

Washtenaw County
Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (WCBRA)
Washtenaw County Western Service Center
705 N. Zeeb Rd.

MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2008

Present:

Board Members: David Hamilton, Karen Hart, Suzie Heiney, Mark Heusel, Rhonda McGill and Richard Plewa

Staff: Patricia Denig, Mary Kowalski and Jeremy McCallion of Planning and Environment, Xiaohong Wu of Finance

Consultants: Mark Van Doren of AKT Peerless

Public/Guests: None

Absent: Jeff Irwin and Guy Williams

Handouts:

Agenda, Agenda Summary, February 14, 2008 Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order & Public Comment

R. McGill called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

K. Hart motioned for and M. Heusel seconded approval of the minutes from the February 14, 2008 meeting. The motion carried.

2. Announcements

J. McCallion introduced Todd Campbell, who is the new City Manager for the City of Saline and will be serving in a municipal position on this Board.

3. Potential Brownfield Projects

Federal Screw Works

J. McCallion noted that while a subcommittee has been formed to review the brownfield plan, they have not yet met. The site is within the City of Chelsea's Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and J. McCallion will be meeting with them to discuss the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan (which utilizes local and state taxes) and the payback period. J. McCallion noted that this will be a good opportunity to work with a DDA outside of the City of Ann Arbor, possibly to lead to more DDA outreach as well. In regards to the historic preservation of the site, some measures could be taken to preserve the heritage of the site even if the buildings themselves are not preserved – J. McCallion will be meeting with the County Historic Preservation Planner, Melissa Milton-Pung and the local group interested in preserving the site. J. McCallion will also present another historic tax credit option to the developer. The Federal 10% rehabilitation tax credit for non-historic buildings (not designated) built before 1936 is less restrictive than the larger tax credit options.

2810 Baker Road, Village of Dexter

No change.

The Village Market Place & Lofts, Saline Project 2

P. Denig and J. McCallion have met with Todd Campbell and Saline mayor Gretchen Driskell to discuss the project. It seems to be moving forward, and they will likely do some environmental remediation soon. The developer is hoping to start construction this spring or summer but still needs to complete some additional local requirements – the Planning Commission has extended the site plan approval through February 2009.

200 South Ashley Street, City of Ann Arbor

No change.

William Street Station (Former Ann Arbor YMCA)

No change.

Water Street Redevelopment Project

J. McCallion has been assisting the City of Ypsilanti with the project; there is interest from a larger Indiana developer who has done brownfield work in the past. He has expressed a need to have an “anchor commercial development,” as the residential market is not very stable right now. The City is looking at some additional options, and a City Council meeting will be held on March 18. Hamilton suggested marketing the site to AR Brouwer, and McCallion also noted that the City is interested developing a waterfront trail that would connect existing parks.

Banks of Saline (232 Monroe Street)

J. McCallion noted that they are still awaiting the final award for the Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) grant and loan – it has been reviewed initially but still needs to be sent to the director. All of the bids are in for an oversight contractor, but one cannot be confirmed until the grant money is set. After that, the Request for Proposal (RFP) process will begin.

Corners at Dixboro Project

This site will be listed on the Brownfield Transaction Forum at the 2008 Brownfields Convention.

Broadway Village at LowerTown Project

The contract with the oversight contractor, Conestoga Rover and Associates, has been signed and they plan to start work soon. A work plan will likely be approved quickly, but they still need to secure project financing – this will likely happen within the next few weeks.

Toyota Redevelopment Project

No change.

Thompson Block, City of Ypsilanti

J. McCallion stated that he received a call from MSHDA, and they are looking at a Michigan Business Tax (MBT) credit for the site. Hopefully this will move forward within a month. K. Hart noted that Beal is hoping to get building plans in soon. A subcommittee to review will be selected in April.

