

**DULUTH
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
January 19, 2010
MINUTES**

Present: Ken Odum- Chairman
Rob Ponder-Vice Chairman
Ed Gulesserian
Shelly Howard
Ron Osterloh
Dennis Taylor
Kathryn Willis

Staff: Christopher McGahee, Economic Development Manager

Absent:

Chairman Ken Odum called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

Chairman Ken Odum requested approval of the minutes from the called meeting of December 8, 2009. **A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Kathryn Willis and seconded by Ed Gulesserian. All voted in favor, motion passed.**

Chairman Ken Odum then proceeded with the agenda. He requested discussion related to Old Business.

Red Clay Demolition, Landscaping, New Construction Options: Mr. McGahee explained that at the December 14, 2009 council meeting council requested that the demolition and renovation proposals be delayed to prevent demolition during the winter rainy season. Staff members were now in the process of continuing with plans as it was now late January. Architects Jeff Hill and Jon Erickson were proceeding with RFP guidance. DDA members agreed that it was time to proceed with paper work processing. There was also discussion related to extending lighting the entire length of Main Street. Staff would research to see if there were improvements to be made during the demolition process.

Pedestrian Walk Way: Mr. McGahee stated that Mack Cain would be requested to attend the next DDA meeting to update DDA members on plans for Pedestrian Improvements for the recently acquire easement to Town Green from Main Street.

Chairman Ken Odum then proceeded with New Business.

Request from Stacie Stamper for Common Area Improvements: Stacie Stamper requested permission to create a pedestrian friendly space in the parking area shared by the warehouse and Accessorize Again. Mr. McGahee explained that this was city ROW which was currently being utilized as parking and loading. He also explained that the Mayor and Council would be the entity to grant ROW changes but that DDA could make recommendations which would be considered. Ms. Stamper explained that she wished to improve the space to make it inviting to pedestrians. DDA members were receptive to the idea but requested a written plan. Ms. Stamper stated she would follow up with a plan. Some concern was expressed by members if the city would be required to maintain the space after improvements were made.

Ms. Stamper also mentioned that she would be coming before DDA for a façade grant to replace a malfunctioning door.

Request from Henry Harrington-Red Clay Wall Signage: Mr. Henry Harrington requested access to Red Clay to display signage for his business. DDA members determined that this would not be prudent as that section of the building was to be demolished within the next few months.

Buford Highway Redevelopment Charrette: Mr. McGahee invited DDA members to attend the design charrette for Buford Highway later in the week.

TAD Boundary Changes: Mr. McGahee explained that Gwinnett County had reviewed the TAD boundaries and requested certain downtown properties be removed. Staff concurred with these changes based on the premise that they could be considered already redeveloped. Essentially, the parcels were all those bordering Town Green and included the Woodley Lot and the Mathias/Street Smarts building.

Old City Hall Administrative Office Sprinkler Damage: Mr. McGahee reported that the cold weather caused the sprinklers in the old city hall administrative building to burst. He expressed concern based upon Red Clay experiences with mold. Member Rob Ponder pointed out that this was catastrophic and that remediation must take place immediately. Sprinkler damage was something that had to be taken care of. He pointed out that pipes burst all over the city that had been through 20 winters. This was an unusual circumstance. Councilman Greg Whitlock, who was present, mentioned that the insurance company was being contacted to look at what actions were needed. DDA Member Rob Ponder volunteered to assess the building with Mr. McGahee later in the week. Chairman Odum thanked Member Ponder. Member Ed Gulesserian stated he would attend also.

Martha Reinman Georgia Main Street Director Site Visit: Mr. McGahee stated that Martha Reinman had visited the downtown as part of the Main Street program and was

well pleased with what she saw. She mentioned having a regional Main Street meeting in Duluth later in the year.

New Years Eve Event: Mr. McGahee reported that the New Years Eve Gala was well attended and enjoyed by over 187 people in the Red Clay Theatre.

Downtown Restaurant Options: Mr. McGahee stated that he was working with restaurant interest to occupy Main Street vacancies. DDA would be consulted as needed if financing were an option.

DDA Funds: Chairman Odum and Member Rob Ponder requested that Ken Sakmar be present at the next DDA meeting to present a financial report.

Real Estate Update: Mr. McGahee stated that the Najar property was now consolidated in bundle of properties liquidated by the FDIC. DDA consensus was to wait and see what the new property owner's direction would be. Ed Gulesserian suggested contacting them just to see what their intent was. Capitol Materials is working on a Letter of Intent.

Strategic Conference Staff and Council: Mr. McGahee pointed out that the Strategic Conference was held over the weekend. DDA will continue to work with and make recommendations to council regarding downtown projects.

Chairman Ken Odum requested final discussion. Member Shelley Howard mentioned how good the Friday Night Art Walks were for downtown. She invited all members to attend and to bring their friends. Chairman Odum then requested comment from the citizens attending. There being none he then requested a motion to adjourn. **A motion was made by Ed Gulesserian to adjourn. Rob Ponder seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion passed.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Chairman, Ken Odum

February 16, 2010 _____
Date

Secretary, Shelly Howard

February 16, 2010 _____
Date