

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
5202 Washington Street, Suite 2
Downers Grove, IL
October 10, 2001

Chairman Phil Cullen called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Phil Cullen, Mr. Jeffrey Bilek, Ms. Liz Chalberg, Ms. Mary Henthorn, Mr. Mike Kelch, Mr. Jan Kopis, Mr. Scott Krafthefer, Ms. Lisa Wisner, Ms. Barb Wysocki, Mr. Steven Rockwell, Director, Ms. Cathy Schuster, Assistant Director, Ms. Ginny Mindo, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: Mr. Joe Garafolo, Mr. Mike Riordan, Mr. Gary Vlk

GUESTS: Mr. Mike Baker, Ms. Kathy Desmarteau, Mr. Doug Kozlowski, Ms. Sue McConnell, Mr. Brian Pabst, Mr. Mark Zabloudil

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM September 12, 2001

**Chairman Cullen moved to APPROVE THE MINUTES from September 12, 2001,
Mr. Krafthefer made a motion and Mr. Kopis seconded the motion**

Vote: **Yay:** Chairman Phil Cullen, Mr. Jeffrey Bilek, Ms. Liz Chalberg, Ms. Mary Henthorn, Mr. Mike Kelch, Mr. Jan Kopis, Mr. Scott Krafthefer, Ms. Lisa Wisner, Ms. Barb Wysocki

Nay: None

Motion carried 9:0

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE:

Chairman Cullen stated that he felt the committees are working very diligently and doing a great job. He also complimented Ms. Schuster on her efforts on the newsletter. He noted that an issue we need to be aware of in the future is the hotel situation. He then talked about a special project on Friday with the Chamber of getting together approximately 50 students of the high schools and some teachers and doing an ongoing project downtown consisting of the high schools taking of about 800 square feet of space and running it as a business and coming up with a business plan. He then invited anyone who is interested in participating in this project to come to the Chamber of Commerce this day at 3:00pm. Ms. Wysocki stated that mentors are needed in different sectors of business to help these kids.

CHARACTER COUNTS PRESENTATION:

Chairman Cullen introduced Councilperson Sue McConnell who would be speaking about the Downers Grove *Character Counts!* Coalition, which this board adopted a resolution as of the last meeting. Ms. McConnell distributed several documents regarding *Character Counts!* She described the mission of using *Character Counts!* as a means of bringing the concepts of character education and a character based culture throughout our community. She noted that *Character Counts!* was put together by the Josephson Institute of Ethics who came up with the concept of having a common framework and language for the community to really look at its character on a conscious basis and to use that to improve their living environment. Ms. McConnell listed the "six pillars": Trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship, and stated that the main goal is to find ways to spread the word to the communities so that every individual in the community knows what the pillars are and will use them in

their lives. The end result is a community that takes these concepts and does “ Teaching, **E**nforcing, **A**dvocating, and **M**odeling character development behaviors. Ms. McConnell stated that the Coalition has spearheaded itself in three different directions this year: A leadership team, a media/PR team, and an assessment/outcomes team. She noted that *Character Counts!* Week is October 21-27th and they are tying into projects that are already going on. She invited everyone to get involved and invited them to the October 25th annual workshop on *Character Counts!* in Downers Grove to give them an idea of how to bring this to the community. She also said that having this program is a positive selling point for Downers Grove. Ms. McConnell noted that November 14th at 7:00pm is the next Coalition meeting at the Public Works building; the goal is to work on the 2002 action plan.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Marketing and Communication

Mr. Kozlowski reported that over the summer he, Mr. Rockwell and several others were involved in reviewing RFP's from firms that would be helping to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy; the selected firm was One Smooth Stone/Marketzing. Due to budget issues, we are now looking at ways to come up with alternative funding mechanisms and/or focus more on an in-house effort. He noted that we have been asked by the Finance Director to pare down our proposal to Council and perhaps even holding off until May 1st as we prepare new budgets and address those issues then, but also pressing forward with the strategies that we've been working with so far. He said that we would mainly use our in-house talent and some of our other avenues to communicate with residents as well as coming up with some branding ideas, logo changes and things that would provide a continuous message throughout all the publications that we develop in the village.

