to the DDA that I will take names and numbers. Let's let Bruce kick this off. The numbers are moving in our direction, and they'll continue to do so as this develops.

Chairperson Matta – Thank you very much, Randy. We appreciate it.

### **Item 5: Attorney's Report**

Chairperson Matta – There was some information in the packet that seemed self-explanatory, but I'll let Chris review it.

Attorney Martella – I'm shocked. The stars aligned and we have the exhibits for our AT&T easement. On the very last page, it specifically calls out, *place new pole and remove old, damaged pole*, with pictures and a drawing. I also got an email on my way here that the easement is ready to be recorded.

Discussion continued regarding the delays that were encountered with the AT&T easement.

### **Item 6: Director's Report**

Director Watson noted that everything was covered in the report submitted in the Board's packet, which is included below along with updates.

- I. Updates on Developments** – Please refer to the Insite Report and the Planning Director's Report for additional information.
  - Five & Main – Continental's construction continues to progress at the Springs at Five & Main. Infrastructure throughout the development will be done in phases. Bruce Aikens provided an update to the DDA in Sept., and he is scheduled to return in December.
  - Merrill Park – Nothing new to report.
  - The Avalon of Commerce Twp. – Nothing new to report.
  - Barrington – Nothing new to report.
  - Wynclyff – Nothing new to report.
  - Public Storage – Nothing new to report.
  - The Space Shop, Self-Storage – Nothing new to report.
  - Higher Ground, Guidepost Montessori – Nothing new to report.
  - Lafontaine Automotive Group Dealerships (LAG) – Construction continues at both sites; 2199 Haggerty, and the corner of Pontiac Trail & Haggerty.
  - Parcel F / Unit 7, in front of the Township Hall – Nothing new to report.
  - Parcel J1, Haggerty & Oakley Park – Nothing new to report.
  - Parcels M & N – Nothing new to report.
  
- II. MTT Judgments** – As updates are available, reports are given at the DDA meeting.
  
- III. Commerce Towne Place HOA Items** –
  - A. Budget – Nothing new to report.
  - B. Dues – Dues are current. Fourth quarter invoices were sent to the subdivisions last week.
  - C. Tax Forms & Reports – The HOA Annual Report was filed Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - D. Lighting/Electrical – Shaw Elec., Eric Peterson, Adam Dornton, Jarrod Muirhead
    - Fall maintenance has been completed on the lighting control panels.
    - Shaw will be onsite this week working on repairs and hooking up outlets. Pole #64 will be reinstalled.
    - Light pole decorations are planned for mid-November.
  - E. Landscaping & Maintenance – United Lawnscape, Jose Medina; Bob Rousseaux's Excavating, Mark Rousseaux
    - United has been working hard to maintain the site and they're doing a great job.
    - We've completed tree removals and trail maintenance; however, some flags of concrete were cracked when trucks and equipment drove into the trails. Those will be scheduled for repairs as necessary in the Spring.
  - F. Irrigation – Michigan Automatic Sprinkler, Mike Rennie
    - The system is fully functional.
    - It is scheduled for winterization on October 26<sup>th</sup>.
  
- IV. Other** –
  - The Outrun Hunger team is gearing up for the 5K race on Sat., Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>. Their alternate route avoids the construction zone at Five & Main. I spoke with Kari Cotter yesterday and everything seems to be on track. For more information on this event, visit <https://www.outrunhunger.org/>.

### **Township Board Report**

Supervisor Gray –

- We have been having special Board meetings the last couple of months, working through our budgeting process. We're hoping to wrap that up by October 22<sup>nd</sup>, with approval of the 2025 Budget in November at the regular Township Board meeting. The following are some highlights from the last meeting.
- We approved a purchase for a room mural at the Library in the kids' area. We're going to have an artist come in and paint some sort of mural representing Commerce Township and what we have to offer.
- We finalized everything for Victory Park:
  - If you haven't been down Wise Road lately, you'll see that there's some clearing going on. We're putting in a new dog park there. We purchased benches. There will be three dog runs, a parking area, a pavilion and ultimately, water and a restroom back there.
  - We had residents pull the stakes out two times, so we actually have to have someone there marking while they're cutting.
  - We have an anonymous donor who is donating \$50,000 toward the dog park, so that was good news.
- We approved Halloween, so Halloween will happen. It's from 6:00pm to 8:30pm on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- You may have heard about the issue we had at Byers over the weekend. Last week we were doing sample testing for underground core samples. They went down 27 feet and hit an artesian well. That well came up through the ground and made a mess for us. It ended up putting silt into the river which flowed into Commerce Lake. Residents called EPA and EGLE. So, I was there Friday until 2:30am trying to get the well done, which we did, and we wrapped everything up by Saturday afternoon. We met with EGLE yesterday and we have plans to rectify the remaining issues and put everything back together.

