

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes

July 9, 2009

1. Call To Order

Members Present: Tommy Brann, Brann's Steakhouse and Grille; Jerry DeGood, Auto Finance Company; Al Reurink, Modern RV Center; Lisa Golder, City of Kentwood, Steve Karris, Metro Motors; Aida Slogar, Lake Michigan Credit Union; Jim Leach Jr. Hobart Sales and Service; Michelle Wisniewski, Chase; ; Susie Hudson, Chase; Gary Ball, B-Quick Printing; Tim Cochran, City of Wyoming; Michael Myczkowiak, City of Wyoming; Juliette Cowall, Godwin Plumbing; Dave Johnson, Maplelawn Baptist Church; Dirk Haight, Williams Cars, Inc.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Al Reurink with support from Jerry DeGood to approve the May and June meeting minutes.

A correction was noted that the parade participants fee is \$100, also the city hopes to get 100 participants for the parade.

--Motion Carried, with amendments--

3. Treasury Report

Gary Ball gave the Treasury Report. The current balance is \$2,534.68. Molesta bill was paid. There are 30 members.

Tom said that the insurance bill is due soon. It is \$169. We have tried to get an insurance policy from someone on Division but the price can't be beat.

4. Roundtable

Jerry raised the issue of prostitution along the corridor. It is becoming problem again. Dirk asked whether we could have the police do anything like get a warrant. Sometimes it is a problem even early in the morning. Will check with Mj. Lind to see if anything can be done.

Steve said the rest of the banners are going up. He said there is a site that the city required the installation of landscaping. The business complied but now its all weeds and

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes

Page 2

looks terrible. Tim said the city is changing their ordinance so that landscaping is not required along Division.

The question was asked whether the city would maintain/water/prune the trees. Tim said there is no budget for this. He will be working on the DNR application to replace the trees that have died; the application comes out this month. Tim said that if the BRT were approved, it would not be as hard to attract developers that would plant and maintain properties. If the BRT were approved, the cities would be able to establish a Corridor Improvement Authority or a DDA to do streetscapes.

Jim: said that he suggested planting bulbs in the fall after the regular clean up. Planting other perennials had been suggested. Juliet said there were some plants that would be drought resistant and appropriate for the area and would add color. They would need to be established initially, but after would be relatively maintenance-free. She will give him a list of the types of plants that would be appropriate. Jim said the clean-up is September 12, so that would be the time we would target for the planting.

Dave Johnson said he has not been here for a few months but the tax program they ran during tax season was very successful. He will share numbers on the impact of the program on the overall community next month. The church also sponsored a financial literacy class in conjunction with Byron Bank. If the participants put in \$300, Byron would put in a 50% match into their account. Another class will be offered in October. He also described his work in promoting the BRT to the congregation. He thinks we should continue to promote the concept to area churches.

Michael described some of the activities for the 50th year Anniversary of Wyoming becoming a city. The events will take place primarily August 26-29 and includes the MetroCruise. The parade will be August 26 and Wyoming is trying to promote the events through sources such as GRNow. The city is also printing posters of the events; he hopes some of the businesses would be willing to hang them in their windows. He will be able to send applications for the parade.

Tim said that there were several churches in Wyoming that have closed and he is looking for input into what these buildings could be used for. He handed out a short survey for people to complete.

Juliet: talked about rain barrels for watering plants. This would allow property owners to capture rainwater for watering plants rather than having to use city water. The barrels are very inexpensive; Godwin gets them from Old Orchard. She is going to a workshop regarding leading rain barrel workshops.

Aida: said that Lake Michigan Credit Union is also participating in the 100 days of summer event, and sponsoring the Positively Warren Golf Outing. They are also in need for things to put to baskets for auction, with proceeds to the Lacks Cancer Center. There has not been as much participation in the 100 days of summer events as was expected. Grace Bible is looking at ways to involve kids for next year. The Lake Michigan Credit Union is also participating in Kids Day for the Wyoming 50th celebration.

5. Goals

Improve Aesthetics: Jim and Lee and working with this goal

Open House: Set date of September 17, 2009

Improvement of Safety: Tom is waiting until it gets dark earlier in the day to show city officials that additional lighting is needed on Division

Vacant Buildings:

Promote Division: Comcast commercial has been prepared but there is no money to run it. Tom will talk to Comcast representative

Membership: Will be going door to door to get new members

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Division Avenue Business Association is scheduled for August 13, 2009 at 8:00 AM.

DIVISION AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION 2009 GOALS

1. IMPROVE THE AESTHETICS OF THE DIVISION AVENUE AREA

- a. Go to other communities—and to other business associations to see how we can improve our association
- b. Increase/Improve the planter program
 - i. Meet with City
 - ii. Meet with Molesta
 - iii. Develop a plan for financing
 - iv. Promote to members – assist members in financing the planters
 - v. 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
- e. Pursue with city the development of incentives for property owners to use a pre-selected palette when painting their properties.

2. HAVE A MORE SUCCESSFUL AND AFFORDABLE OPEN HOUSE

- a. Get available dates for both cities
- b. Make reminder calls to assure attendance
- c. Continue awards—highlight in GR Press and Advance
- d. Invite media

3. IMPROVE SAFETY OF THE AREA

- a. Meet with Ron Dressander regarding lights
- b. Get police endorsement of brighter lights
- c. Get lighting information from other communities
- d. Have Mayor and Council come out at night so that they understand the lighting issue

4. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF VACANT BUILDINGS ON DIVISION

- a. Continue to promote advantages of being in Division area
- b. Develop list of vacant buildings
- c. Get periodic reports from realtors/businesses regarding available properties, sales, etc.

5. CONTINUE ADOPT-A-BLOCK PROGRAM

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

6. 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

7. MEMBERSHIP

- d. Increase membership to 60
- e. Encourage the active participation of membership at monthly meetings
- f. Increase members from 44th to 54th Street
- g. Promote benefits of membership—**networking**, neighborhood watch etc.
- h. Increase diversity of members—Asian and Spanish populations
- i. Involve the residents in the area by advertising meeting information in stores, schools, etc.

8. PREPARE FOR THE BRT

- j. Receive and review final report of the charrette
- k. Become involved and understand the new zoning regulations pertaining to the BRT and transit oriented development
- l. Participate in additional meetings/charrettes regarding other station locations such as 44th Street, 36th Street, 28th Street, etc.