OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMISSION
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
CITY OF ESCANABA, MICHIGAN
Special Council Meeting
Thursday, May 29, 2014

Pursuit to a special meeting notice posted May 2, 2014, the meeting was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Marc D. Tall at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 410 Ludington Street.

Present: Mayor Marc D. Tall, Mayor Pro Tem Ronald J. Beauchamp, Council Members Patricia A. Baribeau, Ralph B. Blasier, and Michael R. Sattem.
Absent: None

Planning: Chairperson Thomas Warstler, Commission Members Patrick Connor, Roy Webber, Brian Black, and Kelvin Smyth.
Absent: Todd Milkiewicz, Christine Williams, James Hellermann

DDA: Chairperson Sue Parker, DDA Trustees Dan Bender, Mary Finlan, Andy Crispigna, Tara Deno (arrived at 6:18), Mitch Taylor, and James O'Toole.
Absent: Jeffrey Slagstad

Historic: Chairperson Don Curran, Commissioners Judith Fouts, Ellie O'Donnell, Suzell Eisenberger, Karen Lindquist, and Monte Morrison.
Absent: One Vacancy

Also Present: City Manager James V. O'Toole, Robert S. Richards City Clerk, City Attorney Ralph B.K. Peterson, DDA Director Ed Legault, Library Director Carolyn Stacey, City Code Enforcement Blaine DeGrave, Media, Jessica Flores (who was Skyped) from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and members of the public.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Administration asked to move Agenda Items 3-5 to be first on the agenda, and to change agenda item 2, to agenda item 4, and move agenda item 1, to agenda item 5.

Blasier moved, Baribeau seconded, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**, to approve the agenda as amended.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION – None

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion – City of Escanaba National Register of Historic Places Listing.

Administration led a discussion, with Jessica Flores of the State Historic Preservation Office, on the City of Escanaba downtown being among the most recent listings to the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Flores stated the listing on the National Register would enable the owners of income-producing properties to apply for Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits for the rehabilitation of their buildings, thereby encouraging potential investment in downtown Escanaba. The following was reviewed:

- This designation not only recognizes the architectural features in Escanaba's buildings but also was "enticing" for developers;
- Through the historic places program, income-producing properties were eligible for a 20 percent tax credit for renovations of the owner's choice. If federal funds were used, specific renovation requirements were required;
- The next step was to be synced up with the projects taking place downtown.

Update – Michigan (MEDC) Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC).

Administration, with Jessica Flores State Historic Preservation Office, provided an update on the City of Escanaba's selection into the Michigan Economic Development Corporation Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC). The RRC Program is a statewide program that certifies communities as "development ready" based on effective policies, efficient processes and broad community support. The following was reviewed:

- Ms. Flores provided a broad overview of the MEDC Program;
- RRC Program would allow the City to obtain a comprehensive review of City Master and Development Plans, and would also assess the City's business and residential opportunities, parking, downtown corridors, public input, targeted investments, redevelopment plans, and other economic practices;
- Ms. Flores advised an RRC really elevates Escanaba's presence in the state, and shows the City has an open door policy for development.

Discussion – Certified Local Government Status (CLG).

Administration, with Jessica Flores State Historic Preservation Office, led a discussion on the possibility of Escanaba becoming a "Certified Local Government" which, if approved, could provide financial assistance and technical assistance for specific projects that would enhance and promote historic neighborhoods and commercial districts in the City by identifying specific preservation projects. The following was reviewed:

- Ms. Flores provided a basic overview of the program;
- Manager O'Toole noted the City and DDA master plans helped make Escanaba eligible to apply for the CLG program.

Update – City of Escanaba and Downtown Development Authority Facade Incentive Program 2014-15.

Ed Legault, DDA Director, provided an update on the 2014-15 Facade Incentive Program funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Downtown Facade Improvement Program. The program was structured to provide commercial/mixed use building facade improvement funds to sustain and minimize deterioration of the downtown area. The following was reviewed:

- Provided a history of the program;
- Program has received $350,000 from State Grants, $200,000 from the DDA, and $75,000 from Local Matches;
- Updated current status of the program;
- Reviewed proposed current Façade Improvement Program properties.

Discussion – City of Escanaba Historical Facade Design Guideline.

Administration led a discussion on the proposed Historical Facade Design Guideline which when adopted will provide guidance to property owners undertaking work within an established Historic District that is subject to review by the Historic District Commission or facade work undertaken as part of the downtown Facade Incentive Program. Those in attendance were asked to review the proposed document for recommendations. Ultimately, the Council would approve the document after review.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – None

COMMISSION/STAFF COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The studies conducted by the City of Escanaba over the years have led to the opportunities the City has today.

Hearing no further business or public comment, the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Richards, CMC
City Clerk

Approved: _____
Marc. D. Tall, Mayor