

Minutes from DDN Board meeting 09/07/2016

Present: George Dusenbury, Nikki Econnomou, Pete Peiffer, Buddy Harrell, Judi Bodinger

Absent: Kathie Gannon, Sara Sullivan, Lila Miller

Actions:

- Minutes from the previous Board meeting was approved.

- Treasurer's report: Sara was not there, so George reported on her behalf. There has been no substantial change from the previous report. There may be a request to support parks, but the committee anticipates revenue will exceed expense for shirts and car decals.

Committee Reports:

Planning and Development:

Buddy reported that the committee has not met.

George then relayed that he had spoken with Kathie, and Dan Reuter has committed to working with DDN to develop a master plan for Downtown Decatur. The approach will be for DDN to take the lead and invite the City to participate. This is an approach taken by civic and business organizations in other communities. Kathie and Dan believe that they will be able to recruit other planning professionals to support the effort, and that DDN will be able to coordinate and staff it. We will await additional information from Kathie, but the goal would be to launch the first quarter of 2017. Pete emphasized the need to package the initiative nicely when we present it to the City.

Communications Committee

Judi provided an update on our communications effort, noting that we had 183 people on our email list and 621 people liking us on Facebook (293 like the Downtown Decatur Park Facebook page). We continue to expand our reach at a consistent, steady pace.

At this point, the committee began a discussion about the need to launch a recruitment drive. It was noted that we had funding for a social event that could support the effort, and those in attendance recalled that Kathie and Sara were to spearhead the effort. Judi emphasized that we need a message and strategy, and the team agreed that developing and implementing a membership drive will be a goal for 2017. It will be important to reach out to and engage new apartment dwellers.

We all noted that Judi will depart soon, and we will need to recruit a replacement.

Public Spaces and Green Space:

Nikki – The Public Spaces hosted a successful wake in anticipation of the destruction of the one-acre greenspace on Clairemont between the Marriot and Emory Healthcare. The City has indicated that construction on a new Hampton Inn will begin before the end of the year. Wake participants first marched in the Decatur Haints & Saints Parade, pulling a coffin to represent the doomed greenspace (one of the few remaining downtown). About a dozen people gathered at the greenspace, where Paula Collins read The Giving Tree and we enjoyed the serenity.

The Public Spaces Committee has formed a broader, citywide team to advocate for parks and greenspace. The team sent a letter to the Commission asking about efforts to establish park impact fees. It also has ordered T-Shirts and car magnets that it will sell to promote the park effort and raise a little funding. George has fronted the cost of the merchandise and plans to be reimbursed through sale proceeds. Profits will go to DDN.

Ordinance and Enforcement:

Pete indicated that he had confirmed Decatur PD to participate in our January meeting. He will solicit questions and topics of interest at the November 9 DDN membership meeting. He already has identified several topics of interest, including (1) pedestrian safety, (2) crosswalk enforcement, (3) adults riding bikes on the sidewalks, and (4) encouraging officers to get out of their cars and engage with people on the street. Pete was encouraged to reach out to the Decatur Business Association to encourage their participation in the effort to engage Decatur PD to improve quality of life Downtown.

Seniors:

Lila was not present to give a report. George noted that he had been communicating with Lila via email and that she had lined up JoAnn with Decatur's Aging in Place Committee to present the results of their transportation survey and Decatur Planner Courtney ___ to present on the City's current sidewalk effort.

George then adjourned the meeting a little before 7:30.