Growing Hope, City of Ypsilanti

This site is at 918-924 Michigan Avenue. They have filed a Baseline Environmental Assessment (BEA) using EPA assessment funds and have done a due care investigation, but a due care plan has not been finalized. M. Van Doren noted that they are trying to delineate petroleum contamination, and borings have shown that the highest concentration is near the road right-of-way. The site exceeds drinking water protection limits but not groundwater – it may be acceptable to leave the contamination alone, but due to the nature of the site (gardens, etc.) it might be better to remove the majority of the source. They may need to use Petroleum Assessment dollars in order to determine the contamination level in the right-of-way and clean up beyond due care standards. The next step will be to submit an eligibility memo to the EPA for the RLF, pending confirmation of contamination.

4. Grants

EPA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Grant

The Growing Hope site will hopefully use some of these funds and preserve the funds, and hopefully there will be an eligibility memo submitted to the EPA within the next week. It will then take two to three weeks to review.

EPA Petroleum Assessment Grant (PAG)

J. McCallion stated that the end of March is the deadline to spend the funds, but that he is working on a letter to request a six month extension. He believes that there is a good case for the extension, as a large portion of the money (\$66,000) has been spent over the last few months. Additionally, we have been leveraging funds and thus spending the grant money more slowly.

1196 Ecorse Road, Ypsilanti Township

This is a new nomination and the site was for the sale and service of power sports equipment with a gas station next door; it has been determined to be eligible for PAG and a Phase I has previously been completed. This site will be used by “Friends In Deed” to store furniture, and they will likely use the existing building with some internal modifications.

2340 Dexter Avenue

This site is still under review at the State – they need to obtain more information on past owners to determine if there is a viable responsible party for the contamination cleanup. The concern was raised by the EPA project manager, which is a similar concern raised about municipality-owned properties.

7890 Ann Arbor Street

We are using EPA funds on part of the property that included a gas station, and will be moving into Phase II soon.

202-212 S. Division Street

This is a new nomination and a Phase I has been completed by the developer. It has been requested to use PAG funds to complete a Phase II and BEA. The nomination has been submitted to the State. The current use is a private parking lot and the proposed use will be a mixed-use development.

5. Other Sites

University Village

This development would include student housing. It is located at South University and South Forest, would consist of two towers (one that is 21 stories and another that is 15 stories). It would function much like a dormitory, with security, floor managers, etc. There was an informal meeting to discuss the brownfield procedure, and later public meetings on March 5 and March 6. Several members of the public have expressed concern about density issues, and around 45-50 people attended the public brownfield plan meeting on March 6. The contamination on the site comes from a former gas station and dry cleaner. J. McCallion noted that he would like to be involved in the brownfield process from the beginning for future City of Ann Arbor projects, before a developer is contacted, in order to provide financial and environmental expertise.

Georgetown Commons

Kroger will be vacating this site this summer, and a developer is interested in redeveloping the site into a mixed-use development, possibly including senior housing. A BEA was filed, but there may be some liability questions. The planned development would add 25,000 square feet of retail space along with two parking decks to be used by residents and guests.

6. Administration

WCBRA Work Group Meeting Times

This work group is to discuss scope and policy changes as related to the new PA 381 amendments, including the changes to administrative fees and the possibility of using funds to clean up beyond due care standards. The group will also be involved in outreach and marketing of tax incentives to Local Units of Government (LUGs). Mark Heusel, Rhonda McGill, Karen Hart and Richard Plewa will be members of the group.

Membership

J. McCallion noted that there are still two public vacancies, and the deadline to submit applications is March 14. He encouraged members to reach out to anyone they think might be interested in applying for board membership.

National Brownfield Conference

P. Denig suggested that the WCBRA board discuss which members will host the booth and attend the conference at the next meeting.

7. Next Steps

- Work Group meeting set
- Federal Screw Works – preservation group meeting
- Growing Hope eligibility memo submitted to the EPA

8. Public Comment

None

Adjourn

R. McGill made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

I certify that the minutes are accurate and approved by the Washtenaw County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Board on April 10, 2008.

S. Heiney, Treasurer

Date