Mr. Rockwell reported that he and Ms. Schuster had a meeting with Mr. Kozlowski, Ms. Sarah Bobikiewicz, Mr. Cullen, and Dave Hankes to work on the website due to its increased popularity due to the “What's Going on in Downtown Downers Grove” series, and also from their desire to use the website more as a marketing tool. Mr. Rockwell reported that during that process, he and Mr. Kozlowski wrote six additional press releases that were economic development related. He noted that at the previous evening's Council meeting, the Council announced that they were interested in talking with Rosol Construction to finalize negotiations of a final Redevelopment agreement for signature. The Redevelopment agreement would define how each cause and effect of the project would be addressed. Topics would include title, land price, environmental clean-up, proposed unit sales price, etc. Mr. Rockwell added that this group is ready to put together a proof that can really be pushed forward. There has also been communication with ComEd and they indicated that they could come up with some budget dollars to assist us in marketing – and that they have a program this year and they want us to do the program and want it completed by the end of the year. Mr. Rockwell then said “So at this time we want to bring back One Smooth Stone/MarketZing and ask them what type of a “bare-boned” system we could come with.” Mr. Rockwell also expressed the need to get a “spruced up” web site up and running. He also distributed the new and improved newsletter.

Ms. Wisner reported that she would meet with hotel representatives on October 15th to get a feel of what has happened with the market and what they are projecting for the next quarter. She also noted that she attended a county meeting and their projections were that for the end of the calendar year, taxes would be down about 5%.

Mr. Cullen concluded stating that this coming up Friday, the Marketing Committee will meeting with One Smooth Stone/MarketZing and see what they can come up with.

Ms. Schuster reported on the newsletter, stating it is a new, redesigned newsletter. We're excited about it, and it was a nice collaboration (noting the addition of Ms. Bobikiewicz). She described this newsletter as more attention grabbing, more "zip", more geared towards businesses, shorter articles. She noted that they've waited to change the creative umbrella of the newsletter with the marketing group to coming on board – that may not happen or may happen in a pared down mode now – so we will probably evolve the concept of the newsletter even further, but we really would appreciate your comments and suggestions. Mr. Rockwell added that Ms. Wisner added an article regarding the hotels and that we are constantly looking at what we should be reporting on. He noted that he and Mr.

Kozlowski discussed the fact that maybe we succeed in going quick or not going that big and doing one-page mailers and those sorts of things. The difficulty is not in producing the document – it's in the massive cost of mailing the item. Ms. Chalberg asked who the target audience is. Mr. Rockwell responded stating that it goes to approximately 2700 businesses in Downers Grove – and some selected companies. He noted that we can also send the website address to those who are interested. Mr. Cullen stated that it is a much more marketable piece than the previous version.

Mr. Rockwell then reported Ms. Lawson will not return to the EDC and in the interim, Ms. Mindo would have some internal training and continue to update the database.

Ms. Schuster reported that the Q & A piece (“*What's Going on in Downers Grove*”) is scheduled for mailing in approximately a week. This is the fourth addition and it is on the Gilbert Street Landbank. She noted that it is a really nice effort by all of the people involved, and this time ScotPress was used, which combines both the printer and designer service, so approximately \$1200 was saved.

Ms. Schuster then talked more about the website saying it will go live this Friday. She noted the goal is to make it easier to read with updated information. She requested everyone look at the index and give her their comments. She also noted that graphics have yet to be added due to decision-making regarding the marketing company. She added that we might work in-house on our own theme.

Opportunities for Retention and Attraction

Mr. Kelch discussed a couple of projects his committee has been working on. First, to put together a Retention/Attraction activities database with the help of the Webmaster –so that this team can access and update it on an ongoing basis with a running log of what has been worked on. Mr. Rockwell mentioned that Synchronist Software might also be utilized for this. Mr. Kelch stated that the other project is to identify the top 25 revenue producers. He said they have been working with Mr. Lyons, but the information is not readily available and asked the Board to e-mail him with any information they have.

Ogden Development

Mr. Krafthefer reported that a signage design on Ogden Avenue is occurring right now for the gateways and the mock-ups for the street signage; he then displayed the mock-ups. Mr. Rockwell added that the Council needs to be notified that we are ready to start doing those on Ogden Ave. He also reported that he received a first draft of the Action Plan from Mr. LaMotte. He said this committee is doing a lot of teamwork and has been working with Public Works. He reported that Mr. LaMotte said there was approximately a \$15K price to bring this to the final part, and the two committees (Communication and Ogden Development) will come with him and one or the other will go back to the ComEd Board and determine that we want the dollars. Mr. Krafthefer indicated that his committee wants to start meeting with the Ogden Avenue businesses, but first wants the full ‘OK’ from the Council.

Mr. Krafthefer stated that his group has a brochure for the landscaping, building renovation, and a facade program that they are looking at doing now as well as signage. He plans on doing a brochure on each of those, so if a building owner wants to do a sign, his group can make some recommendations on how to incorporate it with his current architecture and do something that will be more tasteful than some of the signs that are currently in place. Mr. Krafthefer inquired as to whether architects were already chosen. Mr. Rockwell said that would be the job of the Ogden Committee.

