



# **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**OF THE CITY OF GRIFFIN, GEORGIA**

Robin Nance, *Chairman*  
Bruce Ballard, *Vice Chairman*  
Otis Blake III • Douglas Hollberg  
Gertrude Rogers • Daniel Searcy  
James Willis  
Adam Causey, *Executive Director*

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, June 17, 2008

The June 17, 2008, meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held in the Griffin Welcome Center at 8:00 a.m. The meeting was called to order by Robin Nance.

*On motion by Bruce Ballard and seconded by Gertrude Rogers and approved by all present, motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 20, 2008.*

**Attendance:** Otis Blake, Doug Hollberg, James Willis, Gertrude Rogers, Daniel Searcy, Robin Nance, Bruce Ballard, DDA Executive Director Adam Causey, City Manager Kenny Smith, Planning & Development Director, Frederick Gardiner, Special Projects Coordinator, Vicki Hyatt and Main Street Manager, Kira Harris-Braggs.

### **Financial Report:**

- **FY09 Budget**  
Adam Causey discusses the DDA operating budget as recently approved by the Board of Commissioners.

### **Chairman's Report:**

Robin Nance states that he had contacted Norfolk Southern Railroad to begin a new dialogue about the relationship between the railroad and the city. Norfolk Southern has a speakers' forum through their public relations apparatus, and Mr. Nance has arranged for a representative from the railroad to come speak at a Kiwanis meeting in the fall. Mr. Nance hopes that increased contact with Norfolk Southern representatives will assist in creating and maintaining an attractive railroad corridor.

### **DDA Director's Report:**

- **Downtown Design Guidelines**  
The Planning Commission voted to recommend adoption of the Downtown Design Guidelines recently created from the Community Choices program from the ARC. Mr. Gardiner stated that the Planning Commission's recommendation will go before the Board of Commissioners in July.



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- **Enterprise Zone Designation**  
Mr. Causey stated that the Enterprise Zone Ordinance will go before the Board of Commissioners at the first July meeting. Mr. Causey explained that an Enterprise Zone would designate specific areas of the city as “enterprise zones,” which would allow new businesses to exempt city property taxes for up to five years. Those businesses must certify that they have created at least two new jobs. Residential development may also be able to exempt property taxes if the redevelopment increases the value of the land by 500%. Property owners would be required to apply for the exemptions through the DDA, which would act as the liaison with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Mr. Causey reminded the board that the targeted areas for Enterprise Zone designation do not include the central business district properties that would be included in the proposed Tax Allocation District. This is because the TAD would not perform properly if its properties were exempt and not contributing to the tax digest.
- **LCI Parking Study**  
Mr. Causey stated that the parking study will be put out to bid in July. He reminds the board that the total study budget is \$25,000, with the city paying \$12,500.
- **Redevelopment Fund**  
Mr. Causey said that he is narrowing down subject properties to apply for the DCA Redevelopment Fund. He reminds the board that projects may apply for up to \$500,000 in money to be awarded as a grant to the city. The city would then be free to loan the funds to the DDA in order to complete a redevelopment project. The Five Points property on North Hill Street was discussed as a viable and visible project to pursue.
- **City Hall**  
Mr. Causey said that he is still awaiting the purchase contract from Spectra Properties. There have been delays from the financial backer of the project, World Equity Partners. Mr. Causey stated that he received another letter from that bank that explained some of the delays and was more detailed in the funding priority of this project than previous correspondence. There is no deadline for finalizing the real estate deal, although the Mr. Causey stated that he is ready to put the property back up for bid if the need arises.



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- **Façade Loan/Grant**  
Mr. Causey discussed options for converting the current façade loan program into a grant; the difference being that funds would not be replenished for a grant. Mr. Causey stated that there is approximately \$37,000 in the FNB account for the loan program, but the program has not been utilized since 2005. Discussion ensued regarding the façade grant program in Madison, GA, and why it utilized a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. Various funding mechanisms, such as tax districts and donations, were discussed as ways to offset the use of the funds if the program were changed to a grant since city general funds cannot be used in this fashion. It was stated that interest in the façade loan has waned and that the lure of a matching grant may create more awareness of the program.
- **Griffin Grower's Market**  
Mr. Causey updated the board on the proposed Griffin Growers' Market. A meeting was held to determine the level of interest from local farmers on a downtown market to sell their produce. The meeting was well-attended and UGA and county extension employees were there to facilitate. The consensus from that meeting was that a location downtown would be best, and several requests were made to have the parking deck available. Kira Harris-Braggs stated that a successful market needs an on-site manager during the market times. Drew Whalen reminded that any payment to a manager would need to follow accounting rules. Mr. Causey said that updates on the progress of the market would follow, but that interest was high enough to begin this summer and fall.
- **Business Update**  
Mr. Causey informed the board that Blue Collar Clothing was closing down. Jim Ogletree owns the building and is looking for a new tenant.
- **'08-'09 Goals**  
Mr. Causey reviewed the proposed goals as discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Causey stated that the next meeting will include a final list of the goals he feels are appropriate for the next fiscal year. Most of the goals include projects already underway, such as the downtown development guide and the website update. Mr. Causey reminded that he is working closely with Kira Harris-Braggs of the Main Street Program and that some of the goals overlap. He inquired whether they would need to a vote to become the official goals of FY 2009.

## City Manager's Report

Mr. Kenny Smith reminded the board that the official Griffin-Spalding Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremony for Angelo's Italian Restaurant would take place



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Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 11am in front of the restaurant. Another ceremony would take place at The Hound and Puss pet store on Solomon Street following Angelo's.

#### Other Business

- Main Street Report

Mrs. Harris-Braggs thanked everyone for participating in June Jam. She said the event was a success and that feedback was positive. The event did net \$1,400, which will go to fund the "September Smash" even already being planned. She reminded the board that the next Main Street Advisory Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 25 at 8:15am at the Welcome Center. Mrs. Harris-Braggs also discussed the recent Downtown Council interest meeting. Some new faces were present and the consensus was that the Downtown Council was needed. The next Downtown Council meeting is planned for July 21 and will feature the election of new officers.

Vicki Hyatt gave a BRAG update. The event was a slow start due to the hot weather and tired bike riders, but it was well-attended later in the evening. Several of the downtown restaurants were opened and had good business.

Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted by:

Adam Causey  
Executive Director  
Downtown Development Authority

ATTEST:

Robin Nance  
Chairman  
Downtown Development Authority Board