

Minutes of the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership Board of Directors
Wednesday, December 9, 2009 3:00 pm
Morehead Planetarium, Downtown Chapel Hill, NC

Members Present: George Draper, Linda Convissor, Dick Mann, Tommy O'Connell, Mark Vevle, Glenn Boothe, Dwight Bassett, Patty Griffin, Chris Jones, Andy Pennock

Members Absent: Mark Kleinschmidt, Cheryl Lin, Hilary Workman

Staff Present: Jim Norton; Executive Director, Meg McGurk; Assistant Director, Bobby Funk; Office Manager

Others Present: Pat Evans

George Draper called the meeting to order

Citizen Comments:

Pat Evans announced the next Friends of Downtown meeting featuring Gordon Merklein on January 28.

Consent Agenda:

Dick Mann motioned to approve minutes. Tommy O'Connell seconded, the motion carried.

Items for Review/Discussion:

Recommendation to Manager re: Arts Revolving Loan – Jim Norton presented the revolving Arts Loan Program and gave a brief history of the Arts Co-op. He informed the Board of funds currently raised by the Co-op and plans to raise more money. There will be an announcement about the Co-op next week. Mr. Norton explained the three year pro forma of the loan program citing the attached reports. He indicated that this is a loan a normal bank would not make, but it does further the Town Council's goal of encouraging arts in Downtown Chapel Hill. Mr. Norton will sit on the board as an ex officio member. Mr. Norton gave credit to Michael Brader-Araje, the owner of the property, for making the lease with the Co-op. Chris Jones motioned to approve the loan; Dick Mann seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

Report on Parking Task Force – Jim Norton spoke about the parking task force which has been established to set parking policy. Town Manager Roger Stancil put together this task force at the direction of the Town Council. Their first meeting will be December 21. Glenn Boothe asked about what business owners in Downtown will be on the Task Force. Mr. Norton responded that Mark Pons at Chapel Hill Tire will represent the West Franklin businesses and Scott Maitland, owner of Top of the Hill, will represent the East Franklin businesses.

Linda Convissor asked about Lot 4 paving. Dwight Bassett hopes that it will be open by the first of the year. Tommy O'Connell had concerns about damages and potholes in Lot 3 and asked the Partnership to follow up on his concerns.

Top of D'Grill Façade Grant Report – Jim Norton brought forth the new façade grant application. The awning is already installed. Tommy O'Connell asked about the approval process. Linda Convissor said the original intent of the program was for the Partnership to have input into the visual look of building

facades. Dick Mann stated that the basis of the grant is to help fund improvements to storefronts. Ms. Convisor suggested a more detailed review of future applications.

Report on Holiday Lighting Ceremony – Jim Norton gave a brief review of the Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. He thanked Meg McGurk for organizing the event, and Bobby Funk for assisting.

Other – Mr. Norton talked about holiday lights distribution to merchants in downtown and that he had observed that quite a few people have put up lights in the past week. Tommy O’Connell stated that the main goal is for businesses is to use lights in any way which is appropriate. Mr. O’Connell complimented the fraternities and the way they have lit up the community for the holidays. Pat Evans suggested giving a reminder to the business community to make sure the lights are put up. Mr. Norton recognized The Friends of Downtown as a 50% partner in this project.

Mr. Norton announced the holiday parade will be this Saturday from 10:00 AM until Noon. Pat Evans mentioned not seeing it in the newspaper recently. Linda Convisor noted the Town’s Facebook page is promoting it.

Mr. Norton brought up the meeting time schedule. He said there doesn’t seem to be consensus as a better time than 3:00 on the second Wednesday of the month.

Mr. Norton mentioned the downtown Master Plan RFP. Submissions are due December 15. There will be an independent review process with the Town staff and with Partnership personnel. Mr. Norton asked if anyone was interested in being on the proposal review committee. He will be writing an RFP for a branding/ marketing proposal to be finished in the early spring and that Mark Vevle, Glenn Boothe, Tommy O’Connell, and Hilary Workman had expressed interest in being on a review committee for this project.

Patty Griffin announced the Chapel Hill food-lover’s guide which just came out through the Visitors Bureau and can be purchased at Southern Season and online.

Dwight Bassett talked about potential additional market studies. The Town will conduct an office market study in the downtown and Chapel Hill in general.

Dwight Bassett announced the hiring of a graduate student to do a survey about small business barriers. Mr. Bassett asked for suggestions of businesses to contact about participating in the survey. Tommy O’Connell said he will send Mr. Bassett a list of businesses. The surveys will start in January and will run through February.

Andy Pennock mentioned Halloween parking issues. He had a problem with police who are coming from out of town and asked how the Partnership could help facilitate better communication with the Town. Mr. Norton responded that greater efforts to communicate with the Town would be made in 2010.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobby Funk, Office Manager