

# DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET BOARD

## November 8, 2012 Meeting Minutes

DDA members present: Larry Odom, Tony Owens, Denson Martin, Hal Williams

DDA members absent: Donna Logan, Chris Welch, Mac McConnell

Staff present: Rebecca Shirley, Joel Cordle

Partners present: Bill Lewis, Jay Markwalter

Partners absent: Amy Booker, Angelia Wilson, Andrea Lee

Denson called the meeting to order at 8:45 AM

A motion to approve the October 11, 2012 minutes was made by Tony, and seconded by Larry. All members present approved the motion.

There was no report on the financials.

### ORGANIZATION

***Support City Council in Park Street Area Historic District designation & Downtown Historic District expansion and design guidelines*** – Hal reported that GMRC staff person has been working on the documents needed, and according to Chris Head they will be presented to council to be followed by public meetings

***Assist council with implementing Downtown Master Plan (consider funding a portion of the ordinance/zoning cost)*** – Hal reported that Doug's staff is going through the proposal and looking at ways to save money by using GMRC. Hope to have more to report at the annual work session.

***Holly Theatre contract proposal*** – Hal abstained from all conversation and voting on this action item. The finance committee recommended a 6 month contract for services for \$6k with DDA receiving approximately 6 dates that could be used for hosting meetings or events at the convenience of the Holly's schedule. The contract would begin January 1, 2013. Finance Committee recommended two stipulations – 1. \$1000 a month applied to the mortgage specifically, 2. If the theatre should close during the 6 month period the DDA would not be obligated to any remaining balance. The money would come from the DDA's redevelopment fund. Tony made a motion to accept the proposal as presented by the DDA finance committee, Larry seconded the motion. All voting members and Mac McConnell, via telephone text message, approved the motion. In further discussion it was considered that the DDA could potentially partner with other community organizations (county, chamber, university, county development authority) to help with the ongoing basic costs of operation through an annual contract for services. Joel said he would set up a meeting of these partners to consider this proposal.

***Present outline for DDA annual work plan meeting*** – Joel reported on the proposed agenda included in the board packet. The facilitator is Billy Parrish. Council has been invited. The next 12-18 months' work will be based upon that meeting.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

***Explore Univ. of North Georgia bonds sponsorship; support convocation center*** – Hal reported that a representative from LARC was here to do a feasibility study on the conference center/convocation center idea. The study is still being prepared and will be available in a few weeks.

***Support city council in parking management plan*** – There is no report on this item.

***Develop downtown arts strategies, support facilities*** – Hal reported the committee had a recent meeting, and the Old Baptist Church property is being renovated to house the University's Visual Arts Department.

***Support master plan catalytic real estate projects, property owners' development/ redevelopment of strategic sites*** – Denson mentioned the renovation of the Old Baptist Church property. Joel reported that UNG has quietly begun the fundraising campaign for a fine art museum/art center in the site of the annex. Lord Aeck & Sargent is doing the concept plan. Tony reminded the group of the importance to be involved in the concept of the place to make sure it is compatible to historic downtown versus being too modern.

***Keep current inventory of available spaces & businesses seeking spaces*** – Joel asked that the board refer to the inventory list included in the board packet. Joel highlighted the new Papa Johns (drawings from Main Street office) building on S. Chestatee St. University working on the Baptist Church buildings, Diving Bell pavilion, and Don Pollo's building. Star Trophies business is for sale. Tony reported plans to begin work in January on the E. Main Street property. In the new business section there is a t-shirt shop above Caruso's, and the North Grove reception/events hall.

### PROMOTION

***Plan and implement retail promotion & advertising*** – Rebecca reported advertising for downtown Christmas shopping is moving forward in Smoke Signals, The Nugget, and the Saint newspapers. We are also working in partnership with the

Chamber for Small Business Saturday – Nov 24. November 23 begins the evening shopping hours for the holiday season with extended shopping hours each weekend through Christmas. We have also begun plans for the Winter Comcast campaign in partnership with Jay. We will also do a Facebook ad for the Holiday Season.

## **DESIGN**

*Support design & construction of streetscapes* – No report on this item.

*Expand Dahlonga Stories historic plaque program* – Thank you to The Smith House for \$500 to more print brochures.

**Staff Report** (detail attached to end of minutes)

**New Business** – Hal suggested a program for property owners on lease agreements and relationships with tenants. Joel asked that the board refer to the GMA GA Renaissance Act information sheet that was distributed this morning. Denson reminded the board they must attend 9 meetings a year and asked if we need to change day or time of meetings in 2013.

## **Announcements from partner agencies**

- No report from University of North Georgia.
- No report from the Merchants Association.
- No report from the Historic Preservation Commission.
- No report from the City.
- Reporting for the Chamber, Jay summarized the partnerships with event production, planning sessions and Diving Bell preparation; he attended a conference and learned about Mobile applications for smart phones; Amy and Jay participated in the LARC interview for the conference/convocation center; Amy & Jay plan on doing a full presentation to the new leadership at the county after January 1; the tourism staff is reviewing annual event involvement for promotion and production; they hope to determine a “master kiosk” showing the community calendar; they have recently had film scouts visiting Dahlonga; motor coach parking is an issue downtown that needs to be handled when evaluating the parking management plan.

