



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

OF THE CITY OF GRIFFIN, GEORGIA

Robin Nance, *Chairman*
Bruce Ballard, *Vice Chairman*
Otis Blake III • Douglas Hollberg
Nat Doughtie • Daniel Searcy
Allen Marshall
Adam Causey, *Executive Director*

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

The October 20, 2009, 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 Vice Chairman Bruce Ballard.

Attendance: *Board members:* Bruce Ballard, Otis Blake, Doug Hollberg, Daniel Searcy, Nat Doughtie *City staff:* Executive Director Adam Causey, City Manager Kenny Smith, Planning Director Frederick Gardiner, Vicki Hyatt, Kira Harris-Braggs *Guests:* Jim Brown, Dan Dunson

On motion by Doug Hollberg and second by Dan Searcy and approved by all present, the minutes from the meeting held on September 15, 2009, were recorded.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Robin Nance was not in attendance. There was no report.

Financial Report:

Mr. Causey distributed the financial report for the Façade Program account. The account stands at \$21,467.48 after removing those projects already approved.

Façade Grant:

Jim Brown with Championship Martial Arts was present to discuss his façade grant request for 210 East Solomon Street. Mr. Brown previously ran Elite Martial Arts from the Coca-Cola Building on Taylor Street. Mr. Brown purchased the subject property and is moving his business closer to the central business district. This building is not within the Historic Preservation Commission District. Mr. Brown has not received Façade Grant/Loan monies previously.

On motion by Doug Hollberg and second by Nat Doughty and approved by all present, the Board voted to approve a \$2,500 Façade Grant to Jim Brown for work at 210 East Solomon Street.

Dan Dunson presented his application for a Façade Grant for 135 South Hill Street. Mr. Dunson has a bicycle shop going into the space and will rebuild the entire facade. This building is within the Historic Preservation Commission District and will need a Certificate of Appropriateness before commencing work. Mr. Dunson has not received Façade Grant/Loan monies previously.



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On motion by Doug Hollberg and second by Nat Doughty and approved by all present, a \$2,500 Façade Grant was awarded to Dan Dunson for façade work at 135 South Hill Street.

Otis Blake updated the Board on his work at the Jackson Hewitt building on Taylor Street. Mr. Blake presented new drawings showing a renovated façade. Mr. Blake said the new façade would be all brick and stone after removing the existing tin and tile front.

DDA Director's Report:

- *Downtown Trolleys*

Mr. Causey informed the Board on the potential for a trolley for downtown. A local businessman has several for sale and has approached the city with an idea for a circulator in the downtown district. Mr. Causey asked for input from the Board.

Mr. Hollberg wondered if any funding from the Atlanta Regional Commission might be available if matched with plans or ideas from McIntosh Trail RDC other initiatives. Mr. Hollberg said it an idea worth looking into if you could get a route that would serve multiple activity centers.

Mr. Causey said he is looking at potential routes and funding, but cautioned against considering this idea as a “transit project”. Mr. Causey sees potential for a lunchtime route or tourism route, but not as a regular route for everyday travel. Mr. Hollberg thought

Mr. Causey said the trolleys would be converted from natural gas to liquid propane. Mr. Ballard said that this has been talked about previously and thought it was an idea worth pursuing if costs could be justified or funding sources were available and if other benefits could be derived from utilizing alternate modes of transportation.

- *Griffin Hotel*

Mr. Causey informed the Board that Steve Morris received approval from the Board of Commissioners for his roof concept on the Griffin Hotel project. Mr. Morris had earlier appealed the HPC decision against the roof. Mr. Morris has also secured private funding from Georgia Banking Company for the project. Mr. Causey is working toward getting the deadline extended for the state revolving loan funds. Mr. Morris is ready to begin construction as soon as plans are approved.



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Mr. Hollberg inquired whether other redevelopment funds might be available to Mr. Morris. Mr. Causey answered that the hotel project would not likely qualify for redevelopment money from DCA, but that another project could. Mr. Searcy suggested the Goddard Building, which Mr. Morris also purchased recently. Mr. Causey stated that he had been in talks with Mr. Morris about opportunities with the Goddard Building.

