

MINUTES

Downtown Decatur Neighbors General Meeting

January 11 2017

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm. By George Dusenbury, President.

I **November** Minutes - Motion was made to approve as posted on the DDN website, seconded and approved unanimously.

II **Presentation** – Pete Pfeiffer, Chair of Codes and Ordinances Committee introduced our speaker – Lieutenant Chris Clark with Special Units Section covering downtown. He was accompanied by Sgt. Dana Cnipe.

Previously the committee solicited questions from downtown residents and the Lt. went through some of those providing answers:

1. Do they live in Decatur and if not would they like to?

Lt - NO and NO - He likes the wide-open spaces in Conyers.

Sgt. - If she could afford to, she would live in Decatur.

2. What are the rules dealing with bicyclists, especially adults riding on Sidewalks? (especially problematic around Jimmy Johns.)

State Law – no one over 12 on sidewalks. City Ord – Can ride on sidewalks – Contradictory laws so hard to enforce (City Ord needs to be changed.) Skateboards are NOT allowed on roads but are OK on Sidewalks except around the Square.

3. Power blowers– its referred to as “construction noise” so they don’t enforce unless you call them in after it has been running 30 min. Noise Ord are confusing.

4. Outside Utility blower in the Dental Building at corner of Church and Ponce, has flaps which sound like a siren and spews out liquid, what can be done? – Not sure, will have to check into it.

5. Do they have a bike education program – NO but have an annual Bike Rodeo through the schools, to register your bikes and give out safety tips.

6. Need to have enforcement of parking rules on Commerce. The Oliver House area is resident only and they have stickers but during school events people park everywhere and block the driveways. - They will get signs to not block the driveways. Otherwise call in and describe the vehicle that is in violation.

7. How to get mid-block crosswalk enforcement? Have done a couple of stings. Trying to have all on force do it so can get out a message. Reminder to make sure you have eye contact before crossing. They get complaints about mid-block from walkers and drivers.

8. Signalization – Not enough time to cross streets. Sidewalk inventories documented this as did DDN in their report to city in 2015. We will need to continue to advocate.

9. Would be good to have a visible police presence on foot patrol - Two officers are downtown day and night. Sgt. Cnipe is their supervisor.

Can we do walking cops to help city promote its walkability? Not enough officers and need to answer calls so being in their cars is faster.

10. Given the increased population downtown, how does the city respond to the call volume? – They are looking into how to spread officers during the different shifts.

11. Do you patrol off street parking areas? They don't have access to some of the new decks, which are locked. DDN could help by trying to get buildings to give police access with key cards so they could do random drive troughs.

12. Suppose to be new signage coming to E Ponce/Commerce corner for No Left Turn.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? See Something Say Something
non-emergency # 404-373-6551

But do use 911 for anything that could be considered an Emergency.

Suggestions to DDN:

- Help tackle the CVS/Selig parking lot frequency of booting. Check out the Gwinnett Ordinance.
- Help get multifamily buildings with locked parking to give police access codes or fobs.
- Promote their citizen Police Academy
- Advocate for signal changes with enough time to cross the street.
- Review and Help clarify the Noise Code re: excessive blower noise issue. Not clear on their enforcement authority.
- Review and help clear up other ambiguous ordinances that impede enforcement like the State vs. City laws on bike riding on sidewalks. Change the City Code.
- Several signs that are too high for drivers and walkers to see need to get lowered

III **Committee Reports**

Planning – Buddy Harrell – The City has not responded to all the requests and activities (Comprehensive Plan input and numerous meetings with City officials) to develop or update a downtown Plan. All Commission candidates said they were in favor of doing a Plan for downtown but now all we get is push back. Will try a citizen's approach to start with and bring the city along later.

Parks and Greenspace – Nikki Economou – No help from the City. Will focus on fundraisings to help sweeten the pot.

Communications – Judi has moved away and we are recruiting communications chair. Please let George know if you can give a few hours each month for website, Facebook and mail chimp postings.

Treasurer – Introduced the DDN new Treasurer, Tom Frangos

All committees need downtown neighbors to make our work easier and more meaningful to YOU – Please step up.

Next meeting will be March 8, 7:00 PM at the Recreation Center. Election of Officers will be held.

Submitted by Kathie Gannon, Secretary.