



**City of Avondale Estates  
Downtown Development Authority  
Special-Called Meeting  
March 4, 2021  
5:30 p.m.  
MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Dave Dieters, Chair  
Lisa Shortell  
Leigh Lynch  
Jennifer Joyner  
Tom Trocheck  
Walter Barineau  
Stacia Familo-Hopek (joined late)

**Staff Present:** Shannon Powell, Executive Director  
Paul Hanebuth, Treasurer (joined late)  
Rebecca Long, Communications Mgr.  
Sara Hempen, Main St & Events Mgr.

Item No. 1 **Meeting called to Order (Deiters)**

Item No. 2 **Approval of Agenda (Deiters)**  
Shortell motioned to approve minutes and Trocheck seconded. All ayes.

Item No. 3 **Capital Projects Priorities (Deiters/ Powell)**

Chair Dave Deiters started the meeting by explaining that the BOMC would like to have a joint session within the next couple months (after the bids for the Town Green Park come back) to align priorities.

This special-called DDA presentation/discussion is a baseline to get members prepared for the joint meeting by revisiting and discussing overarching goals and principles. Chair Deiters mentioned three considerations -- to remain economically viable (currently paying \$165,000/year toward staffing alone), protect capital, and the DDA's mission to aid in downtown revitalization.

Executive Director Shannon Powell gave a slide presentation (see attached). The presentation began with a list of guiding principles and DDA tools for catalyzing private development (infrastructure, investment in public and/or private partnerships, and real estate acquisition.) While DDAs cannot do eminent domain,

there are things they can do that the city cannot or which are much more difficult for the city.

Director Powell refreshed the DDA on the 2018 DDA/BOMC joint goals. Most of these have been completed or are underway. She then gave an overview of **potential capital priorities** with some ball-park figures:

1. Infrastructure – park storm water (\$1.5 million) and interim solution (~\$450,000).

Interim solution necessary for development and park construction and allows activation until commercial project. Storm water solution is also necessary and extends beyond the park to adjacent properties.

Board members were interested in exactly what area the storm water solution will cover and it would have value as a storm water utility for future development. Director Powell mentioned another storm water priority project at Franklin/Pine and that it may be able to be leveraged as well.

2. Investment in Development
  - (a) Equity Investment in Commercial part of Town Green Project
  - (b) Purchase and Renovation of 90 N. Avondale

Director Powell outlined the pros and cons of these investment (see slides). Both might be a potential revenue source; however, costs may exceed revenue. Catalyzing surrounding development, activation and tenant control/curating were also bullet points. Retail/restaurant will be the toughest sectors to rebound in the economy. The DDA can afford to wait on return on investment in a way that private developers cannot. Equity investment in the commercial project is similar to the DJJ building model but has higher risk with no guaranteed tenant and an out-of-pocket requirement. 90 N. Avondale has been considered shorter term project and renovation might cost more than can be realized in 5 years of rental revenue. The building is in bad shape; was hoping preliminary numbers would be back, but not yet. Tom Trocheck mentioned the idea of a marketing study as a next step to see what is feasible in the building.

3. Real Estate Purchases
  - (a) Town Green Commercial Site
  - (b) Other Strategic Parcels

Director Powell discussed pros/cons and barriers to such purchases. Strategic properties might include parcels that could contribute to street grid. Purchasing city owned property is a mechanism for transferring funds to the city to be used on other projects. Property values in downtown AE are escalating.

The DDA members discussed the presentation and their initial thoughts.

- Interested in storm water utility model
- Hesitation to landlord/manage tenants
- The need for a road map and shared priorities with BOMC
- Concern over remaining economically viable with a long-term revenue stream to support activities and staffing

- Importance of Town Green Project (park and commercial; catalyst for development, need for activation; storm water solution is important; need to get under construction.

Item No. 5

**Public Comment on Agenda Items**

No public comments.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Lynch and seconded by Barineau. All ayes.