

## Downtown Decatur Neighbors General Meeting

January 12, 2022

Pete Pfeiffer, presiding over Annual Meeting via Zoom, called meeting to order at 7:00 PM. This is the first general meeting since March 2020 when the Covid pandemic closed public gatherings.

At one count there were 40 attendees and a Quorum was established.

Pete gave opening remarks highlighting the things the Board has been doing during this almost 2 years, most notably the recently published pamphlet with a restated Vision and Mission statement. It includes a short list of Accomplishments and a future Wish List. One is submitted for the Minutes. DDN advocacy for a downtown master plan was noted and the news that this will be undertaken this year. Our City Commissioners, Kelly Walsh and George Duesenbury were introduced.

Board member self-introductions were made in the context of Committee Reports.

**Secretary** – Kathie Gannon, who lives in 335 W Ponce Condos, noted we have Minutes from the last Annual meeting held January 8, 2020, and the last general meeting held March 2020 that need to be Approved. However, we post our Minutes on the website for all to read and then approve the minutes as posted. The website is under construction so we will postpone those approvals until our next general meeting in March.

**Parks/Public Greenspace** – Kathie Gannon (Secretary) gave the report and a moment of silence was held in memory of Betty Blondeau, our committee chairperson, who died this past fall. Betty loved Decatur and volunteered for many causes she thought would keep Decatur a great place to live. We were pleased to announce that the City is working with Betty's friends and family to plant an oak tree with an appropriate plaque as a Memorial for her. We will notify the DDN friends of the details of the ceremony as they are finalized, so people can attend. During the "hibernation" Betty was working with the Decatur Schools to utilize the greenspace at the corner of Trinity and Commerce as a temporary useable park space until the Schools build on it. Picnic tables have been installed near the Rec Center end of the property thanks to the School's contribution. Hope for use of the Housing Authority's gazebo, which is in storage for lack of a space, has not come to fruition due to the DHA's funding restrictions. We will need to fundraise for a gazebo as well as mulch walking trails. DDN has committed to purchase of the doggie comfort station, which the City will requisition on our behalf. The hope is to have a trail to walk and keep dogs on a leash while doing so and have the center area for free play open space. We will need help to move forward on this plan for the temporary park while we continue our quest for a downtown park.

**Planning and Development** – Susan Avent, Chair, and resident of the Decatur Renaissance Condos. The group successfully advocated for the denial of a Variance to allow more parking in the downtown pedestrian district. The committee tried to compromise with some parking in return for additional greenspace and plantings that were not put in when the property was

redeveloped in 2014. The owner declined to compromise. Individuals participated as best they could in the virtual 2030 Strategic Plan and the committee will devote its attention to the upcoming downtown master plan.

**Communications** – Lisa Schreiber, Chair and resident of the Decatur Walk townhomes. In addition to the MailChimp email, which is our primary form of communication with residents, we also have Facebook and are in the process of updating the website. We have also added Communications Volunteers from the residential buildings to help connect us. The liaisons introduced themselves and requested an opportunity to meet and talk. In attendance were Paula Collins, The Artisan; Velda Goldberg, The Place On Ponce; Mary Donovan, 335 W Ponce Condos; Cathy Mullins, The Clairmont; Kathy Allen, The Renaissance; and Pete Pfeiffer for Town Square. Help is needed recruiting liaisons from the apartment buildings.

**Treasure's Report** – Tom Frangos, lives in the Renaissance, submitted a written report, to attached to the Minutes. DDN has a balance of \$724.40 in SouthState Bank. Our expenses include the annual Registration and P.O. Box, an annual contribution to the West Ponce Music Stroll and this year the printing of Brochures. Our income is from donations and for 2021 the Renaissance Condos gave a \$250 contribution. To do any activities or work on the temporary park, DDN needs to do some sort of fundraising. At one time we asked every building to contribute.

**Public Safety** – Nancy Hall, Chair lives at 335 W Ponce Condos. Pedestrian safety is their primary focus. Over past year plus they have concentrated on N Candler St sidewalk and connectivity to the Kroger. John Maximus, City Public Works agreed to undertake the engineering study needed to decide on a fix. Working with this Department has been pleasant and productive. Committee will continue to follow up on this project in the coming year.

**Seniors** – Lila Miller, a resident of Oliver House has been long time chair of this committee. She usually visits with the other senior buildings in downtown but this has not been possible. She hopes to resume contacts in 2022 to help us better advocate for our senior neighbors.

**Nominating Committee** – Pete Pfeifer gave the report for the Nominations Committee. Election of Officers is the main purpose of the Annual meeting. He proposed a slate of Officers and opened nominations from the floor. Hearing no nominations, he recommended acceptance of the proposed Slate. Motion was made by Dave Schneberger to elect the slate as recommended and listed below. Lisa Schreiber seconded and the slate was approved by what appeared to be a unanimous show of hands.

2022 Slate of Officers:

- President – Kathie Gannon
- Secretary - Jane and Harry Yeomans
- Treasurer – Tom Frangos
- Public Spaces Chair - Stephen Busch
- Seniors Chair - Lila Miller
- Planning and Development Chair - Susan Avent

- Public Safety Chair - Nancy Hall
- Communications Chair - Lisa Schreiber
- Past-President - Pete Pfeiffer

Dave Schneberger was introduced as the DDN webmaster.

Meeting was opened to Q and A:

Q posed to Kelly and George as to How do we make sure DDN has a seat at the table for the downtown master plan? **George** explained his discussion with the City Manager, they believe there will be a committee for downtown residents. They have also reached out to DeKalb Co. to participate. **Kelly** noted that they have our leadership identified and we can be used as a point of contact.

Additional announcements include the State of the City will be held on Jan 25, City Commission will have its Retreat in late February, City Energy Workshops are coming up and we were asked to help get the word out.

Pete announced the Board members and Communications liaisons will meet on Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> and the next General Meeting will be March 9 at 6:00 PM. Note change in time – so we can hopefully meet outside at the “temporary” Park.

A Thank You was given to Pete for his service during the past 2 years to keep us together and actively advocating for quality of life issues in downtown and the long over-due downtown master plan.

Respectfully Submitted, Kathie Gannon, Outgoing Secretary.