

**Village of Pentwater - Downtown Development Authority**  
**Workshop Planning Session – March 6, 2024**  
**Held at Park Place – 310 N Rush Street**

**I. Call to Order** - Chair Shotwell called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Roll Call**

Present: Barnes, Haack, Henley, Hodges (10:25am), Prescott, Saunders, Williams, Shotwell.

Absent: Nagel, Witt.

Also present: Village Deputy Clerk/Treasurer VanNortwick.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Prescott, second by Barnes to approve the agenda as presented with the condition that each agenda item will have a time limit of 15 minutes. Priorities should be set for immediate and future goals and anything immediate should be on the agenda for the April meeting.

Voice vote: Ayes: 7, Opposed: 0. Absent, Hodges, Nagel, Witt. Motion carried.

**IV. New Business**

**A. Speed of cars on Hancock** – While any traffic-related decisions are not under the DDA's purview, it was decided to briefly discuss the items with the possibility of making suggestions to the Village Council. Prescott will head a committee to study further.

1. Flashing speed signs for both sides of town – the Village is looking into these signs already. Can the DDA help pay for these signs? Would the school participate so they could use the signs on Park Street occasionally as well?
2. Need for pedestrian crosswalk signs.
  - The Village bought two signs that were used last year. It is believed that a couple more would be purchased to add for this year. Confirm with Chris Brown.
  - Pedestrians are not always crossing at marked crosswalks which is a safety issue and impedes the flow of traffic. How can we better direct foot traffic to cross at the crosswalks and stop jaywalking? It is possible that having more crosswalk signs would help as well as adding bump outs.

**B. Improvements to Hancock Street.**

1. Create bump outs on Hancock Street. Shotwell will follow up with Brown.
  - Is the Village already planning for bump outs?
  - What is the approximate cost per bump out? Is the Village paying for these or will the DDA have to fund? If the DDA would pay, is this a project that they could fund after their current loan is paid off next year? Would like to see this completed within two years – a project for 2025?
  - These could help pedestrian issues discussed previously.
  - One drawback is losing parking spaces.
2. Conduit to run electric & water by trees (lights & irrigation for trees/flowers)
  - The Village has said that this could be done when new trees are being planted or the brickwork is being fixed.
  - Is there already timing for the brickwork?
  - What is the cost? Is the Village covering this cost or will the DDA?
3. Plant the rest of the trees originally planned for South Hancock. At the December DDA meeting, Claudia Ressel-Hodan had a rough guess estimate of \$3100 for 6 trees and the labor to plant them.

4. Mulch & flowers around trees or an alternative that will stay off the sidewalks and be refreshed throughout the summer months. Priority item.
  - Mulch is an easy way to “refresh” the look of downtown though the summer.
  - The Petal Project Committee will be formed with Williams as the chair and will be an agenda item in April.
    - “The Petal Project is designed to create a colorful, fun, and family-friendly display of daffodils throughout downtown Pentwater in early spring.”
    - Daffodils are inexpensive, low maintenance, deer-resistant and will grow in either the sun or the shade with little water required.
    - Plant daffodils in the downtown area around the trees. Leaves can be cut down when they are done blooming.
    - Encourage business owners and residents outside the commercial district to plant daffodils in planters, window boxes, gardens, etc.
    - Select areas where large scale displays of daffodils can be planted. Possible locations would be Water Tower Rec Area, North End Park, pavilion at the village limit on the south side of town, and the marina areas. One section could be done every year until complete.
    - Community groups or residents could help with planting.
    - Williams will get pricing on bulbs – maybe we could get some donated by Weesies or Up North Garden Center in exchange for some PR.
    - Should this be added as a separate budget item for future years until the project is completed?

C. **Speed of golf carts and safety concerns** – This is also under Village control. Per Hodges, the DDA could recommend that the Village Ordinance be reviewed and updated if needed. This could also be a good time to address golf cart parking.

D. **Village Green items** – A committee will be formed led by Saunders to explore different ideas to present to the Buildings and Grounds committee for the Village Green as well as funding, or helping the Village fund these projects. By beautifying the Village Green and making it a community space, people would be inclined to spend more time downtown.

1. The top of the Green looks very cluttered and uninviting.
  - Waiting for the status of Consumer’s Energy grant for a firepit so it is easier to look at the space and have ideas as to what can be done.
  - When will the sculpture be removed?
  - Can the billboard and arch be moved?
2. Grant for the firepit at the top of the Village Green – status?
3. Power for the lights on the trees at the top of the Green – currently using extension cords, could add or move outlets. Could do something when conduit is run.
4. Develop the park and make it usable at the west end.
  - Add benches or tables – need a place for people to sit and look at the water. There are not a lot of public places in Pentwater where a water view can be enjoyed. Have a sign showing it is a public space.
  - Yacht Club parking is an ongoing issue. Public cannot enjoy the space.
  - View the new schematics by Steve Bass for the Village Green.
5. Sound system on the Village Green – will be addressed at a future meeting.

