



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, March 11, 2025**

The Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance led by DDA Chairman Blair

ROLL CALL: Ackley, Allen, Blair, Johnston, Lublin, Mechigian, Millen, Raleigh

ABSENT: Amin, Marshall, McDonald

OTHERS PRESENT: *Mayor Pro Tem Woods, Council Member Owsinek, Public Safety Deputy Director Shakinas, Deputy Police Chief Kolke, Fire Chief Gonzalez, City Attorney Vanerian, DPW Superintendent Ladd, Finance Director Pesta, Assistant to City Manager Jaquays, and City Clerk Stuart

There being a quorum present the meeting was declared in session.

**DDA 03-01-25 MOTION TO EXCUSE DDA BOARD MEMBER AMIN,
MARSHALL, AND MCDONALD**

Motion by Raleigh, seconded by Millen: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To excuse DDA Board Members Amin, Marshall and McDonald.

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES:

Dda Board Member Lublin request to add discussion regarding the Banks-Dolbeer Foster farmhouse.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

1. Regular DDA Meeting of February 11, 2025

**DDA 03-02-25 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 11, 2025
MEETING**

Motion by Raleigh, seconded by Johnston: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the minutes of the February 11, 2025 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion Banks-Dolbeer Foster Farmhouse

DDA Board Member Lublin said he would like to make the home look good on the exterior at least at recommended vinyl siding.

DDA Board Member Millen stated that investing \$100,000 into improving the exterior of the home, particularly with vinyl siding, doesn't make sense for a historic property. He mentioned that he has been inside the home several times and believes it will take between \$200,000 and \$300,000 to make the space habitable and functional. Millen emphasized that painting the exterior would only be a temporary fix, as it would likely need to be addressed again in three to four years. For a more permanent solution, he suggested considering the possibility of demolishing the building. Millen also noted that he has personally invested over \$35,000 into the building, primarily for new windows. He pointed out that the interior of the building is in dangerous condition.

DDA Chairman Blair asked about donating the building to a museum or historical entity.

DDA Board Member Lublin said he did not want to just paint it and then have discussion again in three or four years. He explained discussions need to be had about the future of the home.

DDA Board Member Millen opined the downtown area needs to have major infrastructure repairs, why should they spend money on a non-usable uninhabitable structure.

DDA Board Member Mechigian inquired about the current use of the building. He clarified that, as he understands it, the \$200,000 is only intended to make the building usable and does not cover the ongoing maintenance required after the repairs are completed. Mechigian expressed concern that this could turn into a never-ending endeavor.

DDA Board Member Lublin said there is currently no use of or for the building.

DDA Board Member Millen explained that he reached out to the schools and encouraged visits to view the historical items, several news articles and interviews were conducted to promote the historical building and nothing at all came of it.

DDA Board Member Lublin explained everybody has a view, we have an election maybe put the question to the voters.

City Manager Whitt explained that the last millage proposed to voters was for the trailway, was overwhelmingly rejected by the people of Walled Lake. He expressed that he does not support the idea of painting or restoring the building. City Manager Whitt explained that while the project initially had good intentions, there were never discussions about its future use. Having been with the city for 14 years, Mr. Whitt mentioned there have been no viable uses for the building ever proposed. He stated that the building is essentially useless to the city, as no one visits it. City Manager Whitt explained that the very people the building was meant to impress with its history were underwhelmed. He recalled seeing Mayor Ackley, Council Member Owsinek, and former Council Member Robertson physically working on the building in previous years, spending countless hours trying to update it. City Manager Whitt said nobody is going to come in and save this building.

DDA Chairman Blair asked Council Member Owsinek for his opinion since he worked on the home.

Council Member Owsinek said he spent a lot of time re-plastering the home back then, nothing came of the home, and right now this home serves no purpose. Owsinek said it is deteriorating and as far as he is concerned this home is a lost cause.

Mayor Ackley said she agrees with Council Member Owsinek, she, Council Member Owsinek and former Council Member Robertson have spent hours and hours on this home, the support from the community is not there. Mayor Ackley said Mr. Millen has put the most money into this site and she has put numerous hours into the site. Mayor Ackley said if put to the vote of people, who is going to finance it. Mayor Ackley said the city has severe infrastructure issues downtown that take priority. Mayor Ackley said she has spoken with several individuals, even representatives from Greenfield Village, nobody wants to help or move it, it is not in any shape to relocate it.

DDA Board Member Lublin said we need to have an end vision and utilize city monies to do that. We need to discuss it.

DDA Chairman Blair recommended to table the discussion.

City Manager Whitt said the home needs to go, the opportunity to have someone swoop in and refurbish this home is not going to happen, and there is no municipal use for this home. City Manager Whitt said prior to his arrival, prior DDA members had discussed using the home as meeting venue for the DDA, but nothing ever came of it.

Mayor Ackley said there is no financing for current or long-range costs. Mayor Ackley explained that the city DPW crew work their heart and souls out right now to keep the city looking as beautiful as possible, then if we were to add maintenance of this home to their agenda, it would become overwhelming. Mayor Ackley said she does not wish to see this home as a burden for future generations.

DDA Board Member Lublin explained ultimately it will be the tax payer paying for this home.

City Manager Whitt said people do not want to spend money on something not purposeful.

DDA Board Member Millen explained when they put the site on the news as a destination, a historic venue, nobody showed up. DDA Board Member Millen said he has already put \$35,000 into home for new windows and additional funds when someone vandalized the windows, this is a money pit.

