

Minutes of the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership Board of Directors
Friday, October 2, 2008 8:00 am
Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership Office, Downtown Chapel Hill, NC

Members Present: George Draper, Chris Jones, Glenn Booth, Cheryl Lin, Tommy O'Connell, Mark Vevle, Linda Convissor, Dick Mann

Members Absent: Laurie Paolicelli, Kevin Foy

Others Present: Meg McGurk, Assistant Director, Daniel Goldberg (Herald Sun), Eric Martin (WCHL), Carlo Robustelli

George Draper called the meeting to order.

Items for Review/ Discussion

George Draper led the board discussion on possible alcohol sales restrictions on Halloween night in downtown Chapel Hill by giving background information on the issues and the reason for this meeting. The Executive Committee wanted the board to discuss the issue in order to share its' collective opinion with the Town Council and Police Department. George Draper outlined the other possible restrictions that the town is considering; stopping the park & ride buses and restricting traffic into the downtown.

Chris Jones, continued the discussion by outlining the issues surrounding alcohol use and abuse on Halloween night; including binge drinking that is occurring elsewhere in the town and campus, substantial underage drinking that is not taking place in the downtown establishments due to checking ID's, closing bars earlier forces people to drink in unregulated places, as well as alcohol sales will continue in all other areas of the tow and Carrboro. Jones brought up the significant issue of whether or not Carrboro had been involved in any of these discussions and the impact it would have there.

Tommy O'Connell and Glenn Boothe both explained that most downtown establishments have regular customers on Halloween night who seek refuge from the crowded masses and some establishments hold private functions as well.

George Draper outlined the financial effects these restrictions could have by explaining that Halloween night is both traditionally a large sales night and this year is on a Friday night; both significantly financially relevant for businesses. Draper also discussed the proportional effect these restrictions would have on the crowd if the total number of people that would fill downtown establishments is in the low thousands.

Carlo Robustelli pointed out that the Town's management has been working on these issues for several months and comparisons to Apple Chill are not necessarily equal because that event was town sponsored and Halloween is a holiday that happens regardless if the town supports the celebration or not.

The board discussed that the safety of the event is paramount and measures need to be taken by the Town. The board discussed the long term effects alcohol sales restrictions may have with regards to negative public perception on the downtown that is still reeling from recent criminal activities and tragedies.

A motion was passed to draft a letter to the Town and Police Department stating that the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership board of directors does not support the Town of Chapel Hill restricting alcohol sales at 8:00 pm in the Central Business District on Halloween night.

However, the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership does support the continued conversations between the Town of Chapel Hill and identified business group representatives to determine alternative solutions to the issues surrounding the Halloween event in downtown Chapel Hill.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg McGurk, Assistant Director