

Boardmember Pontz asked in regard to the Main Street Annual Evaluation if the City were asked to resolve the other deficiencies in the evaluation. Ms. Christensen stated that all issues will be resolved. She stated the three main issues were a mission statement, getting the D.D.A. members involved with the Main Street Committees, and more training for our volunteers. Boardmember Pontz asked that the D.D.A. see a plan for correcting the deficiencies. Ms. Christensen agreed to supply a plan and will involve Main Street Committees in developing the plan to resolve the deficiencies.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Pontz, to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 P.M.
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Pontz, Secretary

City Manager Dempsey added that the railings are going to be on both the outside and the inside of the Boardwalk. He said the ramps that connect to the Boardwalk will also have railings on them, so there will be no gaps between the buildings and the Boardwalk.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated the Main Street Program has received a letter of good standing from MSHDA.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that Portland will be used in a case study for our efforts to “Foster a Strong Sense of Place and Strengthen Existing Communities” by MSU Planning & Zoning Center in their Smart Growth Assessment Tool Program. It will be available for various other governmental entities and other interested persons.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that Julie Clement who is the Chair of the Main Street Economic Restructuring Committee has been in contact with Diane Smith of the Ionia County Economic Alliance who is interested in getting together with smaller communities to help with financing to develop more resources in support of Creating Entrepreneurial Communities. Chairman Dumas stated we have sent letters of support for the program.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that she attended the Cool Cities Conference which focused on culture and arts. She stated those that attended the conference received lots of good information and would attend again next year. Mayor Barnes helped with the City booth stating there was a lot of good response from people attending.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated she attended the Main Street 101 Conference and learned the basics of Main Street.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated she will be attending a MSHDA Downtown Revitalization Workshop and invited D.D.A. members that wish to attend to join her. She stated it will be held in Grand Rapids on January 11th from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.. She stated it is a free workshop.

D.D.A. Director Christensen provided minutes from the Main Street Committees. She stated as part of the MSHDA year end review it was recommended that the same people not serve on more than one committee. She also stated that she will be working on the Organization and Finance Newsletter from now on, giving business owner’s valuable information that she received from Main Street, and letting them know what is going on in the community.

D.D.A. Director Christensen supplied copies of the Design Guidelines for review to the D.D.A. members stating that the Design Committee is still working on them.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that Julie and Rush Clement have come up with a “Maintaining a Small Business Incentives Program”. She stated the first incentive is going to be a website for those businesses that do not have one. She stated the website will be free for one year. She stated it will be an earning points system such as joining a committee or fixing up or improving your store front. Rush and Julie Clement have put together a packet listing various points that can be earned.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that the Promotion and Marketing Committee was discussing putting on the Winter Run this year; however, decided against it because they were extremely burned out from Holiday Fest.

proposed the project. He explained that for each dollar spent fixing up the facades under the D.D.A. Façade Improvement Program that could be matched by another dollar up to a maximum of \$5,000. He stated that if we can take those two dollars and put them into this program and have State CDBG funds it would be like their one dollar spending as four dollars. The budget indicates that \$88,000 would be CDBG funds, \$44,000 would be local D.D.A. funds, and \$44,000 from the private property owners. He stated we have secured the commitment letters from the property owners for the \$44,000. He stated the attached resolution would be the D.D.A. commitment to match the \$44,000. He stated on top of the \$44,000 are engineering costs from Fleis and VandenBrink for \$31,500 to provide the Engineering and Design Services for this project. He stated the \$31,500 will be split between CDBG funds and D.D.A. funds. He stated we want to see all of the facades getting done under one contract. He said as an end result \$103,750 will be CDBG funds, which is \$3,750 more than previously approved, \$59,750 in D.D.A. funds, and \$44,000 in private funds for a total amount of \$207,500. He stated he has talked to MSHDA about the additional \$3,750 and they are willing to fund it. City Manager Dempsey stated that he and Ms. Christensen met with City Treasurer Brenda Schrauben to review the City's ability to pay the D.D.A. commitment of \$59,750. He said the D.D.A. does not have the cash on hand at this time, and will have to cut some programs to do this project. He stated we will also have to spread the \$59,750 over a number of years as not to impede the Main Street Programs. Boardmembers reviewed an amortization schedule to spread the \$59,750 over the next seven years at 5.25 % interest. He said, "In order to do this we will not be able to do any front side facades over the next few years". He stated if the tax base grows and you can pay off this dept sooner, you can resume your façade program.