E. **EV Stations**

1. Not considered a priority at this time. No grants are currently available and this would be an expensive undertaking.
2. There are charging stations at the State Park. Any new stations would need to be located away from the downtown area so no parking spaces would be lost.

## **F. Develop parks – would like to see this completed in 2-5 years.**

1. Third & Fourth Street pocket parks – possible grants or other funding.
  - Need to make these two parks more usable so it draws more people to them.
    - Add seating and tables so people have a place to sit and enjoy the view.
    - Could sand be added?
    - Could make one park a nature spot and the other could be more active and have games or music.
    - Can we have signs on Hancock showing where the parks are so visitors know?
  - Hodges will talk to Joe Primozich – would like to see if there is anything we can do with the concrete blocks at the water’s edge at the end of Fourth Street.
  - Hodges thinks that the Village has budgeted for engineering and design. He will check into it. Where are the original drawings of the plan for the parks?
  - Is this a project the DDA would like to do once the current loan is paid off? Could the DDA “borrow” from the general fund again and pay back over several years?
2. Water Tower area – add games/picnic tables.
  - Will need to rename – cannot call this area a “park.”
  - Anything added to this area will need to be movable so there is full access to the water tower.
  - Would like to see games added (cornhole, bocce, etc.) and more picnic tables.
    - If theft is an issue, a store or the Chamber can rent out the games by the hour.
    - Ask Claudia if she would like to chair this committee since she is already doing some of the work on this – she is currently looking into bocce ball sets. Saunders said she would help.

## **G. Flowers & Planters.**

1. Flowers for the planters at the Marina for 2024 season – Barnes will locate the baskets for the four shepherd’s hooks. She will also get quotes from MaryAnn and Weesies to fill the baskets with cascading flowers.
2. Planters around town – If the Garden Club is no longer maintaining these, can DDA take over? Barnes will check into this more.

## **H. Arts – Summer concert series/bronze statues.**

1. Summer concerts in addition to Thursday concerts at the Village Green.
  - Try to plan 4 or 5 events showcasing local talent.
  - Would draw more people into town who would also shop and eat locally.
  - Could match it up with another event in the Village to keep people in town longer.
  - Possible locations? Village Green, Marina, Water Tower?
  - Find someone involved in music that could help plan these events and screen talent. Could offer a stipend to this person for the time involved.
  - Saunders will talk to Pentwater Schools new band director to see if he would be interested. Would the Chamber be interested in helping?
  - How does Hart do their concert series? Coordinate dates so they don’t conflict.
2. Bronze statues – Not an immediate priority.
  - Cost of a statue would range from \$5,000 to \$12,000 (wholesale price).
  - These would last a long time and could be moved, if needed.
  - The Village is getting 12 pcs of art from the Arts Council this year. This is the last year of their contract – the DDA can review the bronze statues again after that.
  - Could ask for donations from local businesses to help with the cost (like Christmas in the Village).

- I. **Consider an “Adopt a Block” volunteer program to keep downtown looking sharp.**
  1. Find a block captain to be the main contact for the businesses on each block.
  2. Haack will investigate and have a proposition of possible duties for the April meeting. (watering flowers, mulch replacement, etc.).
  3. Not much success in the past, but worth revisiting to see if there is interest.
  4. Discuss with local non-profits such as the Service Club.

J. **Other ideas discussed:**

1. Wayfinding signs and other signage to direct people into the Village.
  - The blue signs on the freeway can’t have Pentwater Shopping District on the sign, it would have to be a specific business. The cost for one sign space is \$1700 per year.
  - Oceana County DOT has the brown signs that we could get. Barnes will have more information at the April meeting.
  - Renting space for a sign to direct people into Pentwater in front of PCC?
  - Billboards on freeway.
2. AI software to analyze visitors to the area (how long do they stay, where do they come from, where do they go when they leave here, where do they shop and eat?). Could benefit the Village, the DDA, local businesses, and the Chamber of Commerce. Hodges will get more information.

V. **Public Comments**

None.

VI. **Adjournment**

Prescott adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.

Next Regular DDA Meeting: April 10, 2024 – 10:00 AM at Park Place.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee VanNortwick

Renee VanNortwick  
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

03/06/24

Date