

Minutes

**Monroe Downtown Development Authority
Work Session
Wednesday, August 29, 2018
Third Floor Conference Room
Monroe City Hall**

Chairperson Peruski called the meeting to order at 8:16 a.m. The Vision Statement was read by Mayor Clark before a quorum was present.

1. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Robert Clark, Scott Goocher, Les Lukacs, Joe Peruski, Anthony Trujillo (8:45a.m.), Chip Williams
Absent: George Boyan, Scott Kegerreis, Mackenzie Swanson
Guests: Jim Jacobs, Mary Gail Beneteau, Brian Beneteau
Staff: Annette Knowles, Jeff Green

2. Public Comments

Jim Jacobs, Mary Gail Beneteau and Brian Beneteau all expressed their involvement in, prior use of, or support for the façade program.

3. Façade Program Review, Brainstorm and Prioritization Exercises

Knowles recapitulated the reasons for hosting the work session. The board in its strategic plan from 2017 included a revision to the program. Knowles commented that the DDA enabling legislation gives the DDA broader powers; however, any program revision should include a legal review. Invitees included selected stakeholders that have used the program, staff who review projects and façade committee members.

A discussion was held concerning the program in its current form. It has contributed to progress in the downtown and has had visible results, while raising standards. It demonstrates the importance of historic preservation and maintenance. It complements city requirements, while remaining simple for applicants. Demand for the program exists; it makes owners want to invest. Lastly, the process and expectations are clear.

A discussion was held concerning what changes might help the program evolve to meet current needs. Keeping the basis of façade improvements was discussed, but moving past the front door for eligible expenses. Ideas were: asbestos abatement, financial qualifications, demolition, roof replacement, requiring a return on investment, closing financing gap (currently, improvements cost more than the value of the property after the work; help with capital stack), \$10,000 maximum is insufficient (a maximum of \$20,000

would be more impactful), interior work (mechanical, electrical upgrades, utility, load-bearing floors, building shell), connections between buildings to combine properties, ADA improvements, fire separation or suppression, keeping the reimbursement at the end, elevators, design assistance, add committee members/revise committee makeup to include a building official, contractors, architects, design professionals, infill projects, adding the easement agreement.

Trujillo entered the meeting.

Lastly, a discussion was held concerning the board's priorities in moving forward. It is important to give clear direction to the Committee. In regard to process, the board members present would like to entertain applicants who are financially-qualified and that are held to milestone dates. The review should be priority-based. A legal agreement shall be required. The committee composition should be expanded. The application process will be two-phased, first with a predevelopment meeting. The program should be a last resort; other funding opportunities should be explored. A program title could be Building Reinvestment.

Under eligible improvements, the board members present would like to add: roof replacement, elevators, interior work (mechanical, electrical, utility, load-bearing floors, the interior shell), fire separation or suppression, ADA improvements and connections between buildings. Knowles will investigate asbestos abatement funds available from the Downriver Community Conference to determine if a referral would be sufficient.

4. Board Member Comments/Administrative Guest Comments

None

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Williams, seconded by Lukacs at 9:52 a.m. ***Motion carried unanimously.***