

DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/BETTER HOMETOWN
May 5, 2011 Meeting Minutes

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

DDA members absent: Mac McConnell

Staff members present: Joel Cordle

Partners present: Amy Booker, Bill Lewis, Gary McCullough

Partners absent: Gayle Jones

Meeting called to order at 8:45 AM by Chairman Denson Martin

A motion to approve the March 10 and April 7 meeting minutes was made by Chris and seconded by Donna. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

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

DDA Task Force Reports

ORGANIZATION

1. *Explore upcoming NGCSU construction projects & need for bonds sponsorship (Mac & Larry)* – There was no report on this item.
2. *Support of Park Street Area Historic District designation & Downtown Historic District expansion (HPC, Joel, Chris Head, Bill, council)* – Hal reported that the city council recently had received a briefing on the process from project consultant Ken Kocher. The council approved moving forward with the process which includes mailing notices to property owners and holding public meetings. Chris Head will be coordinating that process for the city.
3. *Master Plan Implementation; convene Master Plan Core Team to refresh & energize the program; work with council and staff on implementation items (Hal & Tony)* – Hal reported that a meeting of the Master Plan Core Team is now scheduled for June 14.
4. *Approve expenditure for street pole banners replacement* – A motion to approve the purchase of new street banners (not to exceed \$6700) was made by Hal and seconded by Donna. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
5. *Approve resolution for auditors' recommended change to DDA city budget terminology* – Joel reported that the city's auditing firm has recommended a change in terminology for a budget line item. The city council has already changed theirs. The change requires a resolution by the DDA. The current line item description is "unassigned," and the account contains \$167,049. These funds include revenues from bonds sales sponsorship, and balance of funds carried over from previous year budgets. City Finance Director Chris Austin had a conference with Joel, Denson, and Mac about the issue. The proposal is to leave \$33,000 as "unassigned" (for "emergency" issues), and create a new line item titled "Redevelopment Projects" and designate \$134,049 for that line item. Future expenditures for "redevelopment projects" may include property investment/redevelopment as well façade/wiring/sprinkler grants, and bronze history plaque funding. Chris made a motion, seconded by Hal, to approve the proposal and to authorize the DDA Chairman and the director to draft and execute the required resolution and forward it to City Finance Director Christopher Austin who will make the budget adjustment. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.
6. *Consider Kirby Glaze proposal for property business plan/feasibility analysis* – The board read and discussed the proposal from Kirby Glaze, noting that it is essential to have a feasibility plan and budget projections. Hal made a motion to approve the proposal, seconded by Chris. Voting yes for the motion were Hal, Chris, and Denson. Voting no on the motion were Larry, Donna, and Tony. With the vote tied, Denson directed the proposal to be tabled until the July DDA meeting. Hal, Denson, and Joel will recruit

Mac and meet as a committee with Doug Parks, Chris Head, Bill Lewis, and Gary McCullough to detail the project goals and document any zoning and use issues. The committee will also ask Mac for NGCSU cost sharing for the Glaze proposal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. *Obtain an update of the Master Plan market data section from Ken Bleakly Consultants and apply updated data for local decisions and action (Denson)* - Denson reported that the Bleakly report has been completed and the final invoice was paid. The board suggested marketing the report with a Nugget story, publishing the report on the websites of the DDA, Chamber of Commerce, and Merchants Association, emailing it to local bank presidents, and making a presentation to the Merchants Association. It was also suggested that Ken Bleakly do a presentation and comments to the DDA at the June or July meetings, maybe at 10:00 following the adjournment of the regular meeting.
2. *Support city council in Parking Study & Management Plan issues; explore BB&T site strategy (Hal, Donna w/Bill Lewis)* – Bill Lewis reported that the city council plans to discuss parking at their upcoming planning retreat. Chris commented that the NGCSU parking deck was not open during the Bear on the Square Festival.
3. *Develop downtown arts strategies engaging arts groups; support new NGCSU arts facilities on S. Chestatee (Hal)* - Hal reported that the work group will be meeting in June.
4. *Support master plan catalytic real estate projects; support property owners development and/or redevelopment of strategic sites; develop a list of property owners for discussions (Denson and Chris)* – There was no report on this item.
5. *Keep current inventory of available spaces & businesses seeking spaces (Denson)* – Denson and Joel reported and commented on the inventory list provided in the meeting package.

