

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes July 10, 2008

1. Call To Order

Members Present: Tom Brann, Brann's Steakhouse and Grille; Jerry DeGood, Auto Finance Company; Steve Karrip, Metro Motors; Karen Schmuker, Beltline Bar and Grill; James Leach Jr., Hobart Sales and Service; Lee Groth, South Godwin Neighborhood Association; Raquel Diaz, Lake Michigan Credit Union; Dave VanHouten, Window World of West Michigan and Santa Claus Parade Chair; Eileen Baker, Window World of West Michigan; Jackie Brown, Maplelawn Baptist Church; Lisa Golder, City of Kentwood, Jeff Augustyn, Kentwood Police Dept; Major John Lind, Wyoming Police Department; John Hulett, Neighborhood Church Ministry ACTION; Richard Clanton, Kentwood City Commissioner; Vu Tran, intern DABA; Arelis Diaz, Godwin Heights Public Schools

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jerry DeGood with support from Richard Clanton to approve the June minutes of the Division Avenue Business Association.

--Motion Carried--

3. Treasury Report

4. Roundtable

--Tom said that the Open House will be scheduled for Thursday September 18th at 5:00 PM. He said that the splash pad at the park at 4125 Jefferson will be having their re-dedication on July 12th. There has been some information in the media about the bus rapid transit and the planning charrette. The bus rapid transit will help property values. He sent a message to Chris Knape at the Press regarding the positive article regarding Division Avenue, even though it was relating to the area north of the 28th Street. He said he is working on getting decals for members for their store windows.

--Jerry is pursuing issue with the Kalamazoo Banner Company regarding how the banners are ripping at the top. He is looking into whether the Banner Company will replace any of the banners, whether the banners can be sewn and whether there is a better way to hang the banner so that they do not rip.

-- Arelis Diaz from Godwin Heights Public Schools said that the school continues to offer its summer reading program for K-6th grades. Because of the approved bond issue there are improvements going on all over the district, such as repairs to buildings and new playground equipment. Steve asked whether the school could make sure its planters are watered.

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes

Page 2

--Rachael Diaz from Lake Michigan Credit Union said that the Credit Union is offering insurance for commercial businesses. She has information available. The Credit Union will be handing out ice cream at the park dedication.

--Lisa said that the Bus Rapid Transit charrette will likely be held in September.

--Jackie from Maplelawn Baptist Church said that the church will be handing out water at the splash pad park dedication. The church is also promoting their service to help people file for their tax incentive checks.

--Jim presented the draft of the newsletter—any articles would be appreciated. Articles can be sent to Jim's email at jimjr@hobartgr.com. He is also working on membership along with DABA intern Vu.

--Richard Clanton said that the website looks good. Kentwood will be having a meeting tonight regarding the issue with gypsy moths. There will also be an informational meeting tonight about the proposed new library. There is going to be a press conference today regarding the County jail and the fees that are charged cities but not townships. It is a question of fairness the charges that cities pay versus townships.

--Dave VanHouten from Window World is a new member. He is chair of the Santa Claus parade to be held on December 6th at 10:00. The sponsorships are being formalized.

--Eileen Baker is also from Window World. She says that Division Avenue has been a great location for their company. She said that people tell her that they like to buy from a local company. They are located at 5228 Division next to B & R Auto.

--Dick Jasinski of SJ Wisinski Realty said that there was nothing new with respect to the properties that are for sale along Division.

--Jeff Augustyn said that the website is good and there are links to the cities. He said that Kentwood is running a Citizens Academy. It will be held on Thursdays and will give people information on how the Police Department is run and what services are offered. Otherwise it has been quiet in the Division Avenue area.

--Major Lind said that the County Jail issue costs Wyoming \$500,000-\$600,000 per year. If someone is arrested Wyoming, the County charges Wyoming fees to incarcerate the person. If someone is arrested in the township, there is no charge. All citizens pay for the jail services through their taxes. The additional fees to cities makes residents pay twice for these services.

There has been some late night/early morning breaking and entering on Division, mostly causing losses from destruction of property rather than from theft.

--Karen said that the painted trestles at Division and 28th Street are fading and should be repainted. Tom said that they will be repainted August 1—better paint will be used this time. She also asked about the flooding at 28th and Division. Major Lind said that this is supposed to be fixed with the road improvements, which are to be completed by August 1st.

It was noted that there will also be sidewalks installed in the area near the intersection and 28th and Division.

It was also noted that Wyoming will be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year, and there will be a parade on Division.

--Steve said that the weeds along Division are getting taller. He will be calling the company that does weed control so that they will spray again.

--Lee discussed the activities associated with the park rededication. He said that National Night Out at the South Godwin Association is getting bigger and bigger every year. This year there will be a dunk tank; please consider a contribution or a candidate for being dunked. The Godwin Superintendent will be in the dunk tank. The cost of sponsorship is \$50. You will be listed as a sponsor in a 8"x11" or 11"x17" size (provided by sponsor)

--John Hulett of ACTION (Assisting Teens In Our Neighborhood) explained the purposed of the organization which is to provide events and services to positively impact teens and keep them out of trouble. They have received sponsorship from a foundation, but have been asked to get smaller contributions to show broad community support. The businesses should have received a letter regarding this. Additional information is available.

5. Goals

Aesthetics: Tom said that he wanted to better organize the planter program and get more support for the program like there is in Cutlerville. Al said that although there are improvements being done in Cutlerville, they have not done anything about weeds.

Reduce Vacancies: Still working on this goal through Dick Jasinski

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. The newsletters can be delivered south of 44th Street as well.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Division Avenue Business Association is scheduled for August 14 2008 at 8:00 AM.

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