Mr. Kopis then discussed registration stating that his committee met with the Code Enforcement Committee and Fire Prevention Bureau to see what they use for criteria as far as businesses in town. He said he felt the next step would be meeting with Mr. Rockwell and taking the existing business registration or license programs that are out there and pull what we think are the strongest points that we want to put together into our own document and then start massaging it from there.

Mr. Rockwell said that one of the problems is coordinating with the Planning Commission and other departments to get notified of business transfers. Ms. Chalberg inquired as to whether there was a way of “tagging” the businesses, such as through the final sewer reading. Mr. Rockwell responded stating that that would come from the Financial

Officer's office. He noted that it's an internal situation. He then said it should be some type of business license – and it is our job to put it together and bring it to Council. He also would like the Chamber Board to join us in this, but there is no guarantee that they would. Mr. Kopis agreed stating the Chamber still feels that one way or another it is going to be a monetary vehicle for the Village.

Mr. Kopis started a discussion about whose responsibility it truly is to bring things up to code – mainly the new tenant's and the landlord's. Mr. Zabloudil added that what is really being presented is safety for our community – and that is the spin we should put on it. Mr. Zabloudil also said that Code Enforcement and the Fire Department need to be educated on what approach they should take with new businesses.

Mr. Rockwell reported that he met with Mr. Dan Riordan, Mr. Don Rosenthal, and Mr. Don Scheidler and they basically said that they want the same thing. He noted that they would be willing to inform the landlord that they can have such and such dollars over a five-year period of time and if those terms are violated, then they would be sent over to Mr. Blondin who let them know they are violating the agreement. Mr. Bilek asked whether we are working alone on this or with other committees. Mr. Rockwell responded stating that we have all of them, (Public Works, Fire Department, Safety, Code Enforcement), but they will not be presenting to the Council. Ms. Chalberg stated that she felt that since it is more of a safety issue, the Fire Department should do it. Ms. Wysocki added that some professional business people should be there too. She also mentioned that the Chamber would be interested in being involved in this.

Ms. Schuster went on to discuss the Facade Rebate Program. She said it has been an evolving process and reported that she has contacted different communities who then sent packets of their programs. She also noted that they went out to two communities, St. Charles and Morton Grove – and the result was that they came up with a facade rebate draft. Ms. Schuster then asked for volunteers to review the draft to make sure that it is simple to read and easy to understand. Mr. Rockwell recommended sending it to the entire Board.

Mr. Rockwell then discussed the funding situation noting different options, and added that he would like to have preliminary conversations with the Council before it actually goes in front of them. Chairman Cullen inquired as to the timing of this. Ms. Schuster responded stating that this is the first draft that would actually get sent to businesses and we still need to get together a team and design the design guidelines. She added that the first step is to get the information packet together.

Mr. Rockwell concluded saying that he thinks it's a very good program and that we need to come back to this group and decide what, how, and when do we go forward. He also noted that if two or three of the Board members want to meet with the Council and talk about it, then we'll do that too. Mr. Zabloudil suggested having Mr. Lyons set up a template for these facade improvement programs so that the projection of revenue can begin.

Land Resources

Mr. Bilek reported that his group (a committee of one) met with Mr. Cullen and Rockwell to discuss goals that need to focus on. He discussed the three main goals: 1) Best use of commercial, retail, and industrial property. 2) Analyze land uses and develop ideas and alternatives for highest best uses. 3) Participate in the development and maintenance of village zoning philosophies and regulations. Mr. Bilek stated that he will get started on this and hopefully Mr. Cullen and Rockwell will be able to identify more individuals who are willing to get involved with this committee.

CBD

Chairman Cullen reported that his group has had a meeting and developed the "Vision Statement" for the downtown area, and the final draft is very good. He mentioned he plans on e-mailing it to the Board sometime this week. He also reported that his committee is putting together a list of people to be on this committee from this point forward.

Director's Report

Mr. Pabst reported that the parking deck is on schedule. He spoke of Mr. Tim Hart's business stating that a new site has been found which looks like a really good opportunity and Mr. Hart is very excited about it. Mr. Pabst discussed Mr. Kardendowski's property and said that we seem to be making headway between the two attorneys. Ms.

Chalberg asked about the parking situation after breaking ground. Mr. Pabst responded stating that Desman is checking into temporary parking during construction. A discussion ensued regarding using the shuttle system, especially for employees. Ms. Wisner felt that this was an unrealistic solution.

