

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Record of the February 4, 2016 Special Joint Meeting  
with the Highland Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals**

**APPROVED**

**HDDA Members Present:** Supervisor Hamill, Roscoe Smith, Jim Stevenson, Matt Barnes, John Hirzel

**Township Board Members Present:** Mary McDonell, Judy Cooper, Brian Howe, Charles Dittmar, Russ Tierney

**Planning Commission Board Members Present:** Michael Wiza, Eugene Beach, Alexandra Stellas, Jeffrey Stander

**Zoning Board of Appeals Members Present:** Margie Brockway, Robert Hoffman, Mary Michaels, David Gerathy, John Miller

**Absent:** Cassie Blascyk, Dale Feigley, Mike Maher

**Staff Present:** Melissa Dashevich, HDDA Director  
Karen Beardsley, HDDA Recording Secretary  
Julie Kabalka, Township Board Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by the Township Board at 6:43 PM, and the Township Board Agenda was approved.

Supervisor Hamill stated that it was important to keep information flowing between all local boards; in particular a program from Oakland County called One Stop Ready. He was pleased to welcome many Oakland County Representatives to our meeting.

Mr. Matt Gibbs from Oakland County introduced himself and reviewed the One Stop Ready program, its goals, and objectives. Definition of One-Stop Ready program is: Community focused economic development program built on self-evaluation. All working groups being aware of each other and working together to solve problems and issues in the most efficient way; working to improve customer service from the viewpoint of the customer.

Mr. Richard Carlisle from Carlisle Wortman Associates spoke next on the merits of the One Stop Ready Program. He points out the importance of working together as well, and how if this is not standard practice, the community is not only aware of it, but confused and does not have confidence in their elected officials. Mr. Carlisle distributed, introduced and discussed a powerpoint presentation outlining and discussing the importance of: Pre-Application meetings, Project Tracking, Permitting, Internet Access and Business/Community Input.

Supervisor Hamill joined in to introduce the next topic to be food for thought: Highland's aging population. While many plans, goals and community discussions are focusing on bringing young families to our area, he and Mr. Carlisle spoke of the importance of recognizing seniors as assets to our community. They are perfect candidates for volunteering their time, expertise, and other valuable contributions to our community; yet we are lacking housing opportunities for aging seniors. This is an area that should be discussed, as providing opportunities for our seniors could, in turn, be a great benefit to our community.

Supervisor Hamill spoke of an upcoming event this summer, together with Mainstreet Oakland County, discussing what the vision of Highland is. Many discussions and surveys find that people often cite 'rural' as one of the most important features of importance for our community. We are not, by definition, a proper 'rural' community, yet many use that word. It is important that people explain what they mean by rural. Take pictures: areas of ours that are favorites, areas from other communities that would like to be incorporated, specific ideas of what the favorite word 'rural' actually means to everyone. After a meeting such as this, a new, refined, more specific, detailed 'vision' can be created for Highland.

Supervisor Hamill wanted to touch upon some additional topics that need to be address in the near future. He listed them as:

= Extending sidewalks throughout the township.

This issue is key. Sidewalks are new in downtown, paid for with TIF money earmarked for such through the HDDA. As new businesses arrive, and as existing businesses/residences make improvements, sidewalks are a requirement in certain require areas, per the master plan. However, costs can be a crucial factor, sometimes deciding whether or not the new business or desired improvement can occur. It would be wise to look at other ways to get sidewalks in, and complete the walkability. This should be done with the input of the township board, planning commission and zoning board.

- Commercial landscape requirements.
- Signage regulations.
- Use vs. conditional use redefined, including LULUs.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

It was agreed that the One Stop Ready program would be a great benefit to the community. Additional and continuous sidewalks are definitely needed and wanted, and can only improve our community.

Supervisor Hamill adjourned the meeting at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

---

A. Roscoe Smith

ARS/kb