

## Meeting Minutes

### Downtown Decatur Neighbors

13 July 2016

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM.

I. **May Minutes** - Motion was made to approve as posted online, properly seconded and approved unanimously.

II. **Treasurers Report** - Given by President Dusenbury. Balance remains at \$905. The board will be proposing a building community Social/Member event in the fall. Watch for details and let a Board member know if you can help out.

III **Presentation** Courtney Frisch, Decatur Planning Dept. SIDEWALKS. Angela Threadgill, Planning Director, also attended. Courtney is a Decatur High School grad, Masters in Planning with Certification in Transportation. She previously worked on Transportation issues in Roswell. Her first assignment is a Sidewalk Assessment so City will better understand the existing Pedestrian infrastructure problems, establish priorities for improvement and develop a maintenance and repair schedule. It is NOT a gap analysis (like the DDN crosswalk recommendations). It is follow-up on implementation for Goals related to Sidewalks in Plans from 2000, the Transportation Plan and the 2010 Strategic Plan.

They hope to finish by end of September if get many volunteers. Volunteers will be trained on July 19. DDN will advertise through members, website and Facebook to recruit. They will have an app for smart phones to use during the inventory. One can still volunteer without a phone. After the Inventory, the Lifelong Community Advisory Board and Active Living Board will prioritize the lists and the 3<sup>rd</sup> step will be to Develop a Plan and Budget for the appropriate Departments to undertake. Routes to schools will be a definite priority but after that they are still working on scoring criteria. An unofficial count is 60 miles of sidewalks but that will be updated. It is hoped that sidewalks can be bundled with roads for the use of state LMIG funds to the city. At this time there is no process to fix sidewalks other than the “squeaky wheel” approach.

IV **Committee Reports** - Pete Pfeiffer – **Codes and Ordinances**. They have met with the Police Dept. to discuss enforcement around crosswalks and ways to make the one outside of the Renaissance safer given the number of accidents and near misses at that location. Taking out the parking space on either side of this crosswalk is what they will try first to allow for visibility of the pedestrian. Those of us who not only walk downtown BUT ALSO drive in and out of downtown and are sensitive to the problem need to join in the conversation – see Pete. Safe Routes to School will be doing education on crossing streets safely and defensive driving. In a ped/car accident it is always the drivers fault – but no value in being dead right! Painting the 7 downtown crosswalks is coming – the artistic and noticeable designs are being circulated. New crosswalks will be established at Jimmy Johns on W

Ponce (Thanks to advocacy of DDN and the 335 W Ponce residents) and at Chick Fil A on Trinity.

- Jim Diez, for Buddy Harrell – **Planning and Development**. The Comprehensive Plan is in drafting stage. The survey data is posted in pdf format on the DDN website. A DDN Goal for the Comp Plan is to include recommendation for a Downtown Plan and Park. Last Plan is from 1980's and there are some specific downtown related projects from the 2010 Plan and 2011 LCI but nothing that focuses on downtown. Comp Plan next steps is a draft to Planning Commission then on to City Commission for review, final adoption in Oct or Nov. will be after feedback from the state Dept. of Community Affairs. DDN will provide comments when the draft is released. The Planning Dept. encourages comments by email directly to Angela.

- Lila Miller – **Seniors**. Oliver House residents will be volunteering for the sidewalk inventory.

- Nikki Economou – **Parks and Greenspace**. It was pointed out that the city is setting aside public dollars for the cottage court experiment in housing for a few residents when there are hundreds of residents downtown that need and want a park. DDN has committed to help fundraising and look for additional ways to find money for the city. Urgency was voiced again that every square inch is being developed downtown so we are desperate for Downtown Plan and a Park before it is too late.

**Announcements:** National Night Out is August 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pleases join DDN at Allen Wilson Housing Authority apartments on Commerce Dr. in appreciation for all that our Oliver House residents do for downtown.

July 30 -31 is The Tiny House Atlanta Fest. Decatur will do an Exhibit and Leanne Harvey is in need of volunteers. Proceeds will benefit the Housing Authority.

Submitted by Kathie Gannon, Secretary.