

Division Avenue Business Association

Minutes May 8, 2008

1. Call To Order

Members Present: Tom Brann, Brann's Steakhouse and Grille; Jerry DeGood, Auto Finance Company; Gary Ball, B-Quick Instant Printing; Steve Karris, Metro Motors; Jeff Augustyn, Kentwood Police Department; John Lind, Wyoming Police Department; John Kennedy, Kennedy's Auto Repair and Sales; Vu Tran, intern; Karen Schmuker, Beltline Bar and Grill; Jackie Brown, Maplelawn Baptist; Lisa Golder, City of Kentwood; Rebecca Rynbrandt, City of Wyoming Parks and Recreation; Barb VanDuren, City of Wyoming; Andy Tubergen, Tubergen Saw; Wayne Ondersma, the Dock Ministry; James Leach Jr., Hobart Sales and Service

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from April's meeting will be approved at the next Division Avenue Business Association meeting

3. Treasury Report

The balance in the bank is \$5,153.28. The weed control is paid. There will be a billing for \$540.00 for the website.

4. Roundtable

--Jerry reported that we are still working on the website. Pictures should be sent in so that they can be placed on the website. We will need to send an updated members list for the web designer. We hope to have the website up and running soon.

Jerry, Lisa Golder, and Andy Tubergen will help Mike Endres develop the website.

--Mj Lind: There have been a number of armed robberies in the area. Many of the people committing these crimes are in jail.

--South United Methodist Church will be having a meeting regarding issues in the area. They would like to become involved in helping to keep the area safe. The Grand Rapids, Kentwood and Wyoming Police Departments will be invited. The meeting is at 5:30 on May 13th at the church.

--Jeff Augustyn said that Kentwood has been experiencing the same type of robberies in the area as Wyoming, and many have also been caught. He has invited several business people to the DABA meetings.

--Vu Tran is the intern for the association. He has been going up and down Division visiting businesses that have not come to the meeting.

--Jim Leach Jr. said he would like to start up the newsletter again that Godwin Plumbing was working on previously. It could provide information on the website.

Bicycle patrol was raised. Mj Lind said that some officers are going through bicycle school so that they will be trained to do so at some point.

--Jackie said that Maplelawn's tax prep program processed 97 tax returns representing \$98,000 in refunds. She had certificates for the businesses that have made donations. A fund is being set up for the program by Byron Bank.

--Lisa said that there is going to be another charrette on the Bus Rapid Transit that is scheduled for the summer. It will focus on the 54th Street area.

--Rebecca from Wyoming Parks and Recreation said that the city has developed an Adopt a Park program. The park program will focus on activities for teens and preteens. She provided park rental information, a Wyoming Park getaway guide, and Wyoming Trekker program.

Southlawn Park is being redeveloped. It is located at Bellevue and Jefferson. The city has put a large amount of money into the park, adding a splash pad, pathway and playground equipment. The park will also be irrigated. It is becoming more neighborhood oriented and has already seen a decrease in vandalism. This makes the area more sustainable. The grand re-opening of the park is scheduled for July 12 at 11:00 AM. Rebecca asked if any businesses are interested in sponsoring a portion of the grand re-opening. The sponsor information could be placed on beach balls, sunglasses or used in a raffle.

The construction will be completed by the end of June. The sponsorship information needs to be wrapped up in the next few weeks. Contact Rebecca if you are interested.

--Barb VanDuren said that Wyoming is celebrating its 50th anniversary of being a city next year. There will be a four day celebration, the same week as the MetroCruise, probably on a Tuesday or Wednesday. There will be events in different areas. The City would like for the kick-off parade to go down Division Avenue. There will be a military presence.

She was looking for information on how the other parades in the city were organized.

Jerry said that there is ongoing planning for the Santa parade. There is also a Kiwanis parade. The Santa parade meeting is the 2nd Weds of the month at noon at the Chamber. The city could get information on how these parades work. The contact for the Kiwanis is Bill Doren.

Barb said that there are various sponsorship opportunities. The proceeds from the sponsorship for the parade will benefit the Veteran's Memorial Gardens. .

Barb also mentioned she is on the ITP Board and can keep DABA informed of the progress on the Bus Rapid Transit project.

5. Goals

Aesthetics: The planters are coming out. They will be replanted soon at a cost of \$65. Steve will be ordering 4 more.

Jim Leach is working on the aesthetics of the area along with intern Vu Trans.

Tom is working with Dick Jasinki or other realtors to reduce the number of vacancies in the Division Avenue area. There is a new Mexican restaurant in the former hot dog store.

Steve is continuing his work with the Adopt-A-Block program. He needs to get rid of three signs, because the businesses are no longer participating. The cost is \$100 a year. John Kennedy said he was interested. He asked what he has to do in order to fulfill the requirements of the Adopt a Block. Tom asked Steve to send him the list of Adopt a Block participants.

Gary is working on the membership goals. Our intern may be able to help recruit new members.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Division Avenue Business Association is scheduled for June 12, 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