DESIGN

1. *Support design & construction of Main St. & S. Chestatee streetscapes (Chris)* – Chris reported that the Ga. DOT has not signed and returned the agreements to allow the startup of design drawings for Phase I of the TE funded work on West Main and South Chestatee, and the startup of the TIGER II funded design work. Also, the city is expecting to get a DOT announcement about the 2011 TE grant award.
2. *Hold walk-arounds with partners to pinpoint areas of need, monitor implementation of findings (Denson and Donna)* – Denson suggested that we begin looking for a date for the next walking tour in September.
3. *Bronze historic plaque program; target key property owners; incorporate property owners meeting with master plan meeting (Denson)* – Denson reported that Dale Solomich had sent his check for the Sargent Building plaque and the application was submitted for approval at today's Dahlonega 2000 meeting.

PROMOTION

1. *Retail promotion & advertising workgroup layout specific plans and implement (Tony & Chris)* - Tony reported that the Shop Your Dahlonega Campaign was wrapping up this week. The committee expects to meet this summer to plan for fall and winter promotion and advertising.

Staff Reports (attached at the end of these minutes)

New Business – No new business items

Announcements from partner agencies:

- Reporting for the City of Dahlonega, the Mayor noted the ground breaking for the Koyo 55 million dollar plant expansion; the city is exploring a designated shelter for community use during storm warnings; storm drain repairs are planned for West Main Street and East Main Street; the city is considering a contract with a video company to do a community film for the city website; Josh Saint has

applied for a permit to produce a downtown bike race in September; the Gold Rush Festival district will be expanding in 2011.

- There was no report from the Merchant's Association.
- Reporting for the Chamber of Commerce/CVB Amy Booker noted Leadership Lumpkin class graduation; a Youth Leadership Program is being started; the Chamber board is planning some building repairs; WILL is holding a lunch with Sandra Deal; Ga. Ag Commissioner Gary Black is coming to town to tour the county wineries; the Chamber will be offering a social media class; a new wedding guide is being produced; July 4 events are expanding with a road race; the AT Festival was held; the state's "Camera Ready Designation" was achieved; a tourism commercial is being produced for the website and a blog is being added to the website; Amy is working on hiring a CVB Director.
- There was no report from NGCSU.
- Chris Head provided a copy of the minutes from the recent Historic Preservation Commission meeting.

Tony made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Chris. The vote to approve was unanimous, and Denson adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

TODAY'S STAFF REPORT

Director's Report (March-April activities)

ORGANIZATION

- Reviewed and commented on Ga. DOT's Highway 52 study and attended stakeholders meeting
- Assisted with production of DDA field trip to downtown Blue Ridge
- Finalized update of downtown market study report with consultant Ken Bleakly
- Held called meeting of DDA to discuss available properties and appraisals; acquired business plan proposal from Kirby Glaze; acquired appraisal cost estimates from company; met with property owners regarding prices and timelines
- Met with Senators Chambliss and Isakson staff members regarding support for federal grant programs and local projects
- Attended Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Committee meetings and provided 2010 DDA activity report
- Attended ceremony for Appalachian Trail Community designation
- Attended city council meeting for consultant presentation on Park Street historic district designation
- Completed final draft and executed farmers market/arts market agreement
- Prepared GMA program application for city
- Updated 2011 DDA activity report
- Held DDA training event with Paul Kreager and Kirby Glaze trainers and church property case study
- Prepared and submitted monthly economic activity report for Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs
- Hosted Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs 2011 conference Ga. Main Street Institute (speakers, downtown meeting spaces, lodging, receptions, shopping time, dining, post-event tours)
- Attended Ga. Downtown Association legislative lobbying day at the Capitol and GDA board meeting
- Participated in the Ga. Municipal Association Heart & Soul Bus Tour to 10 Ga. downtowns
- Presented a program on historic downtowns as tourism destinations at the Southeastern Tourism Society spring conference
- Assisted City of Ellijay Better Hometown with advice on committee structures and function