Director Watson – Why were they soil boring there?

Supervisor Gray – If you're familiar with Byers, we have a bridge across the river that goes from Commerce Road to Byers. As part of the pathway system, we received a grant for \$1 million to put in a boardwalk at Commerce and S. Commerce by 7-Eleven. Part of that was to take a pathway up into Byers to that bridge. In order to do that, we're making it ADA compliant with a wheelchair ramp, so they were soil boring for that when they hit the well.

Director Watson – Thank you. I'd also like to add, Randy, thank you for those aerial photos. I included those in my Director's Report. I wanted to have them in the agenda packet. It's a nice view to be able to see the progress at LaFontaine and Five & Main.

Larry, you mentioned benches. One thing I noticed when we were driving over the weekend was that people were sitting on the ground along roadways waiting for public transportation. I'm wondering if the County has plans to install benches for those bus stops, with all that money they're getting from the communities.

Supervisor Gray noted that there is an upcoming transit meeting, and he would inquire.

### **Item 7: Engineer's Report**

Engineer Mayer submitted the following report via email.

- **SPRINGS:** Water main for phase one (the on-site) is tested and connected. They are going to start framing the buildings soon. They are still working on some storm and sanitary for the on-site. They have determined the dewatering required for the offsite sanitary sewer (the deep gravity sewer) and will be dewatering for 90 days straight and they will outlet to the regional system on the west side of Martin Parkway. We will monitor the downstream drainage course during this time.
- **LAFONTAINE:** Water main is installed and being tested this week. Sanitary will start next week. They have about another 3 weeks to a month of utility work remaining on site.

Director Watson – Included with Jason's report were the plans showing the utilities to be stubbed at Parcel M. I just wanted to make sure that we are good on storm, sanitary and water, and everything looks to be in order there.

Chairperson Matta and Director Watson reviewed the plans.

### **Item 8: Planning Director's Report**

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director – We had a Planning Commission meeting last week on Monday. Mr. Winkler chaired that meeting and did a fantastic job doing so. There were three concept plans on that agenda, one of which is in the DDA district at the southwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Welch. It's a project that Randy is familiar with.

The property owner wants to demo the existing house on that corner, which I think has historically been used as an adult foster care facility, amongst other uses, and replace it with a 2-story building with retail on the ground floor, and either office or residential above. I don't think he has decided on the second floor yet as he's trying to figure out what the market would best support. The retail building would have a drive-through for a coffee shop or a smoothie place, something along those lines.

So, a conceptual discussion was held with the Planning Commission. He would have to get the corner rezoned for this to come to fruition. We do have a meeting with the prospective developer tomorrow to talk about the next steps.

I know our friend Spencer has several irons in the fire, at least two of which are in the DDA district along the Haggerty Road corridor. If there's any questions about those, Spencer may be able to answer them better than I could.

Spencer Schafer – With Kroger, we had a call with them yesterday. We've gone through three rounds of iterations on the last of the PUD materials, so the PUD plan is set. We were just going over the qualifications and some of the benefit items that we talked about with Dave. We're fine tuning those and we hope to submit them by next month. That's at Midtown on Haggerty. If everything goes well, our hope is to get a shovel in the ground by summer of next year. It's contingent on us getting our package submitted, which is more on us than the Township. We've worked a lot with Paula, and we understand the process.

As it relates to Crumb Road, I referenced at the last meeting that we have an outlot parcel under contract with Meijer. It's the parcel just west of Goodwill, east of Meijer Drive, to the south of Bennett Lublin's undeveloped commercial parcel where vehicles are being parked by dealerships. We completed the survey on that, and we are looking to make some minor changes to our concept plan, and then we will meet with Jose and the subdivision association directly west of us so we can share our plans before we make a formal submittal.

We will be making a lot of headway in the next 2-4 weeks on both projects.

Dave Campbell – We have heard from some of Jose’s neighbors, so you definitely have to make them happy.

Discussion continued regarding the proposed use and its low traffic impact for this parcel, which is zoned commercial.