**Adjourn** - At 10:10 Tony made a motion to adjourn, Larry seconded the motion. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

## **STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT – OCTOBER 2012**

### **DIRECTOR**

#### **PROMOTION**

##### ***Marketing Projects to Promote Downtown Shopping and Dining***

- Worked downtown Halloween trick or treat crowd & gave adults 500 ink pens promoting downtown shopping, dining

##### ***DDA/Main Street Events Production***

- Assisted with developing surveys for Farmers Market planning

##### ***Partner Events Assistance***

- Assisted Old Fashioned Christmas Committee with seeking volunteers for decorations, and solicited business sponsorships; attended monthly committee meetings

### **DESIGN**

#### ***Streetscape Projects***

- Specified lamp post and light models for streetscape construction with Robert & Co.

#### ***Landscape Projects***

- Facilitating Modern Woodmen donation of memorial tree to city for Hancock Park

#### ***Design Assistance***

- Assisted with design proposals for Papa John’s building, Ariemma Villas, Welch project, Pizzolato building

#### ***Restoration & Repair Projects***

- Advised Brad Walker on removal of paint graffiti from brick wall
- Provided Meredith Grimm with packages on Dahlonga 2000 façade, wiring, and Dahlonga Stories grants for East Main Street property
- Closed out wiring/fire prevention grant for Kevin Ash/Carlson’s project Hall House Hotel & Bourbon Street Grille

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### ***Business Retention, Expansion, Recruitment, Education***

- Updated inventory of business spaces for sale and lease
- Provided information to Jason Streetman on available properties for startup
- Held meeting with Welch family regarding potential expansion plan
- Provided market data, master plan concepts, and advice to LARC company on feasibility of Cottrell project
- Assisted with research and production of fact sheet for marketing North Park Street School property
- Shared Star Trophy sales information to targeted potential buyers

### **ORGANIZATION**

#### ***Grants***

- Produced quarterly reports for ARC diving bell grant; arranged for ARC grant credit on permanent plaque
- Activated part two of contract for TIGER 2 design services with Robert & Co

#### ***Strategic Planning***

- Planned DDA's annual work plan retreat schedule, agenda, facilitator

#### ***Reports***

- Prepared and submitted monthly economic activity reports required by Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs
- Produced 2012 DDA activity report
- Presented city council meeting report on DDA support for update of zoning map and ordinances

#### ***Business Meetings Coordinated***

- Set up DDA finance committee meeting to review and recommend Holly Theatre contract for services
- Held meeting with Amy Booker to work on RFP for community vision & economic development plan

#### ***Partner Business Events***

- Participated in Chamber of Commerce annual planning retreat
- Attended Downtown Merchants Group monthly meeting

#### ***Main Street Network Assistance***

- Managed Georgia Downtown Association nominating committee; recommended 2013 board members & officers
- Advised Douglasville Main Street on statistics for lease rates, occupancy/vacancy rates

#### ***Administrative***

- Prepared agenda and meeting package items for monthly DDA meeting
- Assisted city attorney staff with DDA boundary expansion for Dr. Field property

#### ***Communications***

- Arranged interviews for Georgia Trend article on success of downtown Dahlonega

### ***PROGRAM COORDINATOR***

#### **PROMOTION**

##### ***Advertising to Promote Downtown Shopping and Dining***

- Designed and submitted new Big Canoe Smoke Signals ad for December/Christmas shopping campaign.

##### ***DDA/Main Street Events Production***

- Produced final First Friday Night Concert; updated Facebook and website to reflect 2013 schedule.
- Produced final Farmers Market; updated Facebook and website to reflect 2013 schedule; sent requests to customers on 2012 survey; attended NGCSU GreenFest to promote Farmers Market.
- Worked with site manager for production of final Appalachian Jams; updated Facebook and website to reflect 2013 schedule.
- Submitted events weekly for Chamber's "Events & Entertainment" e-mail blasts.

##### ***Partner Events Assistance***

- Assisting with event production for Old Fashioned Christmas; merchant coalition events; music; coordinating light & bow parties; coordinating schedule with Ricky; finalizing advertising plan.
- Assisted with production details for Halloween downtown trick or treat; gave adults 500 ink pens promoting downtown shopping, dining

#### **DESIGN**

##### ***History Projects***

- Updated, printed, and distributed Dahlonega Stories brochures to participating businesses.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

##### ***Business Retention, Expansion, Recruitment, Education***

- Assisted with updating the inventory of business spaces for sale and lease
- Produced monthly "Business Tips" newsletter for downtown business owners; shared business development articles to downtown business database, on Facebook, and on the DDA website.
- Continued downtown business campaign on Facebook.
- Drafted and posted a marketing sheet for leasing N. Park Street school property.

#### **ORGANIZATION**

##### ***Partner Business Events***

- Assisting the Dahlonega Young Professionals Group with membership recruitment, organization, and programs
- Attended monthly Downtown Merchant Coalition meeting
- Invited to attend the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee planning session.

##### ***DDA/Main Street and City Projects and Programs***

- Reported "Ecotality" electric vehicle charger information to City Council; scheduling a site visit.
- Assisted City Clerk with GMRC luncheon event.
- Assisting City Clerk with regional clerk luncheon.
- Assisted City Clerk with City website maintenance.
- Assisting Georgia Mountain Regional Commission with Mt. Hope Cemetery grant application for GA Historic Preservation Division.
- Assisting Diving Bell Committee with signage, plaques, and event production details.
- Drafted letter of recommendation for Anne Amerson.
- Created and posted city newsletter City Limits.

##### ***Administrative***

- Drafted October DDA board meeting minutes.
- Designed and printed DDA note cards.
- Posted OFC parade information on DDA & city websites.
- Maintained DDA website & Facebook pages.

##### ***Communications***

- Responded to all inquiries about Jam, Market, and First Friday Concert.
- Shared invitation on The Lumpkin County Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition luncheon with board member