

BR-127 Corridor Improvement Authority

Minutes

Tuesday, January 6, 2014

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were members Allen, Balzer, Calder, Mohre, and Taylor.
- 2) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Member Calder motioned to approve the agenda and was seconded by Balzer. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Member Balzer motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Calder. The motion passed unanimously.
- 4) **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** N/A
- 5) **CORRESPONDENCE:** N/A
- 6) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** N/A
- 7) **NEW BUSINESS:**

a) Commercial Rehabilitation Tax Abatement Policy

Planner Niewiadomski went over the tax abatement policy with the CIA Members and indicated that the Township Board authorized the CIA to assume the responsibilities of the Economic Development Committee in September. The CIA was selected due to the location of the commercial rehabilitation district being located within the CIA District, the opportunity for the CIA to establish relationships with new or expanding businesses in the area, and that the goals of the commercial rehabilitation act are closely related to the goals of the CIA.

Planner Niewiadomski indicated that there ranking criteria that the committee utilizes to determine if a commercial rehabilitation tax exemption certificate should be issued. It is based on location, job retention, job creation, other jobs, project value, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. Niewiadomski briefly described the criteria for each of the categories.

Member Calder pointed out that there is no difference based on the value of jobs within the ranking criteria. In addition, the current policy indicates that a full time job is 21+ hours a week. He understood that when the District was created it was put in place to help show that the Township would work with businesses which does provide value and can attract business. Member Taylor added that perhaps there should be a full time equivalency factor for the jobs category with defintions.

There was discussion surrounding the ranking criteria for location, project value being the highest criteria, job creation, and retention. The committee was comfortable leaving the monetary investment category alone but the scoring system may have to be revised based on the new point system.

Member Mohre stated that the current policy gives more breaks to larger employers rather than helping out smaller mom and pop stores that may need the tax benefits more. Perhaps that should be a consideration in the development of the new policy. Member Olson agreed that projects should bring value to the corridor. Member Taylor feels that a factor should be the larger impact on the community. Member Olson felt that location could provide a higher weight, project value should be considered, and the jobs categories should be consolidated into one, with a sliding scale. There should also be a tie in with the CIA goals and objectives.

There was general discussion about exterior improvements and incorporating design concepts into the policy such as preserving historical value, removing or tearing down blighted structures to rebuild and

create modern sites should have a higher point value. In addition, there should be more value if a building has been vacant for a longer period of time and rehabilitated as opposed to rehabilitating a recently utilized parcel. Aesthetics of the property should mean more to the point system so that the transformations are visible from the corridor to provide a bigger impact.

Discussion surrounding the LEED certification indicated that this category should be removed and could be part of the bonus criteria. However, this part of the policy should include a provision for exterior aesthetics that the project brings value to the corridor.

Staff indicated that they would provide a draft revised policy for discussion at the next CIA Meeting.

b) Old 27 Sidewalk and Pathway Project Update

Member Taylor indicated that the project has had some challenges with utility poles but the issues can be solved. Staff has been working on obtaining grading easements and the project is still planned to be constructed this summer.

c) Election of Officers

Mohre move, Allen seconded, to nominate Olson as Chair of the Corridor Improvement Authority.

AYES: Allen, Balzer, Calder, Mohre, Olson, Taylor

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kelley, Randall

Motion carried.

Taylor move, Allen seconded, to nominate Calder as Vice Chair, Taylor as Secretary, and Randall as Treasurer of the Corridor Improvement Authority.

AYES: Allen, Balzer, Calder, Mohre, Olson, Taylor

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Kelley, Randall

Motion carried.

8) **Extended Comments:** Member Taylor informed the Members of the CIA that Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is offering more placemaking art grants. His thoughts were to look at a Township owned parcel on the northern portion of the CIA District to do another art piece, however, Consumers Energy has a gas main easement over the property that would present issues. He did states that possibly next year there will be an opportunity again to look at.

9) **Adjournment:** Member Taylor motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Mohre. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.