

**Approved
January 12, 2009**

SPECIAL MEETING
(CONDUCTED AS A COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE)
OF THE COUNCIL
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD
November 17, 2008
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MINUTES

The meeting of the Council convened at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Conference Room of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan, with Council President Joan Seymour in the Chair. PRESENT: Council Members: Myron Frasier, Sylvia Jordan, Sidney Lantz, Bill Lattimore, Joan Seymour and Kenson Siver. EXCUSED: Donald Fracassi. ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Nancy Banks, City Administrator James Scharret and Assistant City Attorney Susan Ward-Witkowksi. There being a quorum, Council was in session.

James Ralph, Chairman of the Cornerstone Development Authority, 17515 Nine Mile, thanked Council for the opportunity to present the CDA's new strategic plan. He introduced Frank Brock, Executive Director of the CDA.

Frank Brock, 17515 Nine Mile, introduced Sally Hodges of McKenna Associates, who worked with the CDA to develop a strategic plan.

Sally Hodges, Vice President of McKenna Associates, 4307 Walden Drive, Ann Arbor, stated that it was a pleasure to present the results of a planning process that was invigorating and exciting.

The CDA was created in 1988 and was designed to halt property deterioration and promote economic growth in the area. The area has all the elements of a downtown but is not your typical downtown. The purpose of the plan was to refocus the CDA's vision for the area. Focus groups were conducted with residents, business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, and city officials. Individual interviews were done with Providence Hospital and Northland Mall.

The big trend in retail is de-malling with outward facing stores, convenience, access, and entertainment. The CDA's position regarding Northland Mall is that it should consider a potential redesign with walkable and pedestrian scale additions, entertainment venues and activity clusters.

The one major economic sector that did not lose jobs between 2000 and 2007 in Southeast Michigan is the health care field. The health care field will continue to grow due to the aging population.

The CDA's position is that Providence Hospital needs to enhance its visual prominence and physical identity. The development of medical offices and a fitness/wellness center for the area is encouraged.

Oakland Community College is planning a major expansion of the Southfield campus. The CDA would like OCC to have more of a presence on Nine Mile and create a connection between OCC, the Millennium Centre and Northland Mall. They would like to find a way to keep students from OCC in Southfield.

The Millennium Centre has made tremendous strides as a cultural hub. They need to attract people to increase evening activity.

Eight Mile Road is the gateway to the City and CDA. There is a potential for medical office and medical products businesses on Eight Mile. The CDA needs to help facilitate redevelopment.

A Strategic Action Program was created giving a timeframe, responsibility, and potential funding sources for various projects within the CDA.

The CDA is in the process of preparing an updated Enhanced Development and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Plan. Two residential areas have been developed in the TIF Development Area since the prior TIF update, therefore a Development Area Citizens Council (DACC) must be formed. The DACC is a nine member board appointed by City Council. The members must be at least 18 years of age and live in the development area. The DACC must be formed at least 90 days before the TIF Plan Public Hearing is held. At a future Council meeting the CDA will bring the appropriate resolution forward to form the DACC and will also suggest membership for the Council's consideration.

Councilman Lantz stated that based on his experience with citizen committees, the members need to be qualified, knowledgeable individuals and background checks should be required. Mr. Brock replied that the only qualification needed is that they are residents in the development area. The committee would be giving input on what the district should look like. State law requires that residents be given an avenue for input.

Mr. Ralph responded that the citizens council would not be making any decisions. Council has the final word on whether the TIF and Development Plan are adopted.

Mr. Brock stated that the current financial environment makes it more difficult but plans need to be in place so they are ready to move when the economy improves. Providence Hospital has plans and alternative means to finance their plans. The Northland Mall has a

potential new owner coming on board. The new company is anxious to begin planning possible changes to the mall property.

Councilman Lantz asked to see a copy of the State law regarding the citizens' council. He expressed concern about the quality of the committee.

Councilman Siver asked how long the committee members serve. Ms. Hodges replied that the statute does not specify length of terms. The citizens' council must stay in existence during the planning process.

Councilman Siver expressed concern about nearby neighborhoods and what abuts their properties on Eight Mile Road. Mr. Brock replied that those areas would not be eligible because they are not in the TIF District. He promised to find a way to involve them in the process.

Councilman Siver asked about the status of the property that was suppose to be residential. Mr. Brock replied that the property owner is looking at medical offices. The property will be slow to develop.

Councilwoman Jordan stated that she was excited about the college town atmosphere being looked at for OCC and the entrance markers for Providence Hospital. She asked if they had considered making the CDA signs larger. Mr. Brock replied that others have made the same suggestion. The CDA will examine the idea.

Councilman Frasier asked if there were any plans for the hotel on Nine Mile. Mr. Banda replied that he meets with the owner regularly. The building is functionally obsolete. He told the owner that the property would probably qualify for a brownfield. He does not foresee it opening as a hotel. He feels a decision will be made in the next few months.

Mr. Brock stated that OCC has been trying very hard to acquire part of the hotel property. The Plaza Hotel is also a high priority for the CDA.

Mayor Lawrence stated that the older buildings need to be a priority for Code Enforcement. There must be concerted pressure on the owners to maintain their buildings. She recommended meeting with the building managers and make sure they understand the City's expectations. She also suggested that the CDA consider funding a part-time Code Enforcement Officer.

Mayor Lawrence asked that the CDA be involved in the foreclosure package being presented at the next Council meeting.

Councilman Lantz stated that Northland Mall pays Oak Park School taxes. He asked how much the CDA captures. Mr. Brock replied that the CDA captures county and city taxes. They do not receive any school taxes from any community.

Councilman Lantz asked how much taxes the CDA captures from Northland. Mr. Brock replied that he did not have the information with him but he could get it for him. The CDA captures the taxes from the increase in the assessed value. If the decrease in property values continues, there could be problems. The CDA is not immune from the same forces affecting the City.

Councilman Siver asked Dr. Adams from OCC, if the expansion of OCC includes the medical field. Dr. Adams responded that the need for qualified workers in the medical field is the reason for their expansion. They are interested in pursuing partnerships with Providence Hospital.

Council President Seymour stated that she is thrilled that OCC will finally be more visible. She is happy that Providence is becoming more prominent. There is so much potential in the district, it is a good time to begin planning.

There being no further business, the Special Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) adjourned at 6:45 p.m., November 17, 2008 until the next Regular Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) on November 17, 2008, in the Council Conference Room of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan.

Joan Seymour, Council President

Nancy L. M. Banks, City Clerk