

# DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET PROGRAM

## April 24, 2012 Meeting Minutes

DDA members present: Hal Williams, Chris Welch, Denson Martin, Larry Odom, Tony Owens, Donna Logan, Mac McConnell

Staff members present: Rebecca Shirley, Joel Cordle, Sarah Edwards

Partners present: Bill Lewis, Gary McCullough, Jay Markwalter

Meeting called to order at 8:03 AM by Chairman Denson Martin

A motion to approve the March 8, 2012 meeting minutes was made by Larry and seconded by Mac. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Joel presented the financial report. A motion to approve the report was made by Mac and seconded by Tony. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

### ***DDA Task Force Reports***

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. *Explore NGCSU bonds sponsorships, support for convocation center* – Mac reported the group has postponed the next meeting for at least 60 days.
2. *Support city council in parking management plan* – Donna made a motion to give the Mayor and council a formal letter of support from the DDA. The motion was seconded by Hal. All members present unanimously approved the motion.
3. *Develop downtown arts strategies, facilities* – Hal made a motion to sponsor the Holly's Shakespeare in the Park event by securing the pavilion and submitting the permit. The motion was seconded by Tony. All members present unanimously approved the motion. This motion is not in financial support. The event organizers are looking for 5-6 business sponsors.
4. *Support master plan catalytic real estate projects, property owners development/redevelopment of strategic sites* – There was nothing new on this item.
5. *Obtain annual update of master plan market data from Bleakly; use data for decisions, action* – Because Bleakly gave a price quote of \$4500, Joel and Denson recommended postponing updating the market data until 2014.
6. *Keep current inventory of available spaces and businesses seeking spaces* – A report was presented as a handout included in the board meeting packet.

#### **PROMOTION**

1. *Plan and implement retail promotion and advertising* – Rebecca reported about annual event listings, poster distribution, Facebook activity, press releases, etc. Mother's & Father's Day ads will be coming soon. The DDA submitted an ad for the Chamber's Newcomers Guide. North Georgia included a paragraph about downtown shopping and dining opportunities in the Parents Alumni bulletin, and the 9-9-9 economic stimulus event was a success.

#### **ORGANIZATION**

1. *Support of Park Street Area Historic District designation & Downtown Historic District expansion* – There was nothing new on this item.
2. *Assist council with implementing Downtown Master Plan* – Hal made a motion that the DDA should assist with the costs of incorporating the master plan into the zoning ordinances. The specific amount of contribution would be determined through negotiation with city council at a later date. The motion was seconded by Larry. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

#### **DESIGN**

1. *Support design & construction of Main St. & S. Chestatee streetscapes* – Joel reported that Robert & Co. did a presentation of the design concepts at city hall on April 19. These drawings will be refined and then submitted to GDOT as a concept report. The final report is scheduled to be submitted by Sept 2012.
2. *Hold walk-arounds with partners to pinpoint areas of need* – Date scheduled for the next event is May 19, 7-9 PM. Please bring spouse if you wish. Meet at the Welcome Center Plaza.
3. *Expand bronze history plaque program* – Rebecca reported that she mailed a package to property owners to include the plaque, façade, and wire/sprinkler grant information. She has also distributed the “rest of the story” displays and brochures to the retail spaces of participating buildings.

**Staff Reports** (attached at the end of these minutes)

**New Business – There will be no regularly scheduled meeting in May. Tony made a motion that the May 19 walk-around event should serve as the board meeting. The motion was seconded by Chris. All members present unanimously approved the motion.**

**Announcements from partner agencies:**

- Reporting for the City of Dahlonega – Bill reported that city council has not decided on a final plan for the old water plant and the adjacent property.
- Reporting for the Chamber of Commerce/CVB - Jay reported that the visitor center/Chamber renovations went well. He plans on presenting to the DDA board about the upcoming video campaign.
- Reporting for NGCSU – Mac reported that they are in receipt of an option to purchase the Old Baptist church property with plans on closing June/July.
- There was no report by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Tony made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Donna. The vote to approve was unanimous, and Denson adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

***STAFF REPORT ON MARCH ACTIVITIES***

**DIRECTOR**

**ORGANIZATION**

- Completed March monthly Economic Activity Report required by Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs
- Selected internship candidate Sarah Edwards and created project list
- Attended Chamber of Commerce board meeting and provided DDA report
- Attended Downtown Merchants Group meeting and provided DDA report
- Assembled Downtown Dahlonega weekend get-away prize package for Main Street McDonough
- Assembled TIGER 2 grant report package and transmitted to Federal Highway Administration
- Consulted with attorney and CPA to meet requirements for reinstating Dahlonega 2000 classification as 501(c)3
- Arranged preliminary plans and meeting for hosting 2013 Leadership Georgia three day, two night sessions in Dahlonega with President-elect Alex Wayne
- Held annual DDA downtown report and construction awards program
- Filed Dahlonega 2000, Inc. 990 EZ online tax return for 2011
- Attended Main Street managers meeting at Dept. of Community Affairs' Main Street Institute
- Attended NGCSU community focus group on campus merger

