

Meeting Minutes

Downtown Decatur Neighbors

September 14, 2016

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM.

- I. **July Minutes** - Motion was made to approve, properly seconded and approved unanimously.
- II. **Treasurers Report** - Given by **President**. Bills have been paid and balance is at \$1,098.92 We want to do a Social Event so please volunteer.
- III. **Communications** - Judi Bodinger is moving to CO and the committee is in need of a Chair. Please let us know so Judi can train you before she leaves us. We have had 7 email campaigns to 176 subscribers, 90 facebook posts to about 1000 followers and average 600 likes.
- IV. **Presentation** – “How Things get Permitted and the Process of Development for Downtown.” John Maximuk, Director, Design, Environment and Construction Division and Angela Threadgill, Director of Planning.

Planning is the first stop to determine Use and if it is with or without Multi-family AND if is adjacent to a single family zoning district. (Requires a meeting if next to s f)

Next the Decatur/Downtown Development Authority holds a meeting to determine if the development meets zoning standards. They allow public comment and meet the 2nd Friday at 8AM. If NO – back to make changes. If YES on to the next step in development the Land Disturbance Permit. Some plan changes or variances could require additional action by the Zoning Board of Appeals or Planning Commission. If an items has to go to Planning Commission it also goes to the city commission, otherwise there is no commission role in development decisions.

The UDO is part of their guidance and the division sees their mission as “being a vessel to implement the community plans”. It is a new Division created 3 years ago. They review the plans architecture, building issues, storm water and related codes. Building inspection is done at certain intervals. Once a building is completed the Code Compliance Division is the contact for any post-development issues.

They have just hired a new Engineer and are looking for a new Arborist. The customer experience is important as they try to help them get their end result as it works its way through the process. They work as a team. The biggest challenge they face these days in single family residential renovation or retrofit as projects can spill over to impact their neighbors. Also making sure what gets built matches what was reviewed and approved. Planning Dir. has a role in inspections to meet this goal.

Q and A:

- How many Special Exceptions are granted and how to find information on code violations?
 - All Records are kept in the Office and open to public requests.
- Do we have water capacity given all the new development in an old community?
 - -Yes, lots of new capacity with the storm water detention facility recently completed as part of the Ebster redevelopment. Occasionally some developments will need their own detention.
- Is there a pre- development package for developers?
 - No, have consultations as each are different.
- Is there any concern in City that we are reaching beyond demand with all the downtown apartments?
 - - Per Lyn Menne - who keeps up with the pulse of the market – it will take care of demand as the developer can't get money to build if an area is over-built. We are starting to hear that apartments are getting over saturated.
- What to do if you think there are problems with a development
 - – “see something. Say something”.
- How does new inspection process work, thinking back to the Renaissance stucco issues - can that be prevented?
 - - City has an in-house person now.
- Downtown is now one of the largest neighborhoods – How can we get a meeting to discuss development like the s-f neighborhoods do?
 - No Plans to amend the process, which is in the code. Maybe 2020 before new focus on downtown plans. Can go to DDA meetings for input..
- Several members expressed frustration.
- Transportation and traffic are now issues, how will city deal with these problems?
 - - City position is that we have to use alternative modes of transportation. Traffic cannot be used as a reason to stop a development, all things being equal. NOTE: PATH is doing a connectivity study so please see their website to have input.

V. **Seniors:** Will get a sidewalk update for our next meeting. Oct 4 is National Night out.

VI. **Codes and Enforcement:** They are working with the Police Dept. re: What is it that people want from the police to help them?

Paula Collins gave a bring report on the tax referendums for Decatur with Handouts available if more information is desired.

NEXT MEETING: November 9, 2016

Respectfully submitted: Kathie Gannon, Secretary.