

Derry Downtown Committee Minutes Thursday March 18, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 by Michael Gendron, Chair. In attendance were Dave Nelson, Susan Kopetz, Tim Bethke, Brian Chirichiello, Jen Ashford, Jack Roche, George Sioras, John Svenson, Tom & Mary Hankins, Jim Browne, Jona Bostwick, Brenda Willis, David Morris, Deb Paul, C.V. Accardo, Michael Gallagher & Cecile Cormier. Also in attendance was a student from UNH, Ryan Chiavetta, who was reporting on our activities as part of his curriculum at college.

The Minutes from March 4, 2010 were read and approved: motion made by Susan Kopetz and seconded by Michael Gendron.

Chairperson's Comments-For the benefit of the new committee members in attendance, Mike Gendron summarized the history of the Downtown Committee and re-emphasized our theme to "Dream Big". He thanked Derry Town Council liaison Brian Chirichiello for attending tonight's meeting. Mike indicated that Julie Huss of the Derry News had written two very nice articles on some of our efforts. One article discussed our hope to see a farmer's market in town and the other article nicely described our upcoming Downtown Civic Profile Event on April 24, 2010 from 8am-1pm.

Open Comments-Mike asked the new members to introduce themselves. John Svenson is the business owner of Svencon General Contracting LLC and was curious what our committee was working on. Tim Bethke is a concerned resident of Marlboro Rd. and came to our meeting to express his concerns that he and some of his neighbors do not want to see the house next to the library become a parking area for the Derry Public Library and that they had other suggestions to offer. Mike Gendron indicated that his committee would remain sensitive to the concerns of the neighbors on Marlboro Rd. in this respect. Mike Gallagher is with Enterprise bank and on the Derry Economic Development Committee and interested in help Jack Roche bring a college to Derry. Jen Ashford is a concerned citizen and a friend of Sue Kopetz.

Old Business

a. Derry Civic Profile

1. **Michelle Gagne**- of UNH Cooperative Extension reviewed her agenda for the Civic Profile Event and wanted feedback about how we would like it set up. A discussion took place as to whether there should be self-selected or assigned groups the day of the event. After much debate a consensus was reached and profile attendees would be assigned to groups. Dave Nelson volunteered to put together a slide show as an introduction to show the downtown stakeholders an overview of the downtown and also what has been accomplished in the last 15 years since the downtown committee of the 90's?

The tentative agenda for the Profile on April 24, 2010

8am-9am -light breakfast

9am- Welcome

9:15am – Mosaic and Vision

What is Derry? What do we want Derry to look like in the future?

9:30am- Dave Nelson Power point. Dave asked for 20 minutes

Take a 10 minute break

Break into randomly selected groups. Each group will have a UNH facilitator and a scribe from the School of International Training.

We will brainstorm future needs and wants for Downtown in the next ten years.

Rank Ideas using Impact and Feasibility Chart

Select top 5 projects to move forward.

Dave emphasized the importance of engaging and energizing the attendees to have them help get these projects moving forward? Deb Paul suggested having all the groups rotate – it was decided we did not have enough time. Mary Hankins wanted to focus on specific problems. Mike indicated that he would make copies of a photograph (he saw in Town Administrator Gary Stenhouse' office) that depicted the

downtown nicely so as to give profile attendees some perspective on what our downtown looks like currently. Stu Arnett indicated that he would provide renderings of the town owned parcels and have them on display as well.

2. **George Sioras Update**-Mr. Sioras was kind enough to bring copies of our flier to hand out to all of us to either mail them to our neighbors or post them at various locations throughout Derry. Mike wished to thank Elizabeth Robidoux of Mr. Sioras' office for all her help with the flier and mailer.

3. **March 27th Business Canvassing**-Gordon Graham, Susan Kopetz, Jona Bostwick, Dave Nelson, Tom Hankins and George Sioras volunteered to go from merchant to merchant inviting the stake holders to the Downtown profile. We will have a questionnaire we can complete; unless they are too busy we can either swing back by or have them mail it to us.

b. D.O.T. Project-

1. George Sioras, Gordon Graham and Mike Gendron met with Derry Public Works Director Mike Fowler and Town Administrator Gary Stenhouse concerning the intersection of Crystal Ave and Birch Street. The DOT is using the more decorative light poles and will be landscaping the parking area formally Dandilyons. They will stamp the sidewalk from the Sundae Shoppe to Dr Banister's office, and From CVS to the municipal parking lot. They cannot stamp the corners due to American Disability Act.

c. Stu Arnett-Update-

1. Mr. Arnett indicated he would be recommending that the Town Council consider creating a Downtown Investment Fund (DIF) for future use and funding of building or land acquisitions.
2. Stuart gave us an update on the property adjacent to the Adams Memorial Opera House. He said it is not a dead deal or a done deal and that his negotiations were ongoing.
3. Farmer's Market-Stuart indicated that he, Mike Gendron and Mr. Ray Gagnon (an associate of his familiar with Farmer's Markets) and he had met with 3 local farmers to gain their interest in participating in a market in Derry. It was indicated that they were very excited about the idea and would support our efforts. The next meeting concerning the farmer's market would be Tuesday, March 23 at 10:30 am in the 3rd floor meeting room of the Derry Municipal Center and also the following Tuesday, March 30 at 7pm in the same room.
4. Town Parcel Update (former DiFeo property)-Mr. Arnett indicated that he would bring renderings of possible scenarios for this now contiguous town owned property located at the Abbot Ct. lot area. He indicated, again, that he would bring them to the downtown civic profile event for attendees to observe.

d. Shugrue Property Update-Mike Gendron indicated that he had made an appeal to the Derry Town Council concerning this property at their meeting last Tuesday. He explained to the council that the owner of this property was coming to us with a generous, yet time sensitive offer to have the town purchase the property for additional parking at the Derry Public Library. The council has put downtown parking "in general" on the agenda for their next meeting on April 6.

New Business

- a. College Search Subcommittee**- Jack Roche indicated that he had recruited a few members to his subcommittee. They are Jona Bostwick, Neil Johnson, Mike Gallagher and Joe Swarzo sp?. He indicated that he had contacted Dr. Katheryn Dodge who is the Executive Director at NH Postsecondary Education Commission. Some research was conducted and he indicated that Derry would be a good location for a school specializing in Medical Technology. The closest neighboring schools that offer this curriculum are in Boston to the south and in Concord to the north. He mentioned the idea of a two year school.
- b. New Committee Members**-Mike Gendron wished to welcome the newest members of the committee and hoped they would assist us in making the Downtown Civic Profile Event on April 24 a success. The next meeting of the Derry Downtown Committee will be Thursday, April 8 at 7pm in Rm. 207 of the DMC.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02