**Item 9: Committee Reports**

- A. Finance Committee – Susan Spelker – It has been a quiet month. Molly, do you have anything?  
  
Treasurer Phillips – It has been quiet.
- B. Public Relations Committee – Jose Mirkin – I don't have anything new to report today.
- C. Marketing Committee – Chairperson Matta – Dave is not here so we can move to the next item.

Robin Mifsud – Excuse me, I just had a question. What is the Marketing Committee and what is the purpose?

Chairperson Matta – Basically, we try to find out what is going into the new Five & Main development and hear from the people involved in that on a subcommittee basis so we can get more details before we share everything with the public. It’s usually in the planning stages.

Robin Mifsud – So if he has something to report, he will get it to the public?

Chairperson Matta – That’s right, he comes here with it.

Robin Mifsud – Oh, just here.

Chairperson Matta – Yes, and you have to be here.

Robin Mifsud – He always says everything has been said.

Chairperson Matta – You can see the minutes online.

Director Watson – Robin, if you want to send me an email address, I can put you on the email list for our agenda packet. You’ll receive the full packet and the full minutes. You will also get Randy Thomas’ report, which is Insite Commercial. That also addresses the marketing efforts for the properties we have for sale. The Marketing Committee oversees the remaining parcels that we need to sell. We review offers when they come in and we meet before the DDA meeting.

Robin Mifsud – Okay.

Director Watson – Okay, I’ll follow up with you after the meeting.

**Item 10: Approval of Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons, Revenue & Expenditure MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Hoy, to approve the Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons and the Revenue & Expenditure Report. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



**Item 11: Other Matters**

2025 DDA Meeting Schedule

Director Watson – Sandy checked this to the dates of the holidays, and I don't believe there were any conflicts. Randy, I think you'll be absent for the November and December meetings.

Randy Thomas – I'll be here in November.

Director Watson – Okay, this November and next November. On that note, I would add that the DDA has existed for 40 years. Next month for our informational meeting, we should briefly talk about our 40-year history, and also our future. When I've been at the Township Board discussing our budget, they've always asked how much longer the DDA will exist. Our master deed and PUD were recorded in April of 2013. Therefore, we should really be wrapping up in 2028 or 2029 after the 15-year development period. We need to look ahead and set our goal to get the remaining properties sold. Berkheiser had suggested that maybe the DDA would actually go to quarterly meetings at that point. I'll be reviewing the statute and other documents that dictate how we might operate going forward at that point and we can look at establishing a 5-year plan.

Chairperson Matta – For now, we've got a full slate next year. Our next regularly scheduled DDA meeting is Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 12:00pm. That will also be a DDA Informational meeting. You'll be here for that, Randy?

Randy Thomas – Yes.

Chairperson Matta – Are we planning to have Bruce back in December or January?

Director Watson – He did say December.

Chairperson Matta – He was going to New York, and he was going to come right back here and report immediately to us.

Randy Thomas – I can't recall from the last meeting, but New York is in December.

Director Watson – If that works out, Randy, you had mentioned we could have you here via Zoom.

Randy Thomas – Yes, I'm happy to do that.

Director Watson – Thank you.

**Item 12: Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Hoy, to adjourn the meeting at 12:36pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



Melissa Creech  
DDA Secretary

**INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP**

EXP CHECK RUN DATES 10/15/2024 - 10/15/2024

POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID

BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
WATSON DEBORAH WATSON SEP/OCT 2024	DDA	DDA DIRECTOR 09/12/24 - 10/09/24	4,738.50
Total For: DEBORAH WATSON			<u>4,738.50</u>
SANDYB SANDY ALLARD SEP/OCT 2024	DDA	DDA ASSISTANT 09/12/24 - 10/19/24	823.50
Total For: SANDY ALLARD			<u>823.50</u>
Report Total:			<u>5,562.00</u>

**INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP**

INVOICE ENTRY DATES 10/15/2024 - 10/15/2024

POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID

BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
<b>DAWDA DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW</b>			
605947	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 09/30/2024	129.00
605948	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 09/30/2024	958.00
Total For: DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW			<u>1,087.00</u>
<b>DTE DETROIT EDISON</b>			
11/04 2579 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1100 5	101.81
11/04 2581 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1086 6	841.32
11/04 2660 OAKLEY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1065 0	125.18
11/04 3106 MARTIN	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1076 7	133.77
Total For: DETROIT EDISON			<u>1,202.08</u>
Report Total:			<u>2,289.08</u>