DESIGN

- Worked with Sargent Building owner Dale Solomich on bronze plaque application, payment, and order
- Arranged arborist services with Hulsey Tree
- Arranged Hancock Park landscape service and downtown flower replacement with Premier Landcare
- Updated contracts for 2011-2012 landscaping services with B&K Landscaping and Premier Landcare
- Purchased additional barrels for downtown flower installation
- Assisted property owner Jim Kinnard with issues on utility tree trimming
- Arranged paint color options for Jerry Butler and Battle Branch Building

PROMOTION

- Produced ads with Big Canoe Smoke Signals newspaper, Dahlonega Nugget, SE Bluegrass Association
- Purchased two event tents for Appalachian Jam production
- Held planning and evaluation meeting with partners of Appalachian Jam
- Worked on First Friday Concerts booking with Larry Sorohan and marketing with Rebecca
- Continued "Shop Your Dahlonega" local shopping campaign with Amy Booker and chamber staff

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Assisted local bank and new business start-up on purchase of downtown building

- Assisted local business start-ups in search for location (Josh Saint professional bicycle racing team), Juls Candles' Sandy Stevenson; Chris and Jeri Smith
- Worked with consultant Ken Bleakly on market data update
- Provided letter of support for Chestatee Hospital program expansion
- Attended business ribbon cutting events at: Tuxedo House, Yummy Yogurt, Mug Me, Juls Candles, Georgia Girls
- Toured new redecorated space of Ga. Wines Tasting Room

Program Coordinator's Report (March-April activities):

PROMOTION

- Participated in Comcast advertising meeting with Dahlonega Chamber of Commerce
- Participated in planning meeting for Shop Your Dahlonega campaign
- Updated Facebook pages for Appalachian Jam, Farmers Market, Friday Concerts, DDA
- Participated in final presentations/discussions from NGCSU Leadership class on student downtown shopping project --- Social media, flyers/print, and research
- Met with Comcast staff member to get updated information for future proposal
- Sent Jam info to be included in Chamber email blasts
- Delivered Jam flyers to be distributed in SEBA newsletter
- Revised Jam ad for Bear on the Square festival
- Revised & printed posters for Appalachian Jam, First Friday, & Farmers Market
- Distributed posters for Appalachian Jam, First Friday, & Farmers Market

EVENT COORDINATION

- Coordinated Coffee Talk with Kennedy Lawson Smith
- Coordinated Tree Maintenance Workshop
- Assisted in production of Main Street Institute (March 15 through 18)
- Coordinated details for Georgia Cities Week Art in Hancock Park & VH exhibit
- Coordinated Coffee Talk with Barbara Wold
- Assisted with coordinating details for GA Trust for Historic Preservation Ramble
- Production & promotion of "Georgia Cities Week" activities with local schools and NGCSU April & May

ORGANIZATION

- Attended DDA Training with Kirby Glaze
- Attended NGCSU Sustainability Task Force committee meeting
- Attended Appalachian Jam planning meeting with Gold Museum
- Assisted with presidential candidate spouse orientation
- Assisted with development of Lumpkin Youth Leadership program
- Presented to NGCSU class about downtown revitalization for GA Cities Week
- Updating database of email addresses of downtown business owners for communications
- Produced minutes from March DDA meeting & called meeting in April
- Assisted with development of Dahlonega Young Professionals Group monthly event planning & volunteer outreach
- Attended March & April Merchants Association meeting
- Getting details & designs for updated thank you note cards
- Organizing photo opportunity for façade grant participants and sponsors

DESIGN

- Received final banner quote for board consideration
- Working with NGCSU Dr. Pam Sachant to find art marketing student to assist with flyer distribution campaign
- Assisted Dale Solomich in historic plaque order
- Distributed Dahlonega Stories brochures
- Research brown directional signage reorganization

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

- Working with Chamber Economic Development Committee to develop strategies for "Dahlonega Passport" (frequent shopping card/ customer appreciation card)