Boardmember Antaya stated at least 20 years ago, before the inception of the D.D.A. the banks offered low interest loans for property owners to fix up the backs of their buildings, and you never saw any cooperation from the property owners. He congratulated everyone involved in getting this project underway. He said, "This grant will be very well worth it because it is a once in a lifetime effort to get all the facades done at one time".

Boardmember Briggs is the Chair of the Main Street Design Committee and she stated that some of the property owners that had façade money set aside for front improvements may not be able to utilize the money. She stated we may be able to use those funds for this project. City Manager Dempsey explained there is only \$20,000 in the façade budget and we are still looking at spending more money than that.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Briggs, to approve authorizing the submission of a Michigan CDBG Application for a MSHDA Façade Grant and committing \$59,750 in D.D.A. funds for a local match.

All in favor. Adopted

Ms. Christensen stated that we had our year end evaluation of our Main Street Program. Several people were here from MSHDA C.A.T. Team, and National Trust to spend the day to assess the Main Street Program. She stated we did not get our accreditation this year, but are committed to working hard to improve and make that happen next year. She stated the three issues that we need to work on right away are a mission statement, more training, and active board members. Chairman Dumas stated that the D.D.A. is in our third year of a five-year process for Main Street.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated the Boardwalk Project is moving along slowly and crews are still working on fabricating the railings. She stated the rain and the holidays have put us behind schedule.

**Minutes of the Downtown Development Authority
City of Portland**

Held on Thursday, December 21, 2006
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Antaya, Barnes, Briggs, Clement, Dempsey, Dumas, Pontz

Members Absent: Hoppes, Kavanagh, Kolarik, Urie

Guests: Parsons

Chairman Dumas called the meeting to order at 3:32 P.M.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Clement, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Resolution Authorizing Application for Façade Grant, under Old Business.

All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Barnes, supported by Clement, to approve the corrected minutes of the November 16, 2006 meeting.

All in favor. Adopted

Mayor Barnes observed that some of the receipts attached to the Treasurer's Report showed sales tax being charged to the D.D.A and asked if that can be voided.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Clement, to approve the Treasurer's Report.

All in favor. Adopted

D.D.A. Director Melissa Christensen supplied copies to the Board of the 2006 Downtown Façade Initiative Application. She stated they are still tying up loose ends but has kept in close contact with Joe Borgstrom at MSHDA.

City Manager Dempsey stated he wanted to acknowledge all of the effort that Ms. Christensen and Joel Van Slambrouck have put into the application. He stated that Mr. Van Slambrouck is a volunteer of the Main Street Committees and has sought out commitment letters from each of the property owners for façade improvements. He stated that both Ms. Christensen and Mr. Van Slambrouck have spent countless hours putting this application together. Ms. Christensen stated that going through the grant application process has been a learning process for her, and that City Manager Dempsey has been a great help.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated in addition to the grant application the D.D.A. needs to authorize a Resolution of Submission for the funding match of the grant. City Manager Dempsey explained the project budget for the 2006 Downtown Façade Initiative. He stated the total cost of the project is \$207,500 and there will be 13 of the 14 rear façade property owners participating in the façade project. He stated one property is ineligible for the grant because of a recorded lien against their property. He stated we hope to see some improvement to that façade as well in the future. He stated that Ms. Christensen and Mr. Van Slambrouck canvassed the property owners and