DDA Board Member Allen asked if the historical society wanted home.

**Mayor Pro Tem Woods joined meeting. 4:20 p.m.*

DDA Board Member Lublin said the Lakes Area Community Foundation for the Sarah Banks Foster Farmhouse does not have the money to rehabilitate this home.

DDA 03-03-25 TABLED DISCUSSION ON THE BANKS-DOLBEER FOSTER FARMHOUSE

Motion by Ackley, seconded by Lublin: CARRIER UNANIMOUSLY: To table the discussion on the Banks-Dolbeer Foster Farmhouse.

EXECUTIVE & MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT:

1. 2025 Dates for City Events

Assistant to City Manager Jaquays explained the annual Spring Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 19, 2025, the summer concert series will begin at end of June at Hiram Sims, Walled Lake Market Place located at the Casey J. Ambrose Public Safety campus will begin in May, flyers are available and have been distributed.

DDA Chairman Blair asked who would be running the Market Place.

City Manager Whitt said his daughter Ms. Loretta Whitt will be volunteering and working with Ms. Jaquays for operations of the market.

2. Public Safety Activity Report

Public Safety Deputy Director Shakinis explained that the Flock Safety cameras were installed in June 2024 at the following locations: Maple Road east of Decker Road, Pontiac Trail east of Decker Road, Pontiac Trail at West Park Road, and Maple Road just west of Ladd Road. When the cameras are activated, they send unique notifications, one of which led him to respond and conduct a traffic stop. Although it hasn't been a full year yet, the cameras have captured 579,674 vehicles, 80 of which were reported as stolen, and the department has successfully apprehended the violators. Deputy Director Shakinis noted that, as of the end of February, there are 941 policing agencies utilizing Flock Safety cameras, the system operates nationwide, making it a powerful tool. The department has conducted an average of 20 searches per month. He also mentioned that police officers, as well as the department's DEA Officer, utilize the cameras daily to assist with

investigations some even related to drug enterprises in the metro Detroit area. Deputy Director Shakinas explained that different police agencies across the country are able to utilize the Flock Safety system, our system was hit 200 times by diverse police agencies. Deputy Director Shakinas explained the cost for camera installation is \$600 with an annual cost of \$3,000 a year for each camera. Deputy Director Shakinas explained that there are two remaining gateway areas that require cameras: Decker Road and 14 Mile, and Decker just north of 14 Mile and E Walled Lake Drive. Deputy Director Shakinas concluded by requesting support from the DDA for purchase of two additional cameras.

**DDA 03-04-25 MOTION TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE TO PURCHASE TWO
ADDITIONAL FLOCK SAFETY CAMERAS NOT TO EXCEED
\$7500**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Millen, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve expenditure to purchase two additional Flock Safety cameras not to exceed \$7,500.

Deputy Director Shakinas explained that there are still ongoing issues with Up In Smoke Hookah at 1264 S. Commerce that are being addressed. Officer Shallow investigated at 602 N. Pontiac Trail, Suite B, where the building appeared to be vacant due to being blacked out. However, while on evening patrol, Officer Shallow noticed the site was occupied with several cars and found the building full of people smoking, gambling, and drinking. The individuals invited the officers inside, and photos were taken. Code Enforcement and the Fire Chief also visited the site, and within a few days, the lease was terminated, and the illegal activities were stopped.

City Manager Whitt said if you recall one of the social clubs in another location, there was a shootout and fortunately no one was hurt. It is not so much playing cards or dominoes; we have to be mindful of what these sites become. City Manager Whitt explained the city received an application from a the Bazonzoes Provisioning Center requesting an additional drive on Maple Road and a drive-thru window for purchase of marijuana.

Mayor Ackley asked if there is current enforcement of the No Left Turn traffic control order on Maple Road near Bazonzoes. Mayor Ackley said if Bazonzoes is not going to abide by the city ordinances and traffic control orders now, how would they be able to move forward with any reviews or approvals for their request.

Deputy Director Shakinas said he himself has been on patrol of site and issued citations. Deputy Director Shakinas explained there was a 40% increase in activity.

DDA Board Member Lublin said he does not support a drive-thru dispensary

DDA Board Member Millen said dispensary sites have state curb side approvals. The cars are parked, and we bring the product sale to them in their car. There is no need for a drive-thru dispensary.

City Manager Whitt said he does not want to see this request administratively reviewed. City Manager Whitt explained that the Starbucks development is still moving forward in reviews, the development at Decker and 15 Mile is still moving forward. City Manager Whitt explained the vacant property at 615 N. Pontiac Trail is up for purchase, the realtor has reached out for request for proposals. City Manager Whitt explained that the site is substantial at 6.4 plus acres and borders two roads, if there is a developer, the city will accommodate and listen immediately. The city council has been talking about this site for years. A developer may come in with straight zoning or a Commercial Planned Unit Development.

DDA Board Member Blair said there are 63 interested parties in this site

DDA Board Member Millen said he is negotiating a parking agreement to relieve the parking stress of the proposed Watermark Terrace LLC development.

WARRANT REPORT:

1. February 2025

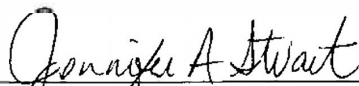
**DDA 03-05-25 APPROVAL TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE WARRANT FOR
FEBRUARY 2025**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Millen: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To receive and file the warrant for February 2025


ADJOURNMENT:

DDA 03-06-25 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Millen: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 4:52 P.M.



Jennifer A. Stuart
City Clerk



Steve Blair
DDA Chairman