



Design Committee Meeting | Thursday, August 3, 2023 | City Council Chambers | 9:00 a.m.

## Minutes

**Call to order, Cassie Ragan**

**Roll Call: Michelle Kendall, DDD Executive Director**

<b>Chris Bankston</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Tara Bennett</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Roy Dufreche</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Michelle Juneau</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Tom Pistorius</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Cassie Ragan</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Jeffrey Smith</b>	<b>Present</b>

## Old Business

### 1. Approval of meeting minutes from July 6, 2023

Roy Dufreche made a motion, seconded by Tara Bennett, to approve the meeting minutes as written.

<b>Chris Bankston</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tara Bennett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Roy Dufreche</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Michelle Juneau</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tom Pistorius</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Cassie Ragan</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Jeffrey Smith</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Yes: 7 | No: 0 | Absent: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Motion carried.**

### 2. Review of Sidewalk Reimbursement Program Guidelines and Application

Ms. Ragan informed the committee that laid out before them is an updated version of the reimbursement program guidelines and application. Ms. Kendall overviewed the finer details of the application with the committee. Mr. Smith voiced that he would like the process to be more structured but not cumbersome for applicants. Ms. Kendall discussed with the committee at what stage the cooperative endeavor agreement would occur, when construction costs would come into play, and when the property owner will know what financial share they will receive prior to beginning their project. She stated the stages and phases of the project to the committee. Lacy Landrum then took to the podium to give



clarification to committee members what the city of Hammond's involvement and role is in this process. Ms. Landrum explained why the CEA is involved in the procedure. She overviewed what the process was typically like in the past for the property owner, the DDD and the city of Hammond. She then explained that the property owner is involved with splitting an equal portion of the reimbursement cost so that the work may be expedited. Due to limited funds for infrastructure for the city and the DDD, the idea of putting money on the table from the property owner is to speed up the process. She then listed how the CEA can be more involved in the process. She also mentioned that application verbiage could say that financial reimbursement can be up to a certain amount and any changes would need to seek approval. She believes that construction can begin with a good cost estimate and that a specific amount, down to the penny, isn't necessary. She guided that there should be language for amendments in the application should any problems occur. Ms. Ragan asked Ms. Landrum at what point in the project can this be initiated. Ms. Landrum stated it can be initiated at any point during the process. Her main thing to note with the committee is that if it is after a certain point, the property owner will be taking a risk if the city and/or DDD should refrain from participating. Ms. Landrum stated the decision will always be based on if the funds are appropriated. If the cost is over \$25,000 or the funds need to be budgeted, it will need council approval. If the cost is lower and funds are available, then the administration has the authority to obligate those funds. Ms. Ragan wanted to ensure that the funds are appropriate and available for annual use. Ms. Landrum informed that this is a more formal process than what has been done in the past and cautioned that there should be more room for broad strokes in the procedure to allow more creativity for a case-by-case basis. Ms. Landrum informed that the city likes to know what the project will look like, what materials will be used, where the project will be located, etc. Next, the group discussed how Hammond has grown into a large pedestrian town which needs improved and more competitive traffic calming measures. The conversation then moved to discussing target areas for the program, different process steps, language to be used in the application, a general time frame for the project, the number of projects that can be accepted at a time, and more. Mr. Bankston inquired if there could be a queue for applicants if funds were not readily available. The committee did not oppose the idea.

Mr. Andre Coudrain took to the podium to express his thoughts on the application. He encouraged the committee to include a deadline for applicants to submit their application post construction. He also encouraged the committee to include a dollar limit since bonded contracts aren't necessarily bonded. Ms. Ragan inquired if he could work with Ms. Kendall to fine-tune the aforementioned adjustments. Mr. Coudrain stated he would be happy to do so.



Jeffrey Smith made a motion, seconded by Roy Dufreche, to approve the sidewalk reimbursement program guidelines and application pending the authorized updates suggested and made by city administration and city attorney consultations.

<b>Chris Bankston</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tara Bennett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Roy Dufreche</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Michelle Juneau</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tom Pistorius</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Cassie Ragan</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Jeffrey Smith</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Yes: 7 | No: 0 | Absent: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Motion carried.**

It was requested to amend the agenda and move the new business item Discussion of Design Committee review authority (Andre Coudrain) before item 3 in old business.

Cassie Ragan made the motion, seconded by Jeffrey Smith, to move the new business item Discussion of Design Committee review authority (Andre Coudrain) before item 3 in old business.

<b>Chris Bankston</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tara Bennett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Roy Dufreche</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Michelle Juneau</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tom Pistorius</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Cassie Ragan</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Jeffrey Smith</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Yes: 7 | No: 0 | Absent: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Motion carried.**

**Discussion of Design Committee review authority (Andre Coudrain)**

Mr. Coudrain informed the committee that their role is to review and make recommendations. He informed they do not have veto power or final authority. He stated the building official is required to consider their review and once a building permit is issued, it is final. This conversation has stemmed from the issue the committee had with an entity that did not follow through with the suggested design alterations suggested by the committee. Mr. Coudrain reviewed this instance that happened and went over the semantics and verbiage used, and how it can be improved in future cases so it does not happen again. Mr. Coudrain informed that if someone did not meet or was in violation of their design recommendations, they need to explicitly state that qualifications were not



met so the building official will understand the violation(s) of criteria and it is not merely a suggestion. Mr. Coudrain stated that the city permitting process will override their overview and recommendations – their verbage must be specific and absolute. Mr. Smith inquired to know more about the UDC and I the design committee can override a UDC. Mr. Coudrain clarified that if it is the deisng committees suggestion that they have veto poper, then the UDC would need to be amended to state as such. He also stated from a document informing the authority of the design committee, verbatim, “with respect to the downtown development district design guidelines, the DDD design/review committee reviews and makes recommendations regarding any new buildings constructions, modifications and renovations which require a building permit and at which are located within the boundaires of the DDD.”

Ms. Ragan concluded that a permit of approval shall not be issued if guidelines are not met or strong language should be used to indicate violaion and disapproval from the committee to the building official. The group continued to discuss their new understanding.

### **3. Review of Railroad Park History Exhibit Panel Renderings**

Ms.Kendall gestured the panel renderings to the committee and asked members to proof-read and edit the panels. She provided stickered dots to be used as a marker indicating where edits needed to be made. Everyone then proceeded to overview each panel looking for any kind of error on the panels. This was the last opportunity to do so. The group spent about 20 minutes proof-reading the panels. No further discussion was held.

## **New Business:**

### **1. ~~Discussion of Design Committee review authority (Andre Coudrain)~~ Item amended**

Public Comment

Adjournment

