

Downtown Vitality Committee (DVC) Meeting
Tuesday, April 9th, 2019
Liberty Hall
Meeting Notes/Minutes

Members in attendance: Herb Wheeler (Chairman), Althea Bramhall, Mary Holtorf, Dave Small, Shelley, Ann Willhite and Diane DiPietro

Also in attendance: Eric Smith (Director of Planning and Development)

There was no media presence.

- I. **Call to Order:** As a quorum was declared shortly after 6:00pm, Chairman Herb Wheeler called the meeting to order.

- II. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**
Herb moved the approval of the minutes to the May 14 meeting.

III. **New Business:**

- a. Letter to Downtown Building landlords to be made broader to include all owners, not just owners of vacant buildings.
1. Version 3.1, on letterhead.
 - a. Mary would like to send the letter in phases-Vacancy and then all others.
 - b. Dave recommended sending to all and following up in phases.
 - c. Herb and Eric agree to letter being revised to include all downtown building owners to look for any roadblocks to upgrades or expansion.
 - d. Mary and Eric will team up to reach out to owners that don't respond within a few weeks of the letter being sent.
 2. CSO will be moving to the hospital upon completion of addition.
 3. Mary continuing to work on downtown building inventory.
- b. Dominoes purchased Family Pharmacy?
1. Althea believes they have closed on the property
 2. Eric to follow up
- c. Committee membership and reappointment status:
1. Diane DiPietro is the only new candidate from the current attendees of the Downtown Vitality Committee meetings.
 2. Everyone currently serving on DVC is still interested in serving.
 3. Dave and Shelley prefer to remain optional attendees.
 4. Is there another Select Person that may want to serve if Holly Young can't continue? Maybe ask Bill Chaisson?
- d. Decorations :
1. Christmas decorations are down.
 2. Flags up for River Rat. Town has them, no response. DPW removed and they are MIA.
 3. Ann stated that Pat is not getting the help he needs on this committee. More bodies are needed.

4. Eric asked about origination of committee. Herb responded that many (30?) years ago, merchants got together and took charge of placing the Christmas tree at the town hall and the Veterans Park. They did fundraising (\$40,000) for the 'skylines' and put them across Main Street with the help of Time Warner Cable (truck).
5. Ann brought up Orange as an example for fundraising activities.
6. Eric recommends press release for recruitment.
7. Diane recommended that we use First Fridays as a format to recruit volunteers.
 - a. Herb stated that the potential volunteer would need to send a letter of intent to the Town Manager.
 - b. Diane asked if there is a form letter available that the volunteer could fill out on the spot.
 - c. Mary has a form letter. Eric says it's as easy as sending an email.
- e. Kickoff meeting with Jason Schrieber of Stantec, the consultant who will be undertaking the Downtown Parking Management Plan will be May 7th to present process and plan for downtown parking. Also, May 14th is the Town Manager Downtown plan meeting.

IV. Old Business:

- a. Travis will plant two Gingko Trees in front of Athol Savings Bank on Arbor Day.
 1. Site selected as first of many sites for trees to be planted this year.
 2. Ann looking for delivery date from Travis for mulch for garden beds in municipal parking lot behind Flowerland and DejaVu.
- b. First Friday will be 4/15.
 1. Next meeting, Monday, 4/15.
 2. Mary approached Athol House of Pizza for participation.
 - a. Tried to negotiate a family package with owner.
 - b. Miss Monet may have dancers perform.
 3. Althea approached Athol Orange Baptist Church for kids activities. The Methodist Church might do bake sales all Fridays.
 - a. Herb recommends keeping food vendors separate from each other.
 - b. Diane expressed concern about a baked goods table being set up right outside Athol House of Pizza (if they still sell their own baked goods).
 - c. Holly is approaching the Lions Club for their hot dog truck.
 - d. Herb suggested talking to Chris and Matt Glover for Entertainment
 - e. Mary has some contacts from the Orange Farmers Market to pass along to Holly
 - f. Ann reached out to Julie Capone Richaud-Free Range (band) is busy
 - g. Herb also suggested Craig Twoey at the King Philips for entertainment
 - h. Diane said she would contact singer Kelliannna to see if she may have an interest.
- c. June 7th, 100 Main Street, Art Exhibit, 6-8PM . First Friday in June.
 1. Music
 2. Window Art
 3. Refreshments and exhibits

- V. Scheduling of Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Downtown Vitality Committee will be Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 6:00PM, Liberty Hall.

- a. Eric stated that this meeting also occurs when the BSC Group will be presenting at the library in the Carnegie Space at 6:30 on the same night.
- b. Discussed moving the DVC meeting to a different night.
- c. Discussed moving the meeting time to start at 5:45 as well
- d. The verdict the committee agreed upon was to keep the same night and the same time due to the fact that it was what worked best for the majority of attendees. If there are folks who cannot be accommodated, maybe they can join as associate members as opposed to voting members. Otherwise, there may be quorum issues.
- e. Herb recommended not meeting in May in lieu of the meeting happening at the library.
- f. Diane suggested meeting on May 7th. Not a good time due to other meetings.
- g. We need to have a meeting in May to approve the landlord letter.
 - 1. Herb suggested meeting for half an hour on May 14^h to approve the letter and then adjourn in time to make the meeting at the library.
 - 2. We will meet to discuss:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Letter
 - C. Building Inventory

VI. Other Business:

- a. Ann presented that Stephanie from Scrafty sent her a message that Sherwin-Williams was looking to contribute paint. Were there any possible painting projects that could use the donation? They will donate supplies and we can come up with a crew of volunteers.
- b. Herb suggested the municipal parking garage. Diane suggested a mural. Maybe work with DPW?
- c. Our town flower is a thistle. Our logo is a Scottish Tartan.
- d. Eric brought up Complete Streets project working with Howard/Stein/Hudson to comment on condition of ramps or sidewalks or handicapped ramps via mapping website. This is a tool for input to help get additional state funding to help us make improvements.

Meeting was adjourned by Herb at 7:06PM, Seconded by Ann

Minutes prepared by Diane DiPietro, Committee Clerk