**DESIGN**

- Advised Kevin Ash on wiring grant application for Moore Building
- Held streetscape committee meeting to consider burying overhead wires and revised phase 1 boundaries
- Revised landscaping contracts with Premier Land Care and B&K Landscaping
- Arranged spring mulching of downtown's public trees
- Updated content for Dahlonega 2000 façade, wiring, and sprinkler grant documents
- Worked with Mike Crann and City Public Works to update landscaping at Grove/Main St. (Ruby's)

**PROMOTION**

- Assisted with selection and booking of bands for First Friday Night Concerts in Hancock Park

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Developed a “retail opportunity event” to market the Gee's building to multiple prospects for subdividing
- Negotiated an update of downtown market data with consultant Ken Bleakly

- Provided property owners (Jim Kinnard, Chris Welch, Lisa Pizzolato, Randy Allen) with list of business start-ups looking for downtown lease space; and provided available space information to business start-ups (Reggie & Tom Curtis, Jim Lovell)
- Assisted Vic Dover with drawings of Hillcrest property to use in marketing plans
- Assisted business owner with expansion design plans and finance plans for East Main Street project
- Provided interview with fund raising consultant regarding potential museum/arts center construction

## **PROJECT COORDINATOR PROMOTION**

- Updated website content – Main Street label, photos, content, links, event logos
- Updated Farmers Market & Appalachian Jam Facebook Fan pages
- Coordinated Farmers Market production plans with Mountain Flower & Gold Rush festival groups
- Mailed packages to Farmers Market vendors with 2012 promotion activities, poster design, and permit; answered market vendor questions
- Updating events listings on websites
- Finalized 2012 poster designs for Concerts, Jam, Market
- Working with street crew and local artist for farmers market sandwich board signs
- Produced Annual DDA Awards Ceremony; posted Awards Ceremony photos on website & Facebook
- Assisting the Dahlonega Downtown Merchant Coalition with Facebook group development
- Assisted intern Sarah Edwards with historic preservation presentation to Ms. Hogan's high school art class in preparation for GA Cities Week and Historic Preservation Month
- Drafted and submitted ad to the Nugget for the Newcomers Guide
- Finalized 2012 First Friday concert schedule and dates
- Getting price quotes and working on design for Farmers Market frequent shopper canvas bags
- Submitted Appalachian Jam poster ad insert for May edition of SEBA newsletter
- Attended event at the chamber to welcome GDED Deputy Commissioner of Tourism to Dahlonega
- Obtained "QR" codes for DDA website & Facebook pages
- Delivered Appalachian Trail sign to the Chamber for display in the Visitor Center
- Assisted with planning and promotion of the shop local campaign "9-9-9 Local Economic Stimulus Plan"

## **ORGANIZATION**

- Hosted the Young Professional Group for historic walking tour, refreshments, and Q&A at the Smith House
- Assisted with identifying projects and schedule for intern Sarah Edwards
- Updated domain names of DDA website
- Updated GoDaddy contact information
- Working with First Friday Concert bands to verify vendor registration
- Attended SBA "Young Entrepreneur" event in Atlanta
- Presented "The Power of Facebook" in partnership with the Chamber to the Women in Lumpkin Leadership group
- Attended the Dahlonega Downtown Merchants Coalition monthly meeting
- Attended 2012 National Main Street Conference in Baltimore as the GDA 2012 scholarship recipient; typed Conference notes
- Preparing for Lumpkin Youth Leadership to present at the City Council work session on April 19
- Drafted March/April "Business Tips" newsletter
- Completed online grant course – A to Z Grant Writing
- Typed March DDA minutes
- Attended CTAE advisory board meeting
- Updated grants.gov username and password for future grant applications

## **DESIGN**

- Completed design and ordering of new Farmers Market banners
- Mailed package to property owners with history plaque, façade, and wiring/sprinkler grant opportunities
- Worked with street crew on shopping banner maintenance
- Edited, scanned, posted, and shared images of potential uses for Hillcrest property with real estate agent and property owner

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Assisted with updating available properties list
- Assisted the North Georgia Network consultant in contacting downtown property owners for broadband fiber optic installation offers
- Assisted production of the "Retail Space Opportunity" event at Gee's furniture building