



# CITY OF MARINE CITY

## Workgroup for City-Owned Properties

Guy Community Center, 260 South Parker Street

Public Meeting: Monday, March 21, 2022; 5:30 PM

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **MOMENT OF SILENCE / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL:** City Commissioners Jacob Bryson, Brian Ross, John Kreidler; Planning Commissioner Ben Heath; Community & Economic Development Chair Joseph Moran; City Manager Holly Tatman
4. **APPROVE AGENDA**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT** Anyone is welcome to address the Workgroup.
6. **APPROVE MINUTES**
  - A. March 7, 2022
7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
  - A. 300 Broadway
  - B. 303 South Water
  - C. Meeting Schedule
8. **NEW BUSINESS**
10. **ADJOURNMENT**

**City of Marine City  
Workgroup for City-Owned Properties  
March 7, 2022**

A regular meeting of the Workgroup for City-Owned Properties was held on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 260 South Parker Street, and was called to order by Chairperson Moran at 5:30 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Moran.

**AUDIO/VIDEO AVAILABLE**

For complete audio/video of meeting, visit the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJifPpOUriQ>

**Present:** City Commissioners Jacob Bryson, Brian Ross, John Kreidler; Community & Economic Development Chair Joseph Moran; City Manager Holly Tatman; Deputy Clerk Michele Goodrich

**Absent:** Planning Commissioner Ben Heath

Motion by Commissioner Ross, seconded by Commissioner Bryson, to excuse Planning Commissioner Heath from the meeting. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Approve Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Ross, to approve the Agenda. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Approve Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Bryson, seconded by Commissioner Kreidler, to approve the February 24, 2022 meeting minutes. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

**Public Comment**

The meeting was conducted with an open forum format that did not limit reasonable speaking time; public comment was made during the discussion of each property.

**Unfinished Business**

### 300 Broadway

Jeff Bohm, St. Clair County Commissioner, discussed the successful repurposing of the former Eddy Elementary building in St. Clair. He stated that there was a tremendous demand for small, sometimes shared, office spaces and that all of the permitted space in the building had been filled. He believed that with the amount of work from home jobs in the County, the incubator space concept was on the rise.

Shannon Schwabe, Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC), discussed the purpose of the SBDC and advised that they provided free business consulting. She stated that she worked with several start-up businesses and that there was a significant need for a meeting space and temporary office space that businesses could utilize to meet with potential clients. She informed the Workgroup that the SBDC would help to fill available space with businesses.

Laura Merchant, Marine City Chamber of Commerce, emphasized that the proposed Guy Center Project (300 Broadway) was a collaborative effort that would involve the input and involvement of several Marine City organizations and groups, including the City, Chamber of Commerce and Friends of City Hall. She believed that the proposed Project could be extremely successful in obtaining funding if the groups worked together.

Judy White, Friends of City Hall, discussed the original Friends of City Hall purchase offer and stated that the business plan submitted promoted incubator space. She stated that the City had not focused on the building for decades and that Friends of City Hall had invested more than \$300,000 to bring the building into the current century. She stated that 300 Broadway needed to be made a priority and that Friends of City Hall was devoted to the restoration, promotion and preservation of the building. She advised that one of her worries was that any restoration done by the City would be done on the cheap and that Friends of City Hall was only interested in doing the building justice.

Mrs. White addressed the handout that was provided and informed the Board that there were only six surviving Opera Houses in Michigan and she believed that Marine City was the forgotten surviving Opera House. She stated that Friends of City Hall would do their best to honor the building and would like the opportunity to finish Phase II. Mrs. White advised that grant seeking was done in-house and that if Friends of City Hall were given the building, they would hire a professional grant writer.

Commissioner Bryson questioned if Friends of City Hall had a market analysis done and if there was still a demand for the vision Friends of City Hall had for the building; Mrs. White responded that from verbal feedback, she believed there was. She also informed the Board that she believed their business plan needed to be updated. Commissioner Bryson questioned if the City retained the building, could the City apply for grants on

behalf of Friends of City Hall. It was determined that it was possible however, there was concern over following the Friends of City Hall plans and drawings for the building. Commissioner Kreidler questioned if it was possible to maintain the historic element of the Opera House while converting the remaining portion into a more modern space with the incubator space concept.

Paul Merchant, Chamber of Commerce Member, spoke to the progress that was being made at Eddy Elementary and the potential for Old City Hall. He believed that the City could come together to achieve a common goal and that was to utilize Old City Hall with no one group being displaced. He stated that current building plans may need to be reassessed and that he did not want to limit the building's potential.

Bob Lepley, Friends of City Hall Vice President, spoke in favor of Friends of City Hall purchasing 300 Broadway for a 10 year period.

Jim Turner, Friends of City Hall, questioned the City's involvement and responsibility if 300 Broadway needed immediate repairs. City Manager Tatman responded that the building was still a City asset and that the City needed to have greater involvement in the construction and maintenance of its own asset. City Manager Tatman stated that there had been a breakdown in communication between the City and Friends of City Hall regarding 300 Broadway.

Laura Merchant, Marine City Chamber of Commerce, spoke to the difference between restoration and renovation and stated that she was able to see the beauty of the old however, she was also able to see the need to reuse the property for the benefit of everyone. She stated that 300 Broadway was known for its divisiveness in town however, she wanted everyone to finally put the past behind them to move forward and have the building be the anchor of the City.

Louise Beutell, spoke in agreement with Mrs. Merchant and questioned if an architect could look at all the options to make the entire property beautiful.

City Manager Tatman circled back to the financial aspect of 300 Broadway and stated that the Workgroup needed to look at the long term planning in terms of what was best for the City. She questioned the longevity of Friends of City Hall and stated that there were finally people in the City who were passionate about doing something with the space other than the status quo. She stated that it may be possible to preserve history while also introducing modern functions within the building.

Chairperson Moran stated that the next workgroup would focus solely on 300 Broadway.

303 South Water

Agenda item was tabled until a future meeting, no set date at this time.

### Meeting Schedule

The next meeting was scheduled for March 21, 2022 at 5:30pm.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Ross, seconded by Commissioner Bryson, to adjourn at 7:12pm. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Goodrich  
Deputy Clerk

Kris Baxter  
City Clerk