Mr. Pabst went on to discuss the Land Bank project stating that there are issues in the agreement that we are working on with Rosol, in addition to other issues (e.g., environmental studies, etc). A discussion ensued regarding the asbestos problem and Mr. Rockwell said that by demolishing the houses, we are doing the community a service.

Mr. Rockwell reported that Mr. Blondin has been working at an incredible speed and the Council will vote next week. Rosol could end up in a situation where they would attend the Planning Commission meeting to do text amendments. Mr. Rockwell noted that a dilemma is that there is no definition and zoning ordinance of a town home and that's something that would need to be looked into and defined. He also said that Rosol would like to start demolishing in mid-November.

Mr. Rockwell reported that Station Crossing stating that he and Mr. Lyons met with The Gammonley Group and they have come back with some architecture and engineering drawings on how to do the property. He noted that it has changed from 34-47 units, and they believe they can do the retail because they are not going to sell. They would like to start this Spring and start moving people into the units in the Summer of 2003. Mr. Rockwell noted that this is a very ambitious schedule because they would also need to do a planning and development and a text amendment. Mr. Pabst discussed the contamination that is on the site that complicates matters due to the remediation process. Mr. Rockwell then said that Gammonley will go back in front of the council in a couple of weeks to show them some numbers and some pictures and see where we go from there.

Mr. Rockwell reported on Fry's stating the activity there is not what we would like it to be at this time. He said he is not convinced that they are eager to rush out and build a tall building due to the incidents of September 11th, but will contact them today to find out what their plans are and when they are coming.

Mr. Rockwell informed the group that Comp USA moved to Lombard to get a sales tax agreement. He then went on to talk about a Fortune 500 company (to remain anonymous) who supposedly signed a grant application and by the end of this month, would start to break ground. This would provide 1,100 jobs and 150K square feet of space. Mr. Rockwell then said that Mr. Lyons has been working with them on a proposal.

VISITOR'S BUREAU UPDATE:

Ms. Wisner reported that she would be meeting with hotel representatives on Monday, October 15th and hopes to have a detailed report at the next EDC Board Meeting on projections on hotel tax since we are budgeting now for next fiscal year.

DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT CORPORATION UPDATE:

In Ms. Kunze's absence, Mr. Rockwell reported that Toys on Main is scheduled to open on October 20th, the Tea Room has signed the leases to move into the Breen's Cleaners space, Subway's lease fell a little bit off schedule due to illness of the Manager, a shoe store has signed the leases to go into the former Mulberry Street location, and Founder's Hill has started remodeling. He also noted that Mama's Deli and Pasta House is coming along slowly.

Mr. Kopis commented that it would be nice to be able to do a report on Ogden Avenue similar to this one. Mr. Rockwell said that we have one, and he proceeded to list some of the projects: CVS is in the process of moving in, Calloway's is having their grand-opening this Friday, Papa B's has their drawings in to tear down their building and put in a strip mall, and the Aldi's is prepared to come forward.

Mr. Kopis asked Mr. Rockwell if there was any truth to the rumor that the former Burpee's location becoming a billiard parlor. Mr. Rockwell responded saying no, that we are working to convince Albertson to double the size of the Jewel without modifying the architecture. They indicate they are looking for demographics to indicate that

people living behind them on 31st Street would use their facility. Mr. Rockwell also mentioned that their sublease requires that if they want to take the property back, Burpee's would have to pay to bring it back to its original condition.

Ms. Chalberg informed the group that Firestone is planning a \$1/2million renovation this put together guidelines for him to follow. Mr. Rockwell agreed.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:

Ms. Wysocki reported on a couple of openings in the next few days and requested that the Board members attend: Good Samaritan Hospital has their 25th anniversary October 11th in the Wellness Center, and October 12th is the Calloway's grand opening. Ms. Wysocki expressed the need for better system of communication between the boards and commissions so everyone is informed when new businesses come into town. She also reported that Downers Grove South High School is having their grand opening for their addition October 14th, and on October 21st, Downers Grove North is having theirs. Ms. Wysocki also mentioned that The Chamber is hosting focus groups next week, and our Education Committee had a lot of community involvement yesterday. She noted they are going to continue their Leadership Academy for the high school students – bring it into District 58, work on direct business partnerships and work on the little initiative behind Dream Interiors.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Cullen gave a special thanks to Mr. Zabloudil for his attendance at today's meeting.

Ms Chalberg inquired as to what the budget process was now. Mr. Rockwell and Ms. Wisner explained that they work on the budget together and bring it to the Council. Mr. Rockwell said that maybe they should bring together a couple of people onto our budget committee and show you what we're doing.

ADJOURNMENT

Cullen moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Kopis seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Mindo, Recording Secretary