

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes August 14, 2008

1. Call To Order

Members Present: Tom Brann, Brann's Steakhouse and Grille; Jerry DeGood, Auto Finance Company; James Leach Jr., Hobart Sales and Service; Lee Groth, South Godwin Neighborhood Association; Aida Slogar, Lake Michigan Credit Union; Dave VanHouten, Window World of West Michigan and Santa Claus Parade Chair; Lisa Golder, City of Kentwood, Don Tuuri, Kentwood Police Dept; Chief Carmody, Wyoming Police Department; Vu Tran, intern DABA; Bob O'Callaghan, Wyoming-Kentwood Chamber of Commerce; Tim Cochran, Wyoming Planning Department; Al Ruerink, Modern RV; Andy Tubergen, Tubergen Cutting Tools

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jim Leach with support from Andy Tubergen to approve the July minutes of the Division Avenue Business Association.

--Motion Carried--

3. Treasury Report

4. Roundtable

--Tom is working on getting decals for DABA members for their store windows. The Division part of the bridge at 28th and Division has been repainted. The 28th Street part will be repainted soon. MDOT will be putting in sidewalk also.

Tom said that the Open House will be scheduled for Thursday September 18th at 5:00 PM.

Tom asked if Jim would consider handling the awards for the Open House. The awards have been given for the business that looks best, the business that is most improved, etc. Plaques have been given in the past for the businesses that win the awards.

--Al said some of the banners are missing on the street.

--Lee said that National Night Out was a great success. About 400 people attended. The dunk tank proceeds went to the PTO. He showed the members the ads that were used for sponsorships that were created by Gary Ball. He said that the splash pad at the park has been a positive influence on the area. There are fewer people causing trouble at the park and there are more dads bringing their children to the park.

--Bob O'Callaghan said that the MetroCruise starts a week from tomorrow. He thanked the police in advance for all they are doing to make sure it is a safe and successful event.

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Other events coming up include the Christmas parade and legislators lunch. Look on the website for more information.

--Aida had information available about business insurance. Lee noted that Lake Michigan Credit Union provided the insurance for the dunk tank. It was a good rate and the credit union donated money to the PTO so that expenses were covered.

--Don Tuuri said he is filling in for Jeff Augustyn.

--Chief Carmody said the summer has been busy but quiet. Nothing major has happened. There was an issue with graffiti in various places. The city is trying to clean up the graffiti as soon as it is discovered.

--Dave Van Houten is working on the Christmas parade. The committee suggested a couple activities that may bring people into the stores during the Christmas season. One is to have an art contest for children. They would have to go to the store to pick up the picture and then go back to the store to drop off the completed picture. Second, the businesses with planters could put artificial trees in the planters during the Christmas season and decorate them to make the Avenue look more like Christmas.

Dave reported that they have had several sponsors.

Jim Leach Jr. said that the newsletter was completed and delivered to businesses between 28th and 44th Street along Division. He talked about ways that can get businesses to join. He thinks that an effort should be made to invite 44th Street-54th Street businesses to the open house.

Andy Tubergen wondered if the clean up from 50-54th Street is going to be on the same day as the clean up for DABA area. Tom said that it could. His group will only be cleaning up the 50th-54th Street, not from 44th-54th. He asked how he can have his website linked to the DABA website.

Lisa Golder and Tim Cochran discussed the Charrette for the bus rapid transit. The charrette would take place from October 18-24th 2008. The kick off meeting where the most input is sought would take place on October 18 10:00AM to 3:00 PM. It would be held at the Kentwood Activities Center. She said that the Planning and City Commissioners from both communities would be asked to participate. Gaines township and Grand Rapids will also be invited. Tim emphasized the importance of the charrette and the experts in design, architecture, engineering, and finance will come together to assist the communities in developing plans that have a realistic chance of being implemented. Wyoming is working on new zoning regulations that will assist in the implementation of the plan.

We are looking for a building to house the engineers and architects that are to be hired to work on this project. It would be ideal if it were in the study area, which is near 54th Street.

--Jerry is working with Kalamazoo Banner Company on the ripped street banners. The company has agreed to repair the banners and reinforce them so that they stay up longer.

Jerry wanted to know how many people are needed for the clean up from Judge Timmer. Tom said 10-112 people are needed.

Jerry also said that the weed man sprayed for weeds again.

5. Goals

Aesthetics: Tom said that he wanted to better organize the planter program. He will speak with Molesta Floral regarding next year's plantings.

Reduce Vacancies: Still working on this goal

Continue Adopt a Block: Tom asked for the phone number of Adopt a Block participants. Steve said that three more signs need to be made.

Promote Division Avenue Area: Comcast Commercial: is now running on the website. We need more sponsors to continue to run the commercial again.

Membership: Tom and Steve will go door to door for new members. Jim and Vu will continue to work to increase membership. We will check with Andy Tubergen regarding the section of Division south of 44th Street.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Division Avenue Business Association is scheduled for September 11, 2008 at 8:00 AM. The clean up will be September 13, 2008.

DIVISION AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION GOALS

IMPROVE THE AESTHETICS OF THE DIVISION AVENUE AREA

- a. Look at other examples of successful area such as Rockford and Spring Lake to get ideas on how the Division Avenue could be more successful.
- b. Place more planters along the Avenue, and benches, etc.
- c. Increase financial resources available—grants, tax capture programs, etc. Contact colleges such as GVSU to get interns to assist businesses in identifying resources for improvement
- d. Continue clean up efforts

2. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF VACANT BUILDINGS ON DIVISION

- a. Continue to promote advantages of being in Division area
- b. Develop list of vacant buildings

3. CONTINUE ADOPT-A-BLOCK PROGRAM

- a. Develop/Maintain a list of participants and phone numbers
- b. Contact participants for Adopt-A-Block to clean area when necessary

4. PROMOTE THE DIVISION AVENUE AREA

- a. Continue running the Comcast commercial
- b. Have Comcast people come in and discuss commercial/updates
- c. Seek more sponsors of the Comcast commercial
- d. Promote positives of the Avenue in the media—Contact media anytime an business expansion or any positive event takes place
- e. Better website for DABA
- f. Look into other ways to promote—direct mailers, etc.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Increase membership to 60
- b. Encourage the active participation of membership at monthly meetings
- c. Increase members from 44th to 54th Street
- d. Promote benefits of membership—networking, neighborhood watch etc.
- e. Increase diversity of members—Asian and Spanish populations
- f. Involve the residents in the area