

**Lawrenceville Downtown Development Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2008**

DDA MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Reedy (Chair), Marie Beiser (Vice Chair), Danny Gravitt (Treasurer), Kathy Monroe (Secretary), Larry Still, Mary Kay Jordan

OTHERS PRESENT: John Heard, Tony Powell (Webb, Tanner, Powell, Mertz & Wilson), David Gussio (WTPMW), Dr. Judy Johnson (City Council), Brad Leonard (City Planning & Zoning), Private Citizens and Property Owners.

The Board members of the Lawrenceville Downtown Development Authority met on Monday, February 25, 2008 at 7:00 pm at Old City Hall in Lawrenceville, GA. Jay Markwalter, DDA Staff, kept the minutes of the meeting.

1.0 – Call to Order – Mike Reedy called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2.0 – Quorum – It was determined that a quorum was present.

3.0 – Minutes – Kathy Monroe made a motion to approve the January 28 minutes, which was seconded by Marie Beiser. The motion passed unanimously.

4.0 – Agenda Approval – Following the approval of the minutes, Danny Gravitt made a motion to add an agenda item as 6.4 to Old Business regarding Signage Lighting for the *welcome to historic Lawrenceville* signs. The amended agenda was approved with a motion from Marie Beiser, which was seconded by Kathy Monroe. The motion passed unanimously.

5.0 - Welcome New Board Member / Board of Directors Appointment Announcement

Mike Reedy introduced and welcomed Mary Kay Jordan as a new Board Member appointed by the Mayor and City Council. John Heard, a proposed new board member and former DDA Board member, was also asked to sit with the Board. Tony Powell stated that John was not an official Board member and would not be able to make motions or vote on agenda items until officially appointed at the next City Meeting.

6.0 – OLD BUSINESS

6.1 – Oakes House Welcome Center Update

Mike Reedy reported that he had been working with Paul Austin and Jim Steadman for further inspections and plans for preparation of RFPs for general contractor bids. Mike mentioned that some further necessary steps may include asking a structural engineer for additional opinion of the flooring and an electrical inspection. Mike also mentioned that he was going to ask Gordon Lawrence to help with architect plans for the bathroom renovation and rear parking area.

6.2 – Trolley Service Update

Jerry Moore and Jay gave an update on the correspondence with Gwinnett County and promotional ideas for launching the trolley shuttle service by April 1. Mike Reedy made a

proposal for the DDA to fund the trolley for the first two months, and there was a general discussion of other possible revenue streams and operational ideas. Jay mentioned that the LTТА office will help Jerry by promoting the trolley service and Kathy Monroe offered to assist the LTТА with marketing efforts. Mike Reedy suggested that there be a volunteer work party to place posters and fliers promoting the trolley. Tony Powell agreed that a trial period contract will need to be executed between Jerry Moore and the DDA. Mr. Moore will need to prepare an operations plan and budget for DDA review. Kathy Monroe made a motion to fund the trolley service for Jerry for two months beginning March 31. Marie Beiser seconded the motion followed by full board approval.

6.3 - Update of DDA Historic Zone recommendations to City

Mike Reedy requested that the board revisit and continue discussion regarding the historic overlay area within the downtown overlay. The DDA had made a recommendation to eliminate the historic overlay and the Planning Commission had supported the recommendation, but the City Council has tabled the issue. Mike gave his opinion and asked Brad Leonard for support that many people do not understand the regulations of the historic zone and boundary lines. The original intent of the area was to preserve the charm of the houses, and Dr. Judy Johnson shared her research with Brad Leonard, Bill Baughman at the Gwinnett Historical Society, and the City of Norcross. Norcross has a variety of plaques displayed on old homes or structures that are used as part of a self-guided walking tour. Larry Still asked if other cities, or if Lawrenceville, can conduct a historical area assessment of properties. Brad Leonard gave examples of the regulations stating that, in the downtown specified area, a builder cannot build anything to replace a structure unless it conforms to the code. There are presently five architectural styles described by the code. Brad also stated that if the style and architecture match the code, then a five story structure can be built if the top two floors are residential. The Board continued the discussion including questions regarding the enforcement of completed buildings matching the original approved designs. Brad Leonard stated that if a builder meets the standards of the overlay, then there is no need to go to the various boards for approval. Randy Sutt, local developer / property owner, stated that he would not like to see the city rid of historic features. He said he did not mind that he had to ask for 14 variances just to keep the old windows as part of his project at Honest Alley Exchange. The Board agreed to conduct further research and gather more input to re-visit the issue.

6.4 – Lighting for City Signs

Danny Gravitt reported that he researched the possibilities for providing light to the welcome signs. It would cost \$600 total to equip three of the four city welcome signs with lights. The Scenic Highway sign is located in an area with Georgia Power and not city power. Judy Johnson said that she would ask the City Council for the \$600 to put lights on the signs.

7.0 – NEW BUSINESS

7.1 – Discussion of Future Agenda Items

Mike Reedy suggested that some of the same agenda items in February will need to be revisited for updates and further discussion in March. The Board was given the opportunity for input for future agenda items.

8.1 - Citizen Comments

Downtown Merchant Gail Imoukhuede asked for any recent updates on the traffic calming efforts or downtown road changes. Tony Powell responded that the city has submitted a concept plan which was in a 45 day review period by the state to produce LCI grant funds to begin a design phase of changing the downtown square roads to wider sidewalks and new traffic directions. Karen Still, downtown merchant and property owner, expressed concern that the concept plan did not offer the same changes and look to all four streets and the initial plans show Perry St. not getting the same wide sidewalk improvements as Crogan St. Gail asked if the plan could include brick pavers and pedestrian crosswalks. John Heard stated that most of the adjustments might not happen until the Sugarloaf / 316 loop project is completed.

Don Segars, representing the downtown 1st Baptist Church, inquired about the naming process of the Walking Trail system. He would like to nominate an individual for the dedication if there is an opportunity. Dr. Judy Johnson said that she would check with Hayes James, designing the walking trails, regarding the status or plan for naming the trails.

9.0 – Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 pm with a motion from Kathy Monroe and a second from Danny Gravitt. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Jay Markwalter.