Mr. Searcy asked about Mr. Morris' plans for the interior lobby of the hotel, wondering if he was going to alter it. Mr. Gardiner said that Mr. Morris has framed up some of the space and Mr. Causey confirmed this, adding that Mr. Morris wants to create a mezzanine area for hotel office space and other rooms around the perimeter of the lobby. These ideas were outlined in Mr. Morris' business plan to the DCA for the revolving loan fund. Mr. Causey stated that he has tried to convince Mr. Morris not to alter the lobby too significantly, but that Mr. Morris is likely to do so.

Mr. Gardiner suggested that Mr. Morris take a tour of other historic hotels so he could see that such material changes to the lobby are unnecessary. Mr. Blake asked if Mr. Morris was using any consultants for the project. Mr. Causey said that Mr. Morris has spoken with some hotel consultant but, to his knowledge, Mr. Morris had no official consultant or hotel chain retained. Mr. Doughty said that there is an association of independent hotels that could help Mr. Morris with a reservation system, etc.

Mr. Searcy asked if there would be more challenges to HPC because of this case. Mr. Hollberg reminded everyone that the HPC is bound by a set of aesthetic guidelines, but the City Board of Commissioners could take into consideration other issues such as economic impact. Mr. Causey said the project went through the process as spelled out in the ordinance but there may be more appeals because of the outcome. Mr. Searcy wondered whether this sets a bad precedent for future cases. Mr. Causey said the Planning Department is going to look at the application process to make sure all information is available.

- *Slaton Ave Property*

Mr. Hollberg asked for an update on the lot given to the DDA by the city, located at 111 West Slaton Avenue. Mr. Causey said the appraisal is done and we should have it soon. The potential buyer is no longer interested in Sean Cain's building next door, but Mr. Causey is still working to sell the lot to the interested party.



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City Manager's Report

Mr. Smith had no report.

Other Business

- City/Main Street/Downtown Council
Kira Harris-Braggs gave an update on:
 - Halloween trick-or-treat event on Friday, October 30 from 4-6PM. The First Baptist Church is also doing an event that night.
 - Main Street Players staging a "haunted theater" from 10/29 – 10/31
 - Holiday events include the tree-lighting and concert on December 3rd. The Salvation Army will be conducting a toy drive. Mistletoe Market will take place December 5, with vendors and Santa at the Welcome Center.
 - Sun City Peachtree has partnered with Main Street to get downtown involved in their welcome packets for new residents
 - Downtown Council membership drive is still ongoing
 - DC Morning Meet-n-Greet meetings still occur on 2nd Monday each month
 - A new brochure for holiday shopping downtown is forthcoming
- Planning Department/Economic Development
Frederick Gardiner noted the following projects from the Planning Dept:
 - Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) overlay district work has begun in downtown
 - West Griffin LCI project is wrapping up. Last public meeting is October 26th.
 - The Urban Redevelopment Area was expanded to include the old NACOM building and other industrial uses on the south side of town
 - A new bill is pending that could affect the funding for the passenger rail by amending the SPLOST law and is something we will keep an eye on
 - The One Town/One Goal project headed by Vicki Hyatt won a grassroots award from the Georgia Planning Association
- Board Appointments
 - Allen Marshall has resigned from the DDA Board, effective immediately
 - DDA will wait until the Board of Commissioners appoints new board members in January to replace Mr. Marshall



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- DDA also needs to appoint a Main Street representative since Mr. Marshall served as that role. Vice Chairman Ballard called for volunteers for that post...

On motion by Doug Hollberg and second by Otis Blake, III, and approved by all present, Nat Doughty was appointed as the temporary Main Street representative from the DDA Board, who would serve until the end of 2009.

Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted by:

ATTEST:

Adam Causey
Executive Director
Downtown Development Authority

Bruce Ballard
Vice Chairman
